



2022-2023

Student Handbook

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STATEMENT of NON-DISCRIMINATION

[As required by the 1979 Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination in Vocational Education Programs
(34 CFR part 100, App. B, IV-O)]

ORANGE SOUTHWEST SUPERVISORY DISTRICT /RANDOLPH TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER

24 Central Street
Randolph, VT 05060

Randolph Technical Career Center is pleased to announce that it is offering the following Career and Technical Education Programs of Study for the school year 2022-2023:

Advanced Manufacturing	Culinary Arts & Hospitality	Diversified Agriculture
Automotive Technology	Management	Education Services
Construction Trades & Management	Dental Assisting	Electrical Technology
Criminal Justice & Cybersecurity	Diesel Technology	Health Careers
	Digital Filmmaking & Media Arts	Pre Technical Exploratory

The ORANGE SOUTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT/RANDOLPH TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and marital status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

The ORANGE SOUTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT/RANDOLPH TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER offers additional services to students with limited english language skills or with disabilities so that they may benefit from these programs. Individuals wishing to obtain information about the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities should contact the 504 Coordinator (information below).

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Heather Lawler	Kayla Link
Title IX Coordinator	504 Coordinator
Orange Southwest SU	Orange Southwest SU
24 Central Street	24 Central Street
Randolph, VT 05060	Randolph, VT 05060
Phone: 802-728-9844	Phone: 802-728-9844

RTCC offers additional services to students with limited English language skills or with disabilities so they may benefit from our programs. Academic and other support services required for successful completion of the student's career and technical program will be provided in coordination with the student's home school.

Please contact the following individuals to discuss and report inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies (e.g. Title VI, Section 504, Title IX) to:

An individual with a complaint may also contact the U.S. Dept. of Education - Office of Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491 Telephone: (617) 289-0111, (877) 521-2172 (tdd), or
Fax: (617) 289-0150 Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

WELCOME TO RANDOLPH TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER

Our faculty and staff would like to welcome you to RTCC. Your acceptance to RTCC is the result of a competitive process. You were selected to attend RTCC based on your completed application, recommendations from your home school, your performance during program visitations, and your demonstrated interest in participating in a Career and College Technical Education program.

You will find that RTCC is filled with opportunities for technical and academic skill training, participation in student leadership organizations, and fun and productive days. We encourage you to get involved in one of our excellent student organizations (Student Forum, SkillsUSA, DECA, FBLA or FFA) as well as to strive academically by taking a Dual Enrollment course or for acceptance into such groups as the National Technical Honor Society.

The staff at RTCC is prepared to offer you an excellent opportunity to succeed and to plan for an exciting and productive future. Thank you for making RTCC part of your education! We look forward to working with you as you succeed during the 2022-2023 school year.

We are proud to offer you the following programs:

Automotive Technology
Construction Trades & Management
Criminal Justice / Cyber Security
Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management
Dental Assisting
Diesel Technology
Digital Filmmaking & Media Arts
Diversified Agriculture
Education Services
Electrical Technology
Health Careers
Industrial Design and Fabrication
Pre-Technical Exploratory

Sincerely,

The Administration, Faculty, and Staff

RTCC FACULTY & STAFF 2022-2023

Felicia Allard	Director
Gary Clark	Dean of Students
TBD	CTE School counselor
Jeremi Lyford	Work Based Learning Coordinator
Cristie Arguin	Student Services Coordinator

Faculty

Jason Ladd	Automotive Technology
Doug VanDalinda	Construction Trades & Management
John Lacey	Criminal Justice
Clint Wild	Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management
Stephanie Garrow	Dental Assisting
Chuck Lyman	Diesel Technology
Lance Madzey	Digital Filmmaking & Media Arts
Ryan O'Malley	Diversified Agriculture
Chancity Young	Education Services
Peter Busha	Electrical Technology
Tammy Ladd	Health Careers
TBD	Industrial Design and Fabrication
Jenny Engel	Mathematics
Greg Hance	Pre Tech Exploratory
Thomas Sheltra	English/Social Studies

Support Staff

Howard Boutwell	Mechanical Core Aide
Randy Clark	Auto and Agriculture Core Aide
Maggie Jarvis	Academic Center Aide
TBD	Academic Center Aide

Office Support Staff

Robin Dunican	Administrative Assistant to Director
Linda Boutwell	Administrative Secretary

R.A.V.E.N. at RTCC

Jim Barry	Lead Instructor
Ralph LeFevbre	Aide

RTCC MISSION

The mission of RTCC is to ignite a passion for learning so that together we can create a highly skilled workforce that benefits our communities by providing exceptional career and technical programs that meet industry demands through positive relationships among staff, students, families, and community partners.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE OSSD

Students have the knowledge, skills and tools to be prepared for the next stage of their lives, which justify the resources invested by the community.

Further, our core focus is on the following:

1.1 Critical thinking: Students creatively apply experiences and critical analysis to solve problems and make informed decisions.

1.2 Foundational Knowledge: Students possess comprehensive knowledge of a core curriculum in the following areas:

- 1.2.1** Reading, writing and communication
- 1.2.2** Mathematics
- 1.2.3** Science
- 1.2.4** Social studies
- 1.2.5** Life Skills
- 1.2.6** The Arts

1.3 Ability to Adapt: Students are adaptable, resilient and can manage change.

1.4 Information Technology: Students use and apply information and technology appropriately, effectively and objectively

PROBLEM RESOLUTION FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

If you experience a problem or issue with any of RTCC services:

1. First speak with the people directly involved. In most situations this will be the student and/or the program instructor.
2. If the issue is unresolved, please contact the Director of RTCC (Felicia Allard, 728-9595 ext. 403).
3. If the issue continues to be unresolved after working with the Director, please contact the Superintendent of the OSSD (728-5052).
4. If the issue continues to be unresolved after working with the Superintendent, you may ask the Superintendent for the process to access the School Board.

Other processes and remedies are available depending on the situation. These are outlined in RTCC's non-discrimination statement, harassment and bullying policy, and special education processes. Contact the RTCC main office (802-728-9595) if you have any questions or on the OSSD Website

<http://orangesouthwest.org/interior.php/pid/4/sid/18/tid/19>

CTE SCHOOL COUNSELOR SERVICES

RTCC students have access to personal, college, and career counseling services at the Center. The student's Program Instructor, Work Based Learning Coordinator, and the CTE School Counselor ensures that students receive information relative to technical education programs, academic courses, colleges, SAT's, financial aid, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) services, and job placement opportunities. It is our goal that every student develop a career plan that includes plans for the transition from school to adult life, including post-secondary education and employment.

The RTCC CTE School Counselor works closely with home school School Counselors and with Program Instructors to schedule students and to ensure appropriate program placement. The CTE School Counselor provides college information and assists with applications. In most cases, college-bound seniors will have their applications completed prior to the middle of their senior year. Students are encouraged to meet with the CTE School Counselor early in the school year to begin their postsecondary plans.

VSAC personnel assist in providing financial aid information and related counseling services. Representatives from various colleges and businesses work with the Center to provide other post-program placement opportunities.

RANDOLPH TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER DAILY SCHEDULE

RTCC is a full-day program with courses that begin at 8:00 (if a student requires additional academic coursework) with programs beginning at 9:00AM. Dismissal is at 2:20 PM.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is an important foundation of the RTCC experience and is necessary for successful completion of both RTCC and the high school program. Irregular attendance is one of the chief causes of poor work quality and a failure to succeed. Program instructors are required to report student attendance to the RTCC main office, where the official school records will be maintained. Upon returning from an absence, students must report to the office to obtain an admit slip.

The Administration has the responsibility to make a final determination whether an absence is excused or unexcused. Without any documentation, the absence will be considered unexcused.

An absence will be considered "unexcused" until a parent calls the main office with the reason for the absence or a student presents a note signed by a parent or guardian identifying the specific days of absence and the reason for the absence.

To have an absence medically waived please submit a note from a physician, dentist, or other health care practitioner, court officer, or similar professional.

Students who are 18 or older and have completed the "**Rights & Responsibilities of Adult Status**" must also communicate with the school when absent to excuse the absence.

Failure to present valid documentation of an absence within five (5) school days of the absence will result in the absence remaining unexcused. (This rule has implications for National Technical Honor Society/Tech Excellence, Scholarships, CTSO participation, and other RTCC-related activities and opportunities)

Those students who are truant for 15 days will be dropped from the roster at RTCC and be returned to their sending school.

TARDINESS POLICY

Students who are tardy (arrive after 9:00 for technical programs or after the beginning of any academic classes prior to 9:00) **must report to the Main Office to sign in and obtain an admit slip.**

A written excuse from a parent/guardian or doctor/official is necessary, in most cases, for the tardiness to be counted as excused. The definition of an excused tardy is the same for an excused absence. If the student obtains excessive tardies, parents will be contacted by the program instructor or RTCC administration.

Students who miss a first or second period but arrive on time for Technical programs, may be considered a “cut” and could face suspension procedures. **3 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence**

If tardiness continues after the parental conference, suspension procedures may be invoked.

Important Points:

1. Every **3 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence**
2. Both **Excused AND Unexcused** absences impact credit attainment
3. Waived absences include: Death in the Family, Medical - Required by Doctor or School Nurse or absences waived by Administration. **Waived absences do not impact credit attainment.**
4. Attendance along with other professional skills will be assessed in every program and will impact grades.

HEALTH SERVICES

It is the intention to have a full time nurse in the school to oversee the care of ill and injured students as well as to dispense authorized medications. The nurse is the custodian of the student health records, which are kept in the Health Office until the student graduates.

1. For students with a significant health concern or allergy, please contact the Health Office to ensure that a health/safety plan is put into place.

2. Return the emergency health form, given to students on the first day of school, as soon as possible, and inform the school **throughout the year** of any changes in contact numbers or medical information.

3. Dismissal from school

If your child becomes ill or injured during the school day, it is the school’s procedure for students to see the nurse before they can leave school. The nurse will call a parent/guardian, or emergency contact if the parent is not reached, to discuss the condition of the student. ***No student, with the exception of those who have obtained “Adult Status” may leave without a school official making direct contact with a parent or emergency contact.**

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

No student is allowed to carry and/or self-administer medication, with the exception of authorized emergency medications. (See below) **No student is allowed to give another student any medication.** This act is considered a serious offense. Please refer to our Drug and Alcohol Policy.

The first dose of any new medication needs to be given at home before it can be given at school.

All medications need to come in their original labeled bottle or box. Send only the number of pills that will be needed at school. For prescription medications, if asked, the pharmacy will make up a second labeled bottle for school.

Prescription medications must be accompanied by written permission from the provider. At the time of the visit, please request that a second prescription be written or copied for the school.

OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATIONS

Over the counter medications must be accompanied by a note from a parent/guardian instructing the nurse or designee on how the medication is to be given. In the case of a temporary condition like a cold or cough, indicate when the medication was last given and your permission to give another dose according to the directions on the bottle or box.

Over the counter medications e.g. Excedrin or Pamprin, for recurring conditions, may be kept in the Health Office, and will be given to the student as needed. These medications must also be accompanied by instructions (give one (1) or two (2) tablets as needed for headache or pain) to extend for the entire school year.

Please include the full name of the student, date and parent/guardian signature on all notes giving permission for medications. Emergency medications such as inhalers or EPI PENS are permitted to be carried by students. However, they need to be cleared first through the Health Office. In the case of an EPI PEN a health safety plan will need to be written and approved by the parent and physician.

INJURIES OR SIGNIFICANT ILLNESS

If your child is significantly injured at school, a parent/guardian will be contacted to inform and consult on a plan for the student. If a student needs to be seen by a doctor for an injury, whether or not the injury occurs at school, please have the doctor write a note indicating any limitations that will be needed at school. Request that the note include expected duration and date of follow up appointment. **All original MD notes are to come to the Health Office.** Copies will be given to the program instructor and main office. Original will be placed in the student's Health Record.

If your child needs to be out of school for an extended period of time because of an illness or injury, the school will need a note from a doctor. Contact the Health Office if arrangements for any physical accommodations will need to be made and Student Services for any academic accommodations.

For any significant injury, illness such as mono, or surgery, a clearance note from a doctor must be received by the school before a student may return to full participation in their RTCC program.

SAFETY & CONCUSSIONS

We take the safety of our students very seriously, we take the time to train students to be safe in the workplace as well as learn how to use equipment properly. Safety could be a reason we ask a student to return to their sending school if they demonstrate the ability to act in a manner that would be considered by us to be dangerous to others (unsafe).

We would also like to present the Agency of Education's Guidelines on Concussions. Although the opportunity is rare, a student might "bang" their head and or harm themselves by accident. Establishing a clear protocol for concussions is available below. Ensuring a student is safe to be back in class and able to learn is our priority.

RTCC refers to the nurse and the student's doctor to determine the protocol when a student is able to return to class.

It is up to the student and family to communicate with teachers and RTCC CTE School Counselor about make-up assignments.

If you have questions please feel free to contact our office at (802-728-9595).

Concussion Guidelines

Act No. 58, § 40 of 2011, Act No. 171, § 39a of 2011 , and Act No. 68, § 2 of 2013 which are codified in 16 V.S.A. § 1431, direct the AOE to develop guidelines to assist schools in taking reasonable steps to prevent, and to minimize the effects of, school related concussions. In the creation of these guidelines, the AOE has consulted with the Vermont Department of Health, the Vermont Principals' Association, and the Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust; we gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

RTCC shall follow the RUHS concussion management action plan that describes the procedures the school shall take when a student suffers a concussion. The action plan shall include policies on: (A) who makes the initial decision to remove a student from a program when it is suspected that the has suffered a concussion; (B) what steps the student must take in order to return to any learning activity; (C) who has the responsibility to inform a parent or guardian when a student suffers a concussion. (D) The student will need clearance from a doctor to allow them to participate in technical skill and academic related activities to be sure they and their peers can be safe. RTCC primary contact will be the RTCC School Nurse and our CTE School Counselor.

ACADEMICS

PROBATION

All enrolled RTCC students will be placed on probation (Academic, Attendance, Behavior, Technical Program) for the first 30 school days.

This will allow both the student and RTCC to ensure the educational partnership is working. If a student needs to transfer back to their partner school this allows time to be re-enrolled and develop a new schedule with the sending school counselor.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

At the beginning of the year, your program instructor will review program competencies and methods for grading used by the instructor. Grading at RTCC is by enrolled course/program 0-100 scale or by proficiency and will depend on what course(s) a student is in during the school year. A student enrolled in a RTCC course both Technical and Academic will be graded at 0-100 scale.

Students will still have the opportunity to earn Honor Roll (SP or 86 or above in all classes) and High Honors (EP or 93 in all classes). Questions about a student's grade regardless of the system should first be addressed by their teacher. During the first week of school students will be handed a PowerSchool password to be able to review their grades, and one will be mailed home to parents, guardians, families.

The following grading ranges will be used for RTCC Courses:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 93-100 | The student is a highly motivated participant in class presentations and discussions and displays a positive attitude. Work is of superior quality and exceeds the standards set by the program instructor. |
| 86-92 | The student is an active class participant and displays a positive attitude. Student work is of a high quality and meets program standards. |
| 77-85 | The student work is of good quality and meets most of the program standards. |

70-76	This grade indicates a failure to meet a substantial number of course standards. Students should make every effort to improve their performance.
69 & below	The student meets few, if any, of the program standards and receives no credit for the program or RTCC academic course.
INC.	(Incomplete) This is a temporary grade that may be given to a student who has not completed the required material by the end of the marking period. It is the student's obligation to contact the teacher to complete the required work. If the work is not completed within ten school days from the date grades close, the incomplete grade will be calculated per usual program grading protocol.

GRADE AND INTERIM REPORTS

Interim reports for each student are issued approximately every five weeks (please see school calendar). Quarter and semester reports are issued approximately every nine weeks (four times per year).

Grade reports are mailed home and interim reports are handed out to the student, and a copy is forwarded to the student's home school to become part of the permanent record.

Both parents and students are encouraged to review a student's progress on their PowerSchool Account by accessing <https://ossu.powerschool.com/public/home.html> website. This link can also be found on the <http://orangesouthwest.org/interior.php/pid/4/sid/18/tid/19>

POWERSCHOOL PORTAL

All students and parents/ guardians have access to their student's current demographic and attendance information via the Powerschool parent portal. Students and parents/ guardians will be given a username and password at the beginning of the academic year. If this information is lost, please contact the main office at RTCC.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING/CREDIT OF ENGLISH/HUMANITIES/MATHEMATICS

English/Humanities/Mathematics are designed to be a complementary course to each technical education program and is fully integrated into each program. Content directly related to each student's program and many of the employability competencies common to all programs are included in the courses. Students meet face to face with the teacher for direct instruction and complete follow-up assignments in their technical education program with their teacher's support. Because of this integration, participation in English/Humanities is a mandatory component of a student's RTCC program, regardless of the student's need for credit.

RTCC's English/Humanities grade is calculated as the average of two semesters. A final grade of 70 or above will result in the student receiving one full credit. Students who are enrolled in English/Humanities for less than a full year will receive credit on a prorated basis.

ACADEMIC WARNING

RTCC provides students with program and academic support via the program teacher, Guidance Coordinator, our Student Services Program and by working with the student's parents and partner school. Every effort is made to provide the student with information and support needed to succeed. Program instructors report to the program support team every month on each student's progress and if further intervention is needed the MTSS team coordinates those supports.

Students who receive a failing grade in their technical program for any quarter or in a companion course for two quarters will be placed on Academic Warning and will be required to attend a meeting with RTCC MTSS Team to develop a plan that will remediate the performance issues. Continued failing grades may

result in students not receiving full credit for the program/course and/or being transferred back to their partner school from RTCC for not making sufficient academic progress towards graduation.

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATING IN RECOGNITION NIGHT & RECEIVING A CERTIFICATE OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM COMPLETION

Approved by RTCC Staff June 2017

The purpose of Recognition Night is to acknowledge successful completion of a student's technical program. To this end, students who receive a passing grade for the average of two semesters in their technical program will receive a program certificate and be allowed to participate in the Recognition Night ceremony.

Students who are successfully enrolled for less than a full year may receive a "certificate of attendance" for participation in their program. Successful program completion will involve performance in the student's technical program only and is not affected by any other Academic courses.

NATIONAL TECHNICAL HONOR SOCIETY & TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Every student has the opportunity to strive towards earning National Technical Honor Society status. National Technical Honor Society is "an honor society for outstanding career and technical students of workforce vocational education institutions in the United States. NTHS began in 1984 as the National Vocational-Technical Honor Society at H.B. Swofford Career Center, Spartanburg County, South Carolina". At RTCC, it is an honor to be recognized as a NTHS student and to be able to wear your NTHS stole or Technical Excellence rope at your high school graduation.

Students earn the right to be inducted. If they plan for their success now in the beginning of the year they may face less difficulties or disappointment in May 2023 when recognition is announced. Although this is a yearlong process, nominations start in late winter around February/March. National Technical Honor Society & Technical Excellence Night will be May 18, 2023.

Below is the criteria for students to achieve NTHS honor. Please pay close attention to attendance scales as well as discipline. Students who are nominated for Technical Excellence by their program teacher are outlined below.

NTHS Selection based on the following assessment scale. (See rubric criteria on next page)

37 – 40 points = student meets criteria for **NTHS** selection

32 – 36 points = student meets criteria for **Technical Excellence** selection

- Students must have no formal documented disciplinary issues
- Students must have positive outcome of an interview with the RTCC NTHS Advisory Committee
- Students who are inducted as juniors may wear their stoles during RTCC's recognition Night Ceremony. They must re-qualify as seniors and be a member in good standing in order to wear their stoles during their senior year Recognition Night & home-school graduation ceremonies.

CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL TECHNICAL HONOR SOCIETY & TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Students at RTCC have the opportunity to be acknowledged for attainment of their academic and technical skills.

The following rubric outlines criteria for selection:

Teacher Review

ATTRIBUTES	8-10	6-7	4-5	Disqualified from Consideration
Leadership	Evidence of a leadership position Promotes school activities Inspires positive behavior in others	Participation in a team, CTSO, club or committee Goes “above and beyond” what is expected or asked	Occasional participation in class and other school activities	Rare participation in class Appears uninterested and doesn’t offer ideas
Skill & Work Ethic	Always prepared and ready to work Knows and can identify and explain necessary tools for the completion of a project Able to complete tasks without assistance Uses time well and gets projects done on time	Usually prepared and ready to work Able to identify and explain necessary tools for the completion of a project with some assistance Able to complete tasks with little assistance Procrastinates but gets the job done	Takes extra time to get ready to work Unable to identify or use tools without prompting Unable to complete tasks without assistance Difficulty meeting timelines	Often unable to perform work Use of tools may pose danger to self and others Unable to complete tasks with assistance Doesn’t meet timelines due to wasting time
Citizenship	Trustworthy Treats everyone with fairness, equity and respect	Trustworthy Has a friendly attitude toward peers and adults	Usually trustworthy Usually treats classmates and staff with respect	Seldom trustworthy Speaks in ways that are hurtful to others
Responsibility	Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously	Respectfully acknowledges feedback and recommendations	Accepts feedback on disrespectful behaviors	Attempts to impose own views, standards and values on everyone
Teacher Recommendation	Highly Recommend	Recommend	Recommend with Reservations	Do Not Recommend

NTHS Committee /Administration Review

ATTRIBUTES	10	7-9	5-6	Disqualified from Consideration
Tech Program Grades	Three-quarter average 93+	Three-quarter average 86-92	Three-quarter average 80-85	***Ineligible for NTHS with a GPA below 3.0
English Grades	Three-quarter average 93+	Three-quarter average 86-92	Three-quarter average 80-85	***Ineligible for NTHS with a GPA below 3.0
Companion Course Grades	Three-quarter average 86+	Three-quarter average 80-85	Three-quarter average 75-79	***Ineligible for NTHS with a GPA below 3.0
Discipline	No documented disciplinary issues	No involvement in any significant or ongoing disciplinary issues	1 documented disciplinary issue	1 or more formal, written disciplinary reports
Attendance	0-3 Absences	4-6 Absences	7-9 Absences ***Ineligible for NTHS	10+ Absences

Score Qualification for NTHS: 94-100 and 86-100 for Tech Excellence

QUARTERLY AWARDS

Student of the Quarter Award CRITERIA:

A student has no unexcused absences, cooperative behavior, friendly, and a positive attitude. A student who is demonstrating proficiency in academic and technical skills, and is showing leadership potential in the class.

Other Award CRITERIA:

Community builder: The community builder award is for a student who works to help the climate and culture in the classroom. This student is helpful and kind towards others and works to keep everyone going in the right direction.

Highly skilled: This student shows exemplary skills within their program. They are well on their way to mastering the skills needed to be successful in the future.

Outstanding industry performer: This student is the model for what industry looks and performs like.

Passion for learning: This student shows up excited to learn and take part in RTCC. They take pride and ownership in their learning and continually work to be the best version of themselves.

RTCC HONOR ROLL

Student accomplishment will also be acknowledged quarterly via the RTCC Honor Roll. In order to achieve High Honors, students must earn a grade of 93 or above or EP in all RUHS courses, RTCC classes and programs. Students who earn a grade of 86 or above or SP in all RUHS courses, RTCC classes and programs will achieve Honor status.

Please refer to Attendance procedures - students must submit valid documentation of an absence within five (5) school days of the absence in order for the absence to be considered excused.

CAREER & TECHNICAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS (CTSOs)

All students are strongly encouraged and assisted to participate in student leadership organizations at the local, state, and national level. These organizations are an important part of RTCC and serve to enhance a student's education, leadership skills, and personal growth. Visit the Vermont CTSO Website to learn more <http://www.vtctso.com/>.

DECA – is an Association of Marketing Students. The mission of DECA is to enhance students' education in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship. DECA helps students develop skills and competence for marketing careers, build self-esteem, experience leadership and practice community service.

FFA – is an Association of Agricultural Education students. The mission of FFA is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

SkillsUSA - is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA helps each student excel. SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including health occupations.

FBLA- is the largest and oldest business student organization in the world. Our main mission is to promote and ensure the values and rewards of joining and participating in Future Business Leaders of America.

STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

RTCC offers student leaders the opportunity to be an ambassador for their program and RTCC by leading student led activities and being an integral part of PR and recruitment for RTCC. Student ambassadors help plan and operate quarterly awards assemblies.

HALLWAYS, PUBLIC SPACES, PARKING LOTS AND BATHROOMS

RTCC does not require students to use passes throughout the building. The intent of this action is to relay our expectations for the maturity and professionalism of our students. Students must, however, sign in and out of classes with the approval of their instructor. Students who need a quiet area to work, with instructor and administration approval can work in the Academic Center, Conference Room, but not hallways. Bathrooms are for bathroom use only and not hanging out or using E-Cigarettes. Should this privilege be abused, the administration reserves the right to reinstate the use of passes for some or all students.

When entering a program please present yourself and the reason for your visit to the program instructor before engaging with any other student or conducting any business.

Hall passes are necessary to travel to the Randolph Union High School at times other than for usual classes, and to go/from the RUHS Media Center and nurse's office.

Students must sign in at the main office before leaving and upon re-entering the building.

FACILITIES

Everyone, especially the custodial staff, works hard to maintain the general appearance of the school. Consequently, it is extremely important that all students undertake the responsibility of keeping the facilities neat, clean, and in good condition. General points to keep in mind are:

1. All notices or posters must be approved by the administration prior to display. Never attach a notice or poster to a painted surface with scotch tape, putty tape, etc.
2. Footwear should be such that it will not mar the floors and/or be considered a safety hazard.
3. Students found defacing or destroying school property will be expected to pay for repair or replacement of items damaged, and may be suspended.
4. Teachers and custodians only are authorized to operate thermostats, open and close windows, draw drapes, and use fire extinguishers (except in the case of an emergency).
5. Please do not litter.

DRIVING/PARKING PERMIT & PERMISSION TO RIDE WITH STUDENTS DRIVERS

RTCC is able to maintain approximately 50 parking spaces for students. Therefore it is not possible for all students to park on campus. The only way to ensure fair and equitable distribution of parking spaces is to make them available to students based on an absolute need to drive and park at RTCC.

RTCC Parking permit applications are available in the RTCC main office. Parking permission requires a reason deemed valid by the RTCC administration as well as parental approval to drive to/from school and to park vehicles at school.

Once granted, this privilege may be revoked for violations of the school's parking regulations or other infractions of school rules/regulations (Revving the engine, squealing out of the parking lot or away from RTCC, excessive speed limits on the RTCC grounds or leaving the school by the Elementary School, tapping, bumping or hitting another student's vehicle, inappropriate stickers or language on the vehicle, and any other infraction). **Students will receive a warning the first time and the second time will lose driving privileges for 5 school days. A third infraction will be loss of parking privileges.**

RUHS students will be accommodated as long as there is adequate space. If space is not available, you will need to park at RUHS.

For students to ride with other student drivers both a Parking Permit (driver) and a Permission to Ride Form (passenger) must be completed with parent/guardian signatures.

PHONE USE

RTCC telephones are to be used for legitimate educational reasons. Cell phone use is prohibited during any class time (technical or academic). Teachers & Staff have the right to collect cell phones at the beginning of the day or class and return them at lunch or when school ends. RTCC reserves the right to collect a cell phone in the main office and hold it until the end of the day or until a parent/guardian can pick it up. Students who cannot follow our policy may be dismissed from RTCC.

Families should plan to contact the Main Office to get messages to students or for students to have phone access before school, mid day, and after school. Please plan accordingly.

- Photographing or videotaping students and staff without permission will not be tolerated.
- RTCC is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

COMPUTER NETWORK USE GUIDELINES

This is the text of an agreement that students must sign to access the computer network:

RTCC's goal in providing computer network access is to support the OSSD Mission Statement: Students have the knowledge, skills and tools to be prepared for the next stage of their lives, which justify the resources invested by the community. We endorse the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, which discourages censorship and promotes collections of varied views.

We expect that students and staff who use the RTCC computer network will do so in a way that is consistent with, and related to, the educational mission of the school community.

1. No person shall deliberately damage school computers or software. This includes vandalism, "hacking", wasting resources, spreading computer viruses, attempting to by-pass Internet filters and **clearing Internet history**.
2. No person shall deliberately access educationally inappropriate materials or show others how to do so. This includes, but is not limited to, obscene and pornographic materials, sites promoting hate groups or violence, the use of illegal or controlled substances, or dangerous materials (such as bombs or weapons).
3. All persons shall respect and uphold copyright laws regarding copies of software, text, graphics, audio files, video files, and will not plagiarize works they find on the OSSD network or on the Internet.
4. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
5. No person shall participate in hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors, including, but not limited to profanity, obscenity, bigotry, 'flaming' and cyberbullying. Cyberbullying: The use of information and communication technology to bully, embarrass, threaten or harass another. It also includes the use of information and communication technology to engage in conduct or behavior that is derogatory, defamatory, degrading, illegal and/or abusive.
6. Use of another user's device or login password, or allowing another user to use one's device or login password, is prohibited.
7. Social networking sites, such as Snapchat and Facebook, and the use of personal web-based email, such as Gmail, Hotmail, and Yahoo, are prohibited.
8. The following activities are permissible only under teacher directive AND administrative approval: Chat, OSSD Gmail, Weblogs, music or video downloads. All persons shall practice courtesy and respect for the rights of other users.
9. OSSD Gmail is the property of OSSD. Gmail accounts are open to communication outside the OSSD domain for students in grades 9-12. All OSSD Gmail accounts are for educational use only. Any inappropriate or uncomfortable interactions and communication should be printed out and reported to an adult immediately.
10. Streaming music, while working on academics, is permissible based on network capabilities. There may be periods of time when music streaming is not allowed.
11. All communication on the RTCC computer network, **including on a personal device**, can and may be monitored and observed by the system administrator and staff.
12. Users who have questions regarding appropriate use should **ASK** a teacher or the system administrator **BEFORE** accessing materials. Activities not noted in this document should not be assumed to be permissible.
13. **All students will follow the RTCC Chromebook 1-1 Guidelines to ensure safe and effective use of individual Chromebooks.**

The use of the RTCC computer network is a privilege, which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct as outlined herein, as defined by school discipline policy, or as determined by the staff, system administrator or administration. Should a student commit any violation, or engage in activities judged by system or school administrators to be inappropriate usage, access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may occur and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

NOTE: This Policy is subject to change.

CHROMEBOOK GUIDELINES

By accepting a Chromebook and its use you agree to the responsibilities of maintaining the equipment outlined below.

General Information

The policies, procedures and information within this document apply to all student Chromebook computers used by students enrolled in RTCC including any other device considered by the Administration to come under this policy. Teachers may set additional requirements for use in their classroom.

Receiving the Chromebook

Parents/Guardians and students must review the RTCC Computer Network Acceptable Use Agreement and RTCC Chromebook 1-1 Guidelines before the Chromebook can be issued to the student. This Agreement summarizes rights and responsibilities with respect to the Chromebook.

Ownership of the Chromebook

A Chromebook and charger will be distributed to each student for use during the school day or at home while enrolled in RTCC. The Chromebook is school property. Students shall be financially responsible for safekeeping and maintenance of the Chromebook. **If the Chromebook is damaged or destroyed, the parents/students shall be financially responsible for its repair or replacement.** Use of the Chromebook at school or at home shall be subject to all applicable District policies, rules and procedures, including but not necessarily limited to RTCC's Computer Network Acceptable Use Agreement.

Care of the Chromebook

Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of the Chromebook. In that regard, students should follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe handling, transportation, storage, cleaning, and maintenance. The District is not responsible for any theft, loss, or other damage of any type to the Chromebook.

The following are additional general precautions:

- Avoid food or drink next to Chromebooks.
- Cords, cables, and removable storage devices must be inserted carefully into Chromebooks.
- Chromebooks should not be used with the power cord plugged in when the cord may be a tripping hazard.
- Chromebooks can be decorated with removable, school-appropriate stickers. Writing or drawing on the Chromebook is not allowed.
- Avoid placing heavy objects on top of Chromebooks (even inside a backpack)

Carrying Chromebooks

- Always transport the Chromebook with care in a protective case.
- Carry Chromebooks with the lids closed. Never lift Chromebooks by the screen.

Screen Care

The Chromebook screen can be damaged if subjected to heavy objects, rough treatment, some cleaning solvents, and other liquids. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure.

- Avoid putting pressure on the top of a Chromebook when it is closed.
- Do not store a Chromebook with the screen open.
- Do not place anything in the protective case that will press against the cover.
- Make sure there is nothing on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. paper, pens, pencils...)
- Open the screen from the middle rather than the corners.
- Only clean the screen with a soft, dry microfiber cloth or anti-static cloth. Ask for assistance with

cleaning and care.

Using the Chromebook at School

The Chromebook is intended for use in all classes, subject to direction and approval from the classroom teacher. In addition to teacher expectations for Chromebook use, school messages, announcements, calendars, and schedules may be accessed using the Chromebook. Students are responsible for bringing their Chromebooks fully charged to school each day. They should bring them to all classes unless specifically instructed not to do so by their teacher.

Using the Chromebook at Home

Once students have demonstrated an understanding of the proper care and handling of the Chromebook, they will be able to bring their Chromebooks home. It is expected that students will use Chromebooks at home for schoolwork and will follow the district policies, procedures and acceptable use agreement guidelines related to computer use.

Chromebook Undergoing Repair / Replacement

If the Chromebook is damaged or destroyed, the parents/students shall be financially responsible for its repair or replacement. The District does not guarantee that a loaner Chromebook will be available, however, we will do our best to support the students' electronic needs. The following are estimated costs of parts and replacements. Prices of full replacements will decrease according to the depreciation in value after every 6 months of use.

- Chromebook Replacement- \$299.00
- New Chromebook Screen - \$299.00
- Chromebook touchpad - \$16.85
- Replacement Keyboard - \$52.00
- Hinge Kit- 41.00
- Chromebook power cord- \$32.00
- Sleeve / Case - \$16.00

Charging the Chromebook Battery

Students must make sure their Chromebooks are charged so they are ready to use each day.

Students should charge their Chromebooks at home every evening. While we will do our best to support students' electronic needs, students who forget to bring or charge their Chromebooks will not have access to loaner devices.

Wallpaper/Background photos

Inappropriate media may not be used as a wallpaper or background photo. Inappropriate media includes, but is not limited to the following: the presence of guns, weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drug, gang-related symbols, or pictures. If inappropriate media is used, (see RTCC/RUHS Student handbook for content information) it will result in disciplinary action.

Sound and Music Programs

As a courtesy, sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. Music is allowed on the Chromebook and can be used at the discretion of the teacher.

Managing Files and Saving to the Chromebook/OSSD Network Resources

It is recommended that students also save documents to their OSSD/RUHS Google Drive account. In addition, students are able to email documents to themselves and/or their teachers.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure or accidental

deletion.

Network Connectivity

OSSD/RTCC makes no guarantee that its network will be up and running 100% of the time. In the rare case that the network is down, the District will not be responsible for lost or missing data.

Students Who Bring Their Own Device

Students may choose to use their own device with approval from a parent or guardian. The OSSD is not responsible for loss, theft, and/or damage if a student chooses to use their own electronic device. Students are still responsible for following the RTCC Computer Network guidelines and understand while a student uses the SD network, OSSD has the right to view the content of the device. OSSD staff reserve the right to ask a student to use their assigned OSSD equipment if the BYOD becomes disruptive to instruction/learning. Students forgo all privacy while on the SD network.

Software Originally Installed on Chromebooks

The software/apps/extensions installed by OSSD/RTCC must remain on the Chromebook in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. Any District-provided software/apps may not be tampered with, altered, deleted, or otherwise removed without the express written permission of the District.

Additional Software

Students may not download apps to the Chromebooks unless it is part of the OSSD/RTCC Collection on the Chrome Store.

Inspection

Chromebooks are the property of RTCC and as such may be collected and inspected at any time and by any OSSD/RTCC staff member.

Procedure for Re-loading Software

If technical difficulties occur, illegal software has been installed, “jailbreaking” (to modify a smartphone or other electronic device, to remove restrictions imposed by the manufacturer or operator, e.g. to allow the installation of unauthorized software) has been attempted, or apps are discovered that are inappropriate under District policies, rules, and procedures, the District reserves the right to restore the Chromebook to its factory state, with any software or apps installed by the manufacturer and the District. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any software or documents deleted due to a re-format. Violations will be addressed as outlined in this handbook, including possible disciplinary action.

Software Upgrades

Upgrade versions of licensed software/apps are available from time to time. The District may require students to update their Chromebooks as it deems appropriate. Students shall allow such updates to be installed when requested by the District.

Statement of Responsibility for Appropriate Use of the Chromebook

The use of OSSD/RUHS’ technology equipment and network is a privilege, not a right.

The privilege of using the technology resources provided by RTCC is not transferable by a student to people or groups outside the district and terminates when a student is no longer enrolled in RTCC. This agreement is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of the Chromebook. If a student violates any of the provisions in this agreement, or any District policies, rules, and procedures regarding the acceptable use of technology, privileges may be terminated, access to the District’s technology resources may be denied, and the appropriate disciplinary

action shall be applied.

In conjunction with the RTCC Computer Network Acceptable Use Agreement, **students are not allowed to use other student's Chromebooks, and there is no sharing of accounts and /or equipment.** The RTCC discipline policy shall be applied to student infractions.

The act of "jailbreaking" the Chromebook (including accessing Developer Mode) voids any warranty and is in strict violation of appropriate use of the Chromebook, the guidelines in this agreement, and District policies, rules, and procedures. Chromebook privileges will be terminated and appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied if a student engages in such misconduct.

Use appropriate language in all communications and refrain from use of profanity, obscenity and offensive or inflammatory speech. **Cyberbullying, including personal attacks or threats toward anyone made while using either the district owned or personally owned technology, is to be reported to responsible school personnel.**

Student users should assume that **none of their data is private or confidential.** Any communication or data on the network may be subject to review by network or school administration and may be confiscated at any time, by any OSSD/RUHS Staff member.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Review the RTCC Computer Network Acceptable Use Agreement. Talk with their student about values and the standards that their student should follow on the use of the Internet, just as they would on the use of all media information sources such as television, telephones, movies, and radio. Support them in digital citizenship.

School Responsibilities

Provide Internet and email access. Provide staff with professional development to guide, prepare, and inspire students in their pursuit of academic success. Support and instruct students on the use of information technology and digital citizenship.

Student Responsibilities

Comply with general school rules concerning behavior and communication that apply to the Chromebook as outlined in this document, the RTCC Chromebook 1-1 Guidelines, as well as all District policies, rules, and procedures governing the use of technology. Use all technology resources in an appropriate manner so as not to damage school equipment. This damage includes, but is not limited to, "jailbreaking" the Chromebook or service interruptions caused by the student's own negligence, errors, or omissions. Help RTCC protect the computer network and devices by contacting a teacher or technology staff about any security problems that may be encountered. Monitor all activity on their account(s) and keep passwords private and uncompromised (except for disclosure to school officials as required or allowed by District policies, rules and procedures). Use computers/devices in a responsible and ethical manner and follow guidelines for digital citizenship. Always put the Chromebook to sleep after use and secure the Chromebook to protect all work and information. If a student should receive email or other electronic message(s) containing inappropriate or abusive language or if the subject matter is questionable, the student should turn it in to a teacher or director or show the teacher or director the Chromebook.

Chromebook Care

Students will be held responsible for maintaining their individual Chromebooks and keeping them in good working order. Chromebooks can be decorated with removable, school-appropriate stickers. Writing or drawing on the Chromebook or charger is not allowed. Any damage to Chromebooks must be reported immediately. A student with his/her Chromebook in need of repair may be issued a loaner Chromebook.

from the Technology Department for temporary use at school as long as such loaner devices are available. Chromebooks that are damaged, lost or stolen must be reported immediately to the technology department.

EXPECTATIONS FOR DRESS AT RTCC

RTCC expects students to dress in a manner that prepares them for careers in their program areas. This may be different for each program, but we want students to learn to be professionals in their respective fields. To that end, student dress expectations are as follows:

RTCC expects students to dress in a manner that prepares them for the world of work and academia beyond RTCC. To that end, student dress expectations are as follows:

Dress for Safety

1. No student shall be allowed to wear clothing that poses a safety risk. This includes exceptionally sharp, loose articles or potentially dangerous jewelry.
2. Students may be asked to wear specific items if they are going on a field trip or working in a space that has specific safety and health requirements and should comply with those reasonable requests.

Dress for Professionalism and Respect

1. Wear clothing that is school or career ready. Refrain from wearing overly revealing clothing or clothing that was intended for a different purpose.
2. No student shall be allowed to wear clothing that implicitly or explicitly:
 - a. includes reference to illegal drugs, nicotine, or alcohol;
 - b. includes reference to use of weapons;
 - c. denotes comments of a sexual nature;
 - d. includes vulgar language; and/or includes language, images or messaging that are offensive, potentially disruptive, or disruptive to the learning environment

If a student arrives at RTCC wearing an item that is not allowed, s/he/they will be asked to cover or otherwise adapt it, change the clothing, or be directed to the administration for remedy. Refusal to comply with reasonable requests may result in disciplinary action.

ENERGY DRINK POLICY

Energy drinks have become more common in the past few years at RTCC. Starting this school year, they will not be allowed in our schools. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that adolescents under 12 years old should consume no caffeine at all. 100mg of caffeine per day for ages 12-18 is considered a safe dose.

Common side effects of a toxic level of caffeine include:

- Nervousness, jitteriness, heart palpitations, increased blood pressure, and chest pain.
- Increased incidence of dehydration from caffeine consumption.

Please contact Felicia Allard or Stephanie Leonard, APRN with any questions.

STUDENT CONDUCT

- A. Students are expected to respect all people, their feelings, their possessions, equipment, and their

- right to an education.
- B. The main purpose of RTCC is to educate. Students are expected to maintain behavior that supports a positive learning environment.

Behavior that interferes with or causes a negative learning environment will be met with corrective/disciplinary action. The primary purpose of disciplinary action is to teach and guide behavior and to ensure that a positive learning environment is available to the RTCC school community. It is our goal to teach and model respectful, positive ways to interact and problem solve while maintaining the integrity of our learning environment.

DISMISSING A STUDENT FROM RTCC

When a student is required to be sent back to their sending school RTCC follows this suggested outline.

Reasons why a student would be dismissed from RTCC

- Attendance
- Lack of Engagement in program - determined by RTCC MTSS Team
- Safety Concerns
- Failing course work and not making academic progress
- Behavior concerns, maturity, multiple discipline reports
- Unable to follow RTCC Expectations outlined in this Student Handbook- fighting, drug use at school, multiple suspensions, repeated disrespectful behavior towards others.
- Failure to meet adequate progress during the first 30 day probation period

BEHAVIOR INFRACTIONS

Each infraction will be handled on a case by case basis, but the framework we will follow is:

Drug / Alcohol Use (per district policy)

In the case of underage possession on campus, police will be notified, a ticket/fine may be issued, and the student will be suspended per usual suspension procedures.

- 1st offense - 5 day out of school suspension (and referral to SAP for 2 sessions)
- 2nd offense - Dismissal from RTCC

Drug/ Alcohol Sale or Distribution (per district policy)

In the case of underage possession on campus, police will be notified, a ticket/fine may be issued, and the student will be suspended per usual suspension procedures.

- 1st offense - Immediate 10 Day Suspension and dismissal from RTCC

Weapons

- Firearms- Immediate OSS and Expulsion Hearing with OSSD Board
- Knives/sharps -
 - 1st offense - Immediate confiscation and warning
 - 2nd offense - Confiscation and 2 day ISS
 - 3rd offense - Confiscation and dismissal from RTCC

Tobacco infraction

In the case of underage possession on campus, police will be notified, a ticket/fine may be issued, and the student will be suspended per usual suspension procedures.

- 1st offense - Warning and ISS (and referral to SAP for 2 sessions)
- 2nd offense - 2 day OSS (and required to attend cessation course)
- 3rd offense - Dismissal from RTCC
-

Safety infraction

- 1st offense - Warning
- 2nd offense - 2 day ISS (and mandatory OSHA training)
- 3rd offense - Dismissal from RTCC

Fighting - physical

- 1st offense - 2 day out of school suspension
- 2nd offense - Dismissal from RTCC

Profanity/ Offensive Language

- 1st offense - Warning
- 2nd offense - 1 day ISS
- 3rd offense - 1 day OSS
- 4th offense - 2 day OSS
- 5th offense - Dismissal from RTCC

Process for dismissal other than noted above

- Instructors will complete the weekly professional rubric and note any concerns. Instructors will call home to discuss concerns.
- If behavior hasn't improved, the instructor will document using the student concern form.
- Parents/ guardians will receive a call from the Dean of Students to talk about the concern. A letter would go home to families, parents documenting infractions (*copies go to student file, case managers, guidance and partner school principal*)
- Student would be discussed at MTSS to create a plan to correct behavior or symptoms.
- A letter would go home to families, parents documenting infractions and outline interventions put in place. (*copies go to student file, case managers, guidance and partner school principal*)
- Phone call home by teacher to update progress.
- If progress continues to decline the student, parents/ guardians, Director and/or Dean of Students, LEA of the sending school, and student services coordinator will meet to discuss next steps.
 - If dismissal is deemed necessary at this meeting, a plan will be made for the student transition back to the partner school.

GENERAL UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

Following is a list of behaviors that form the general guidelines of behavior that is not acceptable at RTCC or school-related activities and will warrant corrective/disciplinary action (suspension procedures will be followed where appropriate):

1. Use of obscene language or profanity
2. Bullying, harassment, and/or hazing will not be tolerated (please see specific sections of this manual for definitions and procedures).
3. Leaving school grounds without express permission (RTCC is not an “open” campus)
4. Plagiarism is a violation of academic honesty and will be treated as a major disciplinary violation.
5. The possession and/or use of lighters and matches on school property.
6. The possession and/or use of knives on school property. (*Multi-tools (e.g. Leatherman) are not to be carried on school grounds.*) The OSSD weapons policy will be followed.
7. Use of personal electronic devices during any class time (technical or academic).
8. Parking on school property without a valid RTCC permit. (Cars may be towed at the owner’s expense)
9. Public display of affection. (*professional environment*)
10. Cutting, skipping or refusal to go to class.
11. Behaviors that are disrespectful or detract from student learning.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE PROCEDURES

1. Desks, lockers, textbooks and other materials or supplies loaned by the school to students remain the property of the school, and may be opened by school employees for cleaning, maintenance, or emergencies. When prohibited items are found in the course of routine cleaning or maintenance, or in the case of an emergency, they will be confiscated and a report will be made to the administration who will determine whether further investigation is warranted.

2. School property (as defined in #1) may also be searched by school employees upon reasonable suspicion on the part of the RU Administration, RTCC Director, professional staff member, or Superintendent that a law or school policy is being violated. Searches of school property in the possession of students will not extend to areas or items not reasonably calculated to aid in the enforcement of specific policies or laws.

3. Searches of students’ persons or vehicles will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a breach of school policy or law is being committed. Search of a student’s person will be conducted by a school employee of the same sex, and whenever possible, in the presence of another school employee.

4. School employees are not the agents of law enforcement officials. Search and/or seizure by law enforcement officials on school property may occur when a warrant or other legal basis exists authorizing such search and/or seizure, and when the requirements of the board’s policy on interrogation by law enforcement officers has been complied with.

5. Copies of this policy will be distributed to students through the student handbook given to students at the beginning of each school year or when they enrolled.

6. If a search under this policy results in discovering a violation of school policy or state law, the appropriate RU/RTCC policy will be followed and law enforcement agencies notified.

SOCIAL MEDIA

User-generated content allows individuals to express their identity and opinions, influence conversations, have a voice with others around the globe, and share general information. This platform for communication allows for the creation of a unique personal brand via expressions of self, sharing of external content, posting messages, receiving instantaneous real-time updates, following others' posts/opinions, private messaging, & sharing photo/video 'stories' or general experiences.

Social media, when used responsibly, is a powerfully positive tool. It can be utilized to promote a personal/organizational brand, for networking, for maintaining online photo albums, as a screening process for employers/colleges/future coaches, and to promote events.

Social media platforms include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Kik, Periscope, TikTok, etc.. Some of these platforms predicate their appeal based on user-anonymity and disappearing messages, but beware – IP addresses are still unique and have been provided to persons of authority such as the police, school administration, and employers in the recent past.

It is not uncommon to trace 'disappearing stories' like those found on Snapchat. It is also not uncommon for high school students pursuing acceptance to post-secondary institutions, searching the job market and/or being recruited to play sports at the collegiate level to have their social media accounts reviewed during the application/recruitment process.

Students' right to freedom of speech, expression and association including the use of online social networks is inherent. As mentioned previously, being a student at RTCC is a privilege & not a right. The expectation for students at RTCC is to portray themselves, their classmates and the school as a whole in a positive manner at all times. All online postings must be consistent with federal and Vermont State laws and are expected to comply with the social media guidelines listed below:

Social Media Guidelines

When using social media or social networking sites, keep in mind the following to guide your online decisions:

- Everything you post becomes potentially public information – including text, photos, comments, etc. This is largely out of your control from the moment you post (even if posting on a private page, if you have heightened security preferences, if you're using 'disappearing content' sites, etc.)
- Keep it clean. Think twice before posting. Social media, regardless of privacy settings, is not necessarily private – it can and will be accessed!
- Use caution when connecting with others online (friending, following, liking, etc.). Individuals have been known to take advantage of student athlete relationships and/or to gain sensitive information about you or your teammates.
- Avoid sharing information about your current location or your plans to be in certain locations in the near future.
- Others are always watching. Employers and college admissions offices review social networking activity often as part of their evaluation of applicants. Carefully consider how you wish to be perceived by others before they misinterpret who you are based on your online presence.

RTCC will not tolerate under any circumstances disrespectful comments or highly-negative social media behavior such as but not limited to:

- Directly derogatory or defamatory language;
- Comments that create a serious danger to the safety of another person or which could be a credible threat of physical or emotional injury to others or which can be considered cyberbullying;
- Implied or referenced communication about emotional or physical harm, derogatory and/or lewd

language, or inappropriate communication as deemed by school administration. This applies to communication about oneself, other students, athletes, teachers, coaches, or other school officials;

- Comments, videos, photos, etc. that depict or describe or imply unlawful assault, abuse, hazing, harassment or discrimination as well as the use of, sale of, or possession of drugs/alcohol/tobacco substances.

Students who have information about another student, instructor or other RTCC staff/ faculty member that may pose risk to others or which are in direct violation of the above guidelines are encouraged to alert a trusted adult or the Director or other school official immediately.

Violations of the above social media guidelines as evident through online content is subject to investigation and potential penalties by school administration. Penalties may include but are not limited to an initial notice to remove the post/photo/video; suspension from the center, or immediate removal from the center.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

Suspension refers to the temporary removal of a student from his or her program for a length of time determined by school policy and procedure and is processed at the discretion of the administration.

Transfer refers to the removal of a student from RTCC for the remainder of the school year back to their partner school. Students removed from RTCC will be returned to their partner school for proper placement decisions.

Prior to imposition of any disciplinary measures, the administration will make every effort to inform involved students and their parents. Most often this will be via the telephone and/or personal meeting. Students and parents will be informed of violations of RTCC rules and to discuss the situation. The administration will act in accordance with the student “due process” procedures and work to include parents in the resolution of the problem.

SUSPENSION

Suspension from school will be the usual and customary response by the administration for, but not limited to, the following behaviors exhibited during school or at school functions:

- a. bullying, harassing behavior, threatening or hazing, electronic or in person;
- b. insubordination to a staff member (disrespect);
- c. fighting; or unwanted physical altercations
- d. vandalism of the school building or school property; theft, misuse or destruction of school property or another student’s property (may also require restitution);
- e. tobacco and tobacco related products (including vape machines & juul pods) possession or use in the school building, during the school day or on school grounds;
- f. sale, possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including over-the-counter medication used inappropriately);
- g. possession of weapons, knife, or knife-like objects;
- h. plagiarism (copying from others, handing in work that is not your own);
- i. vulgar or abusive language, repeated swearing;
- j. infractions of the computer network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy;
- k. safety infractions in program areas;
- l. infractions of RTCC dress expectations;
- m. leaving a program, class (skipping or cutting), or school grounds without permission;
- n. Cutting class (including 1st or 2nd or 7th period) and arriving in time for Technical Classes
- o. actions that cause unrest or unreasonable disruption of normal school routine.
- p. Inappropriate use of cell phones on school property, using the school network, and that is

- published on the internet.
- q. Refusing to put cell phone away

LENGTH OF SUSPENSION

1. First suspension will be a period of 1-3 days and will be considered a short-term suspension.
2. Second suspension may be for a period of 3 days or more. Parent(s) and the student may be required to hold a re-entry meeting with the MTSS Team before the student returns to the program.
3. A single 10-day suspension will be considered a long-term suspension.
4. The administration may initiate a transfer from RTCC to the students' sending school in cases of repeated suspensions, long-term suspension(s), or behavior that puts student or school safety at risk or disrupts the well-being of the school community. Students and their parents/guardians may appeal this decision to the OSSD Superintendent of Schools. If students and their parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools, they may appeal to the RTCC School Board. The RTCC School Board, and/or in some instances, the sending school Board, will meet within 10 school days of a formal, written request.
5. RTCC honors a reciprocal policy of suspension with each home/sending school.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

RTCC assures that appropriate procedures will be followed related to discipline of students with disabilities, including students who are eligible for special education and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

In all situations, RTCC administration will make a good-faith effort to determine if any relationship exists between the child's disability and the behavior that is subject to disciplinary action. Contact with special education staff at RTCC and/or the student's home school will be initiated. If such a relationship exists, steps will be taken to develop accommodations or strategies to resolve the situation.

TRANSPORTATION

The student's partner school is responsible for transportation to RTCC. The daily transportation of students is a privilege accorded by the OSSD Policy in compliance with State requirements. RTCC will work with and follow OSSD school bus policy in conjunction with sending school bus policy.

Students who request to ride a different bus than their own home school bus- must have the sending school principal's permission to ride, and RTCC must have that communication. We will not allow students to ride different buses without this.

To provide maximum safety, each student riding a school bus shall conform to the rules set forth in the Student Code of Conduct to allow the bus driver to focus his/her attention on driving the bus.

To provide maximum safety, each eligible student riding a school bus shall conform to the rules listed below:

- Parents shall have their children at the school bus loading point prior to the arrival of the bus.
- Bus drivers are not required to wait for a tardy child.
- Students shall get on the bus in an orderly manner.
- Students shall take a seat immediately and remain seated.

- Aisles shall be kept clear.
- Students shall talk in low voices, using proper language.
- Students shall keep hands, head, and all other body parts inside the bus.
- Students shall not eat or drink on the bus.
- Students shall not be destructive.
- Students shall keep the bus clean.
- Students may be assigned seats.
- There shall be no fighting and fooling around on the bus or while waiting for the bus.

Students will not be picked up or discharged at any place other than their regular stop without written parental consent and then it is determined by the Principal or Transportation Coordinator that the practice will not create a hardship on the transportation system.

It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to inform the school when the student will be discharged at an alternate stop or when he or she rides a different bus. If it is on a different bus, parents should contact the Transportation Supervisor, Danny Ballavance, at 728-9276 to determine if there is room.

Disciplinary Procedures:

In the event students fail to comply with the rules listed above, a four-step procedure will normally be followed. However, for serious offenses, such as vandalism, fighting, smoking, insubordination, use of drugs or other serious violations, the principal and/or school designee can go directly to step 3 or 4 of the procedures.

1. Upon receipt of a written report from the bus driver, the principal and/or school designee will discuss the incident with both the driver and the student involved.
2. The principal and/or designee will warn the student and notify his/her parents in writing that a second report will mean a bus suspension for up to five days. Upon issuance of a second report, the student will be suspended from riding the bus for up to five days.
3. Should a third report be issued, the principal and/or school designee will suspend the bus riding privilege for up to 20 days.
4. Should a fourth report be issued, the principal and/or school designee will suspend the bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school year.

It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to ensure the safety and well being of their child until she/he enters the school bus each morning and to again resume that responsibility when the child leaves the bus at his/her bus stop after school each day. (see Transportation policy #9201)

If you have a complaint about the bus, please contact your sending school principal first, and please let Director Felicia Allard (802-728-9595 X 403) know of the issue.

SUBSTANCE USE, SALE OR POSSESSION

It is the policy of the OSSD that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give, or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal or prescription drug, regulated substance, alcohol, or any device associated with these substances on any school property or at any school-sponsored activity.

Description of Prohibited Activities

Prohibited activities on school premises or during school-sanctioned events include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. **The use of substances.** Use means personal use of substances, and/or knowingly or willingly assisting another person in using, distributing, or possessing substances, and/or knowingly in the presence of their use.
2. **The possession of substances.** Possession means that through his or her action or inaction a student has possession, custody, or control of a substance.
3. **The distribution of substances.** Distribution means selling, attempting to sell, purchasing, attempting to purchase, or giving away substances.
4. **The possession of paraphernalia** (including but not limited to- lighters, vape machines, juul's, pipes, etc) Possession of paraphernalia means that through his or her action or inaction a student has possession, custody, or control of any device specifically or reasonably associated with the use of any substance.
5. **Being under the influence of any substance.**
6. **The use of prescription drugs when the instructions of the prescribing physician are not followed as prescribed, or administered by the school nurse.**

OSSD ALCOHOL & DRUGS POLICY

It is the policy of this District that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug, regulated substance, or alcohol on any school property, or at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school. Please refer to previous sections describing consequences for substance abuse, sale and related activities.

OSSD TOBACCO POLICY

It is the policy of this District to prohibit the use of tobacco on school grounds in accordance with state law. This ban extends to any student, employee or visitor to the school, and applies at all times, whether or not school is in session. Students are, furthermore, prohibited from possessing tobacco products (including vape machines, juul pods or similar products) at all times while under the supervision of school staff or at school sponsored activities.

Additionally, Title 07, VSA 1005(a) states "it is unlawful for a person under the age of 21 years to possess tobacco products."

In the case of underage possession on campus, police will be notified, a ticket/fine may be issued, and the student will be suspended per usual suspension procedures. Students who are of age to purchase and possess tobacco products will face suspension procedures only.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROCEDURES SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

A student who is found in possession of prohibited substances (e.g. marijuana or other illegal drugs) and those abusing legally controlled substances (e.g. alcohol, prescription drugs), or other substances (e.g. petrochemicals, over the counter medications, look-alike substances) will follow the

procedures outlined below:

1. If the student appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the school nurse and/or SAP counselor will be asked to observe the student and report findings to the administration.
2. If the student is found to be under the influence or in possession of a substance parents and police will be notified.
3. A five (5) day suspension will be initiated.
4. Students will write a plan regarding his/her treatment (with assistance provided if necessary/requested) and meet with an SAP counselor or other counselor for treatment including referral to appropriate services if needed. All costs for referrals to outside agencies for assessment and treatment will be assumed by the student and the parents/guardians.
5. A second offense, or the combination of a first offense with a history of other disciplinary actions, may result in the student being transferred to their sending school.

A student who is found to be involved in the sale or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or substances will follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Notification of police and parents/guardians.
2. Automatic suspension for ten school days.
3. The usual and customary action related to this infraction will be the initiation of a transfer to the student's sending school.
4. See "Length of Suspension" in this handbook.

Randolph Technical Career Center recognizes that substance *addiction* constitutes a disability. In keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act, RTCC will provide reasonable accommodations, as necessary, to a student who is participating in a treatment program for substance addiction.

The Orange Southwest Union District School Board adopts policies to meet state and federal legal requirements as well as specific local needs. Many policies are designed to ensure a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. Excerpts from required policies are included below. Full policy texts, as well as additional district policies, can be obtained by contacting the school office or viewed online at <http://orangesouthwest.org/interior.php/pid/3/sid/12>

OSSD POLICY: PROHIBITION OF FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

Personnel 4003/Students 6003

Section I: Firearms

It is the policy of the district to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law requiring school districts to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring firearms to or

possess firearms at school. This includes students who use 3D printer technology to download or make/create weapons. It is further the intent of the district to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “firearm,” “destructive device,” “school” and “expelled” shall have the following meanings:

- **“Firearm”** means a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code and 13 V.S.A. §4016, including: (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. (E) Downloading directions and or using school technology to make a weapon. A firearm that is for activities approved and authorized by the School District shall not be considered a firearm for the purposes of this policy if the appropriate safeguards to ensure safety as adopted by the District are followed.
- **“Destructive Device”** means
 - (A) any explosive, incendiary or poison gas, including a
 - (i) bomb,
 - (ii) grenade,
 - (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,
 - (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce,
 - (v) mine, or
 - (vi) similar device.
 - (B) any type of weapon that will, or that may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
 - (C) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in subparagraph (A) or (B) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
- **“School”** means any setting which is under the control and supervision of the School District for the purposes of student activities approved and authorized by the School District. It includes school grounds, facilities, and school-sponsored events whether held on or off of school grounds and vehicles used to transport students to and from school or school activities.
- **“Expelled”** means. Unless modified by the superintendent pursuant to policy, the termination for at least a calendar year of educational services to a student.

Sanctions

Any student who brings a firearm to school, or who possesses a firearm at school shall be brought by the Superintendent to the School Board for an expulsion hearing.

A student found by the Board after a hearing to have brought a firearm to school shall be expelled for at least one calendar year. However, the Board may modify the expulsion on a case by case basis when it finds circumstances such as, but not limited to:

1. The student was unaware that he or she had brought a firearm to school.
2. The student did not intend to use the firearm to threaten or endanger others.
3. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy expulsion would not serve the best interests of the pupil.

At the discretion of the Board and administration, an expelled student may be afforded limited educational services at a site other than the school during the period of expulsion under this policy.

Policy Implementation

An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law and according to procedure developed by the Superintendent or his or her designee.

The Superintendent shall refer to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who brings a firearm to a school under the control and supervision of the School District. The Superintendent may also report any incident subject to this policy to the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services.

The Superintendent shall annually provide the Commissioner of Education with descriptions of the circumstances surrounding expulsions imposed under this policy, the number of students expelled and the type of firearms involved.

Section II: Weapons

It is the policy of the district to prohibit the possession by students of knives, weapons or dangerous instruments, as defined by administrative rules, at school and shall allow disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for violations of the prohibition against knives, weapons and dangerous instruments. Behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct, will be stated in the student handbook and/or other publications distributed to students and parents/guardians.

Definitions

- **“Knife”** means any instrument that is capable of ready use as a stabbing weapon that may inflict bodily injury.
- **“Weapon”** means a device, instrument, material or substance whether animate or inanimate which when used in the manner it is intended to be used, is known to be capable of producing death or bodily injury.
- **“School”** means any setting which is under the control and supervision of the School District for the purposes of student activities approved and authorized by the School District. It includes:
 - (1) on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the pupil harmful to the welfare of the school or for misconduct;
 - (2) not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated; or
 - (3) not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s equal access to educational programs.

Nothing contained in this section shall prevent a superintendent or principal, subject to subsequent due process procedures, from removing immediately from a school a pupil who poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school, or from expelling a pupil who brings a weapon to school pursuant to section 1166 of this title.

- ***“Expelled”*** means termination of educational services for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer.

Procedures shall be established by the principal for allowing items that fall under any of the definitions of this policy for educational purposes.

OSSD POLICY: PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT & BULLYING OF STUDENTS

I. Purposes

The Orange Southwest Supervisory Union District is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity or incident(s) and/or conduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

It is the policy of the State of Vermont that all Vermont Educational institutions provide safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environments. Harassment, hazing and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated in Vermont Schools. No Vermont student should feel threatened or be discriminated against while enrolled in a Vermont School. 16 VSA SS570.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually,¹ each school shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.²

It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The purpose of this harassment policy is to prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources, or create a hostile learning environment.

The District shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of harassment in accordance with the procedures established by this policy. In cases where harassment is substantiated, the school shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

II. Definitions

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, ***including any incident conducted by electronic means***, based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability ***that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.*** Sec. 35. 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(26)(A) – 2011

Sec. 36. 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(32) is amended to read (2011):

“Bullying” means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

(A) is repeated over time;

(B) is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and

(C)

(i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity; ***or***

(ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s right to access educational programs.

Additionally, the following laws related to Harassment and Bullying were amended during the 2010-2011 school year:

Sec. 37. 16 V.S.A. § 1162 is amended to read:

§ 1162. SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF PUPILS

(a) A superintendent or principal may, pursuant to policies adopted by the school board that are consistent with state board rules, suspend a pupil for up to 10 school days or, with the approval of the board of the school district, expel a pupil for up to the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer, for misconduct:

(1) on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the pupil harmful to the welfare of the school or for misconduct;

(2) not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated; or

(3) not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s equal access to educational programs.

(b) Nothing contained in this section shall prevent a superintendent or principal, subject to subsequent due process procedures, from removing immediately from a school a pupil who poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school, or from expelling a pupil who brings a weapon to school pursuant to section 1166 of this title.

(b)(c) Principals, superintendents, and school boards are authorized and encouraged to provide alternative education services or programs to students during any period of suspension or expulsion authorized under this section.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

(1) Sexual harassment,⁴ which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:

- (i) submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status or progress; or
- (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student

(2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.

(3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

B. **“Complaint”** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.

C. **“Complainant”** means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint with a school employee or a student who is the target of alleged harassment in a report made by another person.

D. **“Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).

E. **“Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school board member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

F. **“Notice”** means a written complaint or oral information that harassment may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the harassment, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred.⁵

G. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.

H. **“School administrator”** means a superintendent, principal/head of school/technical center director or his/her designee.

III. Reporting Student Harassment

A. Student reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.

B. School employee reporting: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute harassment shall immediately report the information to a designated employee. If one of the designated employees is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the other designated employee or the school administrator.

C. Other reporting: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

D. Documentation of the report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a harassment complaint form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses.

E. False Complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the person has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring.

There is also an anonymous form available for reporting at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc3cdjB4VwbN7BGO6AjASSizA5LtydiU4QIgL3fyms1zEHw7A/viewform>

IV. Procedures Following a Report

A. Notification: 6 Upon receipt of a complaint of harassment the designated employee shall immediately inform the school administrator of the complaint. In addition, the designated employee shall immediately provide a copy of this harassment policy to the complainant and accused individual. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be: 1.) promptly notified that a complaint of harassment has been filed and provided with a copy of this policy; 2.) notified if an alternative dispute resolution method will be offered and, if it occurs, of the outcome of any such attempt; and 3.) notified in writing of the results of the complaint investigation. All notification letters shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek waiver of confidentiality rights of the accused in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that harassment or other misconduct occurred.

B. Investigation:⁷ Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after the filing of a complaint with a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the

allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment. When the initial determination concludes that an accused student has engaged in

harassment, the school administrator shall use his or her discretion to decide the appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary

policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies.

All levels of internal review⁸ of the investigator’s initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the District, be completed within 30 calendar days after the review is requested.

C. Action on a substantiated complaint: If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes harassment, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent any recurrence of harassment. Such action may include warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee.

D. Alternative dispute resolution:⁹ At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. The following should be considered before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods: (1) the nature of the accusations, (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual, (3) the agreement of the complainant, and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual. If an alternative dispute resolution is either not appropriate or is unsuccessful, the school administrator shall initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations in accordance with the timelines established in this policy.

E. Appeal: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the District’s discipline policy, applicable statutes, or collective bargaining agreements.

F. Independent Review:¹⁰ A complainant may request an independent review if s/he: 1.) believes that the school did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the school believed the alleged conduct did not constitute possible harassment, 2.) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether harassment occurred, or 3.) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools/head of school. Upon such request, the superintendent/head of school shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f), and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that she/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: 1.) as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and 2.) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Commissioner.

The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies¹¹ that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the District. The District may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

G. Retaliation: It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this anti retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

VIII. Alternative Complaint Process

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491
(617) 289-0111 (voice)
(877) 521-2172 (tdd)
(617) 289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

If you believe you are the victim of harassment or bullying please contact:

Felicia Allard
Director
RTCC

Heather Lawler
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REFERENCES

- 1 See 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).
- 2 See Appendix A. harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.
- 3 Effective July 1, 2007, 1 V.S.A. §144 defines "gender identity" as "an individual's actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual's gender or gender-identity, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth."
- 4 This statutory definition of sexual harassment describes only the "quid pro quo" form of sexual harassment that can occur between an adult and student. However, sexual harassment may also include student to student conduct as well as conduct that creates a hostile environment.
- 5 See 16 V.S.A. §14(c)(3).
- 6 See 16 V.S.A. §14(a).
- 7 See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(E).
- 8 An "internal review" is any procedure provided by the school through policy or practice and is not the same as an "independent review" as described below.
- 9 See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(C).
- 10 See 16 V.S.A. §565(f).
- 11 Such as those identified in Section VIII of this policy.
- 12 See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).
- 13 See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).

ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The increasing use of information technology has fundamentally changed the classroom and workplace. The Internet, Intranets, cellular telephones, fax machines, digital cameras and e-mail have transformed data management and communication. Users utilize this valuable resource in many innovative ways. The Board fully supports the access of these electronic resources by students and staff.

Application: This policy applies to all users who subscribe to services through the OSSD.

Policy: It is the policy of the School District to use electronic resources including the Internet to support and enrich the curriculum. The Board believes that the benefit to students and staff from access to electronic resources far exceeds the disadvantages. Students, staff and community who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and abide by the requirements of this policy and District procedures will be allowed to access District electronic resources.

Each school principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, is responsible for establishing procedures governing use of electronic resources consistent with the provisions of this policy. Procedures will include use by faculty and staff, and community if applicable, as well as students. The guidelines and procedures may be periodically reviewed and revised. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent or designee to ensure that any local Acceptable Use Procedures do not contravene this policy.

Access to electronic resources is a privilege and users who are found in non-compliance of this policy and the procedures developed in accordance with this policy will be subject to a range of disciplinary actions, up to and including discontinuation of services, referral to local, state or federal law enforcement officials, dismissal from employment, and/or suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Any information sent using an OSSD device, or any information sent over the OSSD network using an OSSD device or on a personally-owned device, should not be considered private. It may be considered public record and subject to discovery and release as part of a legal proceeding or public records request.

In considering appropriate disciplinary action the following may be taken into consideration:

1. The user was unaware that he or she had inappropriately used electronic resources.
2. The user did not intend to inappropriately use electronic resources.
3. The user is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The user does not present an ongoing threat to the electronic resources system and severe disciplinary action would not serve the best interests of the user or the District.

Implementation: The Acceptable Use Policy (“AUP”) will be provided to all parents and students as part of each school’s handbook. In the case of community use, it is the user’s responsibility to employ the system in a manner that is consistent with the mission of a publicly funded educational institution. Access to the system may be terminated if abuse is evident.

There are two usage types: *Acceptable and Unacceptable*

Acceptable

Acceptable uses are activities that promote academic excellence in reaching the District’s educational objectives, access to research findings, and opportunities to satisfy intellectual curiosity. Acceptable use is any application used in the delivery of services that does not disproportionately consume available resources.

Unacceptable

Unacceptable use impedes the work of others and may unintentionally damage the infrastructure. Unacceptable usage may generate extra costs for the OSSD.

The following activities are unacceptable. This list is in no way intended to be exhaustive and the school administration may add to this list in the development of procedures. It is unacceptable to:

- Use, copy, or otherwise access anyone else’s files without authorization.
- Use the OSSD information technology infrastructure for activities that contravene the law, any existing School District policies, or regulations.
- Use any part of the OSSD information technology infrastructure for personal financial gain.
- Infringe copyright or proprietary rights.
- Access abusive or pornographic Internet sites, or provide information about such sites to others, *except to help avoid such sites.*
- Permit unauthorized access.
- Create or propagate computer viruses.
- Damage files, equipment, software, or data belonging to others.
- Use or attempt to use unauthorized access methods or abilities.
- Compromise the privacy or personal data of any member of the OSSD.
- Damage the integrity of a computer system, or the data or programs stored on a computer system.
- Bring OSSD into disrepute.
- Disrupt the intended use of system or network resources.
- Put unjustifiable demands on OSSD infrastructure.
- Facilitate unauthorized access attempts on other computer systems.

- Result in the uploading, downloading, modification, or removal of files on the network for which such action is not authorized.
- Unauthorized downloading of anything that requires a fee for any service or program. Persons doing so are liable for any and all charges.
- Use the computer to annoy or harass others.
- Students are financially responsible for any damage to OSSD electronic equipment; computers, laptops, cameras etc.
- Students may not take a OSSD Laptop home at any time

Without specific authorization, as outlined in District procedures, users must not cause, permit, or attempt any installation of hardware or software, destruction or modification of data or equipment that will affect other users of the OSSD.

The OSSD infrastructure provides access to outside networks. Users may encounter offensive or objectionable material. The OSSD does not assume responsibility for the content of any of these outside networks.

Monitoring: Users should not expect privacy in the contents of their personal files or record of web research activities. Routine maintenance and monitoring of system resources may lead to discovery of violations of the District policy, disciplinary code, or state and federal law. Users should be aware the computer usage can be traced by site logs and other tracked information. OSSD reserves the right to access the contents of all files stored on its systems and all messages transmitted through its information technology infrastructure.

E-Mail: Users must not attempt to read another person's email unless otherwise authorized. The e-mail system is a function of OSSD. **Users should have no reasonable expectation of privacy in e-mail transmitted, received, and stored on and/or through the system.**

Many users access email through web-based accounts hosted on external commercial sites such as user@hotmail.com, user@msn.com, or other free/commercial web based email services. If irresponsible use of web-based e-mail compromises OSSD services, permission to access web-based e-mail from within the network will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Liability: The District cannot be held responsible for any lost resources or damages incurred through the use of any form of District Electronic Resources.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY

No student shall be required, without parental consent, to take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation funded by the U.S. Department of Education that reveals information concerning:

- political affiliations or beliefs of a student or a student's parents;
- mental or psychological problems of a student or student's family;
- sexual behavior or attitudes;
- illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom student respondents have close family relationships;
- legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians or members of the clergy;

- income (other than that required by law) to determine eligibility for participation in a program for receiving financial assistance under such program; or
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

Parents shall have the right to inspect any survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student. Requests for inspection shall be in writing, and shall be made in sufficient time to allow a response at least two weeks in advance of any survey to be given.

Protection of Student Privacy

Parents/guardians or students 18 years of age or older, have the right to “opt out” of the following activities:

- a. the collection, disclosure and use of personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information. This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational services for, or to students such as:
 - college or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
 - book clubs, magazines and programs providing access to low cost literary products;
 - curriculum and instructional materials used in schools;
 - tests and assessments;
 - student recognition programs; and
 - the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related activities.
- b. the administration of any survey that includes the subject areas listed above; or
- c. the administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a student or other students and not otherwise permitted or required by state law.

Parents shall be notified, through U.S. Mail, e-mail or other direct means, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of any activities described in this policy, and shall be provided an opportunity to opt out of participation in those activities.

Parents shall have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

STUDENT RECORDS

All official transcripts and a student's permanent record are held at the student's partner school. RTCC maintains student files including, but not limited to: application, emergency and contact information, RTCC interim and grade reports, and discipline/progress notes.

Parents, guardians or eligible students have a right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act authorizes disclosure without consent;

4. File with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with requirements of the Act; and
5. Obtain a copy of the school's policy and written procedures or protocols related to student records.

The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* requires the release of a student's name, address and telephone listing to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning upon request. ***Parents or eligible students may request that the district not release this information, and the district will comply with the request.***

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#). Or you may contact us at the following address: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

ADA AUXILIARY AIDS INTERPRETER POLICY

All activities for the public shall be accessible to persons with disabilities. For programs/activities which normally attract more than 500 people, a signer will be employed by the schools. For those activities which have less than 500 participants, signers will be provided upon request. Individuals who have become aware of the need for accommodation to fully participate in, and to enjoy the benefits of, a school program should notify the administrator responsible for the program. Requests for interpreters and other forms of accommodations will be made of the administrator responsible for the activity no less than 72 hours in advance of the activity.

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS ACT

The Protection of Pupil Rights Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (hereinafter “PPRA”), requires parental notification in a number of respects:

- A. 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(A)(i) requires local education agencies to notify parents annually, at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time after any amendment thereof, of the adoption or continued use of PPRA policies. These local policies must include the following:
 - i. The rights of parents to inspect surveys created by a “third party” (meaning not federally funded) before it is administered,
 - ii. Procedures for such inspection of surveys,
 - iii. Arrangements to protect student privacy with respect to surveys on sensitive matters,
 - iv. The right to inspect any instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum,
 - v. Procedures for inspecting the instructional materials,
 - vi. The administration of any physical examinations or screenings,
 - vii. The collection or disclosure of student information for marketing purposes,
 - viii. The right of a parent to inspect any instrument used in the collection of personal information for marketing purposes before such information is collected or disclosed, and
 - ix. Procedures for obtaining access to such instruments in a timely fashion.
- B. 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(A)(ii) requires an annual notice to parents of the right to opt out of certain activities including collection of personal student information for marketing purposes, administration of certain surveys, and non-emergency invasive physical examinations or screenings.
- C. 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(B) provides that schools notify parents, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates when any of the following will occur: collection of information for marketing purposes, administration of surveys containing sensitive questions, and any non-emergency, invasive physical examinations or screenings.
- D. 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(d) provides that schools must “give parents and students effective notice of their rights under this section [PPRA].”

ACT 1 VERMONT'S SEXUAL ABUSE RESPONSE SYSTEM

In response to Vermont's Act 1, all OSSD schools have increased their efforts to ensure that students, staff, and parents all help keep our schools safe from sexual abuse and violence. Three primary requirements of Act 1 are for our schools to:

- 1) provide instruction to students on how to recognize and prevent sexual abuse and sexual violence;
- 2) ensure that adults who are employed in schools receive orientation on the prevention, identification, and reporting of child sexual abuse and sexual violence; and
- 3) provide parents, guardians, and other interested persons the opportunity to receive orientation on the prevention, identification, and reporting of sexual abuse and sexual violence.

Should you wish to receive additional information on sexual abuse and violence, please contact us at your convenience.

ACT 158 AN ACT RELATING TO LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES AND CHRONIC ILLNESSES IN SCHOOLS

In 2006, the legislature passed Act 158 to address safe and supportive environments for students with life threatening allergies or chronic illnesses.

Act 158 also requires the school districts to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal/state statutes and regulations and state rules. Other students may not only be protected by Section 504, but may also be eligible for special education.

If your student has a life-threatening chronic illness, please notify either the school nurse or school administration at your earliest convenience.

Section 504 protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. Not all students with life-threatening allergies and chronic illnesses may be protected under Section 504. The school district may also be able to meet a student's needs through the Educational Support System with an individualized health plan.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Principals and Heads of School

FROM: Mark D. Oettinger, General Counsel, Vermont Department of Education

DATE: July 20, 2012

RE: **(1) Educator Reporting Requirements (Child Abuse and Neglect; Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation; and Educator Licensing); and (2) Access to Child and Adult Abuse Registries**

This is my annual reminder of the duties of educators to report abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults, and to report educator misconduct and incompetence that could result in a sanction being imposed on an educator's licenses. I have also included information about gaining access, for the purposes of your hiring and volunteer-screening due diligence, to the Child Protection Registry that is maintained by the Department for Children and Families (DCF), and to the Vulnerable Adult Protection Registry that is maintained by the Department of Aging and Independent Living (DAIL). In addition, for the first time, I have expanded this memorandum to include a number of recommendations related to the hiring of substitute teachers, the screening of volunteers, and the checking of the past employment history of prospective employees, contractors and volunteers.

With respect to educator reporting requirements, there are essentially three categories: (1) reporting suspected abuse or neglect of children to DCF; (2) reporting suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults to DAIL; and (3) reporting educator misconduct to the Commissioner of Education for the purposes of initiating a licensing investigation. Each type of report is explained below. Please remember that some of the reportable conduct that falls within these categories may also permit or require that you take other steps, including but not limited to, an investigation of harassment under 16 V.S.A. § 565, or suspension or dismissal under 16 V.S.A. § 1752(c). While you certainly need to be fully versed in these related, this memorandum is exclusively addressed to the three categories of educator reporting requirements specifically mentioned at the outset of this paragraph.

Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect

33 V.S.A. § 4913(a) requires abuse and neglect reporting by, among other professionals, psychologists, school teachers, nurses, school superintendents, school librarians, school principals, school guidance counselors, mental health professionals and social workers, any other individual who is regularly employed by a school district, or who is contracted and paid by a school district to provide student services for five or more hours per week during the school year.

The specific statutory requirement is that any one of the above-enumerated professionals "who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected shall report [to DCF] or cause a report to be made [to DCF] in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title within 24 hours." 33 V.S.A. § 4913(a). Persons who are not mandatory reporters may report or cause a report to be made. 33 V.S.A. § 4913(c). Whether or not one is a mandatory reporter, a person who files such a report in good faith has immunity from any criminal or civil liability. 33 V.S.A. § 4913(d)(1). Failure of a mandatory reporter to report can result in prosecution and a fine of \$500.00. 33 V.S.A. § 4913(e)(1). "A person may not refuse to make a report....on the grounds that making the report would violate a privilege or disclose confidential communication." 33 V.S.A. § 4913(g).

As we have strongly recommended in the past, reporters should not delay in fulfilling their responsibilities under the above statute. It is not the job of the reporter to conduct a thorough investigation, or to come to a conclusion that abuse or neglect occurred, or to weigh the consequences to the educator or the student of reporting. "Reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected" does not mean that the reporter must be convinced that abuse or neglect occurred. Rather, the reporter need only suspect that abuse or neglect might have occurred. Any doubts the employee may have shall be resolved in favor of reporting the suspicion. To report suspected abuse or neglect of a child, contact the DCF Centralized Intake Unit at (800) 649-5285.

If you have any questions about the interpretation of the above law, or whether particular circumstances might fall within its ambit, please contact the DCF Centralized Intake Unit at 1-800-649-5285. If you would like training on this subject for yourself or your faculty and staff, please contact the Chief of the Special Investigations Unit at DCF at (802) 241-2131.

Reports of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults

There is an additional statutory requirement for reporting abuse, neglect or exploitation of "vulnerable adults." See 33 V.S.A. §§ 6901-6905. A "vulnerable adult" is a person over the age of 18 with some form of disability as described in § 6902(14). The list of mandatory reporters is expanded to include, in addition to those professionals enumerated above in the child abuse reporting requirements, school bus drivers, school aides, and school employees or contractors who work regularly with students. The report must be made within 48 hours of when the mandatory reporter "knows of or has received information of abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult or [when the mandatory reporter] has reason to suspect that any vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected or exploited." 33 V.S.A. § 6903(a). The report is to be made to the Commissioner of DAIL (the toll-free number is 1-800-564-1612; the regular number is 802-241-2345). Because high schools invariably serve students with disabilities over the age of 18, please keep this reporting requirement in mind as well.

Reports of Educator Misconduct to the Commissioner of Education

Educator misconduct can have a devastating impact on students, their families, the school community, and the reputation of all educators and schools in general. 16 V.S.A. § 1699 states that "an individual who has reasonable cause to believe a licensee has engaged in unprofessional conduct or is incompetent may, and a superintendent who has reasonable cause to believe a licensee has engaged in unprofessional conduct or is incompetent shall, submit a written report to the commissioner concerning allegations of unprofessional conduct or incompetence about a licensee.

A principal submitting a report of unprofessional conduct or incompetence shall submit it to the superintendent and may also submit it to the commissioner". Causes for licensing action are listed in 16 V.S.A. § 1698(a) and include the following:

(1) Unprofessional conduct which means:

- (A) Grossly negligent conduct or greater, on or off duty, that places a student or students in meaningful physical or emotional jeopardy, or conduct that evidences moral unfitness to practice as an educator.
- (B) Conviction for a criminal offense in which the underlying circumstances, conduct, or behavior, by gross negligence or greater, places a student or students in meaningful physical or emotional jeopardy, or conviction of a crime that evidences moral unfitness to practice as an educator.
- (C) Conviction of grand larceny under 13 V.S.A. § 2501 or embezzlement as defined in subchapter 2 of chapter 57 of Title 13, provided charges were brought after July 1, 2006.
- (D) Conviction of a crime charged after July 1, 2006, which involves fraudulent misrepresentation, dishonesty, or deceit, including conviction for any of the following: 13 V.S.A. §§ 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1106, 1107, 1108, 3006, or 3016, provided that conviction under 13 V.S.A. §§ 2002, 2502, 2561, 2575, 2582, and 2591, if the value or amount involved is \$500.00 or less, shall not be considered a conviction under this subdivision unless it is part of a larger pattern of dishonesty, deceit, or fraud.
- (E) A pattern of willful misconduct or a single egregious act of willful misconduct in violation of duties and obligations of the position.
- (F) Falsification, misrepresentation, or misstatement of material information provided in connection with the application for or renewal or reinstatement of a license or endorsement.
- (G) With respect to a superintendent, the failure to maintain the confidentiality and privileged status of information provided pursuant to subsection 1700(c) and subdivision 1708(f)(3) of this title.

(2) Incompetence, which means the inability or incapacity to perform the duties and competencies required by the license.

Further guidance on conduct that may constitute unprofessional conduct can be found in Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) Rules 5500-5530, entitled the Code of Professional Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct for Vermont Educators.

While it is understandable that administrators would want to investigate any allegations that fall within the categories of mandated reporting requirements, it is vital that you fulfill your legally-required reporting duties as soon as possible so that objective, trained investigators can become involved immediately. Not only does this protect children, but it also can protect educators and others in cases where false reports are made (which can be very damaging to educators, parents or others against whom false reports of abuse or misconduct are sometimes made).

The sooner the information is reported, and appropriate investigations are commenced by personnel affiliated with law enforcement or DCF, the better the quality of the evidence will be. It also must be stressed that fulfilling one of the reporting requirements mentioned above does not fulfill all of them. For example, reporting to the Commissioner of Education suspected sexual activity between a teacher and a minor student does not relieve you of reporting such allegations to DCF. In any case in which you believe that a crime has been committed, you can (and should) call law enforcement authorities immediately.

Access to Child and Adult Abuse Registries

The Department of Education strongly advises school districts to run Child Protection Registry and Vulnerable Adult Protection Registry checks on *all* prospective school employees. Districts should also run checks for school contractors who may have unsupervised contact with school children. These registries, maintained by DCF and DAIL respectively, contain lists of persons who have been found to have engaged in behavior that might indicate they should not have unsupervised contact with school children or vulnerable adults.

Just to clear up any misunderstanding, Vermont law requires that all prospective school employees be checked against both registries, in addition to undergoing a standard fingerprint-supported criminal record check. The legislature has corrected the drafting earlier error regarding the effective date for the requirement that superintendents and headmasters conduct registry checks under 16 V.S.A. § 255. At this time, such registry checks are required to be conducted on any person for whom a criminal record check is required under 16 V.S.A. § 255(a).

More information regarding the registries can be found at this Web link:

http://dcf.vermont.gov/child_protection_registry. Note that a person is not categorically barred from school employment if he or she appears on one or both of the registries; the registries are intended to provide information to prospective employers regarding a person's history working with vulnerable individuals. An online system is available to check both registries simultaneously. Information about subscribing to this service can be found at <http://www.ahsnet.ahs.state.vt.us/abc/SubscriberHome.cfm>.

Policy Recommendations for Hiring Substitute Teachers

Under VSBPE Rule 5381, local school boards are responsible for adopting policies regarding employment qualifications of substitute teachers. The only specific requirement in that rule, however, is that each policy requires that the substitute teacher have graduated from high school. Obviously, much more rigorous hiring practices are indicated, especially given the risks involved.

We would like to emphasize the importance of exercising a high degree of due diligence in the hiring of substitute teachers. As a starting point, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §§ 255 and 256, a fingerprint supported criminal record check is required for any person whom a superintendent or headmaster is prepared to recommend for employment. That process alone, however, may not turn up all of the information that would be critical to the hiring process, as a district would certainly want to decline to offer employment to a would-be substitute teacher who had engaged in known past conduct that, while not criminal, was inappropriate, and that may put future students at risk. To promote student safety, therefore, we strongly recommend that, in addition to criminal background checks, at a minimum, districts incorporate the following guidelines into their policies and practices for the hiring of substitute teachers:

Require candidates to list all previous employers on their job applications;

Contact, at a minimum, the candidate's two most recent employers for reference checks;

Conduct thorough background and reference checks. This includes contacting a candidate's recent employers, particularly a superintendent or a senior level administrator in the school district(s) where the candidate worked previously, to ensure that all relevant information is provided. Avoid references from friends and relatives;

Do not accept letters of reference as a substitute for telephonic inquiries;

Inquire as to the applicant's eligibility for re-employment at the previous district(s), and ask why the applicant left the previous job(s); and

Use a checklist and keep documentation of your reference calls.

Availability of Online Criminal Record Checks

To promote student safety, we would like to bring to your attention an easy-to-use online criminal record service which is available for your use. This service is known as the Vermont Criminal Conviction Record Internet Service (VCCRIS), is provided by the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC), and allows users to obtain criminal conviction records from VCIC. Please visit the website at <https://secure.vermont.gov/DPS/criminalrecords>. VCCRIS allows educational institutions a means of immediately retrieving Vermont criminal conviction records online. Once you apply online for an account as an educational institution, the report will be free of charge. To request a criminal conviction record, all you need is the name and date of birth of the person for whom you wish to make the request. A criminal conviction record will contain only crimes for which an individual has been convicted in a Vermont court.

The report will include all felonies, misdemeanors, and motor vehicle convictions adjudicated in a court after 9/1/1995. The report will not include: motor vehicle violations adjudicated prior to 9/1/1995; cases that have been dismissed or referred to diversion; juvenile or family court cases; cases that have been sealed, pardoned, or expunged; and cases in which prosecution has been declined. The record will contain the date of conviction, county of jurisdiction, offense of conviction, level of conviction, and sentence. The record will not contain victim information, or any individual's personal identifying information other than the name and date of birth which the user is required to provide. For users registered as an Educational Institution, an online criminal record check will also indicate whether the subject of the record check was convicted of an offense which is listed in 13 V.S.A. § 5401 (sex offender definition for registration purposes). It must be stressed that an online criminal record check does not replace the need for a fingerprint supported criminal record check, required by 16 V.S.A. § 255. The availability of this online instantaneous check is, however, very useful for pre-screening candidates for employment and for use in screening potential school volunteers.

Further information can be found at:

<https://secure.vermont.gov/DPS/criminalrecords/help.php>

Note Regarding Checking Prior Employment References

The 2010 legislative session resulted in the passage of 21 V.S.A. § 306, prospectively prohibiting confidential separation agreements between school districts and former employees, when the reason for the separation was actions jeopardizing the safety of a child or vulnerable adult. That provision went into effect on June 3, 2010, and does not affect pre-existing confidential separation agreements. The 2010 legislative session also resulted in the passage of 21 V.S.A. § 307, which would have required school districts to check with all of the current and past employers of a prospective employee over the past 10 years. 21 V.S.A. § 307 was to have gone into effect on April 1, 2011. Due to concerns expressed by education administrators, during the 2011 legislative session, the “10-year look back” provision in 21 V.S.A. § 307, was repealed. In addition, the 2011 legislative session added 21 V.S.A. § 308, granting civil immunity to current and past employers who, in good faith, voluntarily disclose such information.

Cautionary Note:

The reader is cautioned that the various legal requirements of the law that are discussed in this memorandum are subject to change. Therefore, if you are using a hard copy version of this memorandum, you should check the AOE website to ensure that you have the latest version.

Questions or comments may be directed to Mark Oettinger, DOE General Counsel, at (802) 828-3136 or mark.oettinger@state.vt.us

RTCC STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Thank you for reading and reviewing our handbook! It is our goal to educate and inform the RTCC community of the opportunities and expectations in place at RTCC.

Please sign this page and return it to your program instructor for our records.

Thank you for joining the Randolph Technical Career Center community!

Student Name

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date