



Regional Center for the Arts

HANDBOOK

2025-2026

23 Oakview Drive
Trumbull, CT 06611
203-365-8857 Fax 203-365-8890
www.cestumbull.org/rca



MISSION

The mission of RCA is to bring together students of diverse backgrounds through a common love of the arts. We provide every student a safe, positive and supportive environment in which to reach their personal and artistic potential, teaching them that hard work and persistence lead to individual growth, and empowering them to contribute to society as creative, engaged and compassionate human beings.

At RCA we believe:

- Each individual has worth and deserves respect.
- Each individual's work has worth and deserves respect.
- Each individual is accountable for their own actions.
- Diversity allows students to have a broader view of the human experience.
- Self-esteem and a positive self-image are crucial to learning.
- Disciplined training benefits artistic growth.
- Individuals are at their best when they strive for excellence.
- The creative potential of each student deserves to be developed.
- Students learn best in safe, nurturing environments at school, at home and in the community.
- The arts are vital to human development.
- Through studying the arts, students enhance and improve their ability to succeed in other academic areas.

Our educational goals are:

- to develop self-confidence and self-esteem;
- to develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity;
- to collaborate within and between disciplines;
- to foster flexible ways to think and engage the imagination;
- to increase communication and social interaction among a diverse population;
- to expose students to performances by professional and peer artists;
- to participate in events in and around the community;
- to provide training to students planning a performing arts career; and
- to provide information about post-secondary studies and careers so that students may make informed choices.

POLICY

Non-Discrimination: It is the policy of Cooperative Educational Services that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any service or program on account of race, color, religious creed, age, marital or civil union status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, residence, present or past history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability or physical disability including, but not limited to, blindness, or pregnancy and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This is done in accordance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, and applicable State of Connecticut laws.

Cooperative Educational Services agrees to comply with the above statutes and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto. The Executive Director shall designate an appropriate compliance officer and the procedures for processing grievances. All person associated with C.E.S., including, but not limited to, the Representative Council, the administration, the staff, and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints should be directed to the Title IX Compliance Officer, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Title IX Compliance Officer

Christopher LaBelle
C.E.S.
40 Lindeman Drive
Trumbull, CT 06611
203-365-8828

Section 504 Compliance Officer

Christopher LaBelle
C.E.S.
40 Lindeman Drive
Trumbull, CT 06611
203-365-8828

Title IV Compliance Officer

Dr. Luke Forshaw
C.E.S.
40 Lindeman Drive
Trumbull, CT 06611
203-365-8850

U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights: The Office of Civil Rights enforces several Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education. Discrimination on

the basis of race, color, or national origin is prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; sex discrimination is prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and age discrimination is prohibited by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, OCR enforces the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (Section 9525 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) [<http://www.ed.gov/OCR>]. If you have complaints about discrimination that have not been satisfactorily addressed by C.E.S., you may contact OCR.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491
Phone: 617-289-0111

Bullying: Bullying behavior by any student at RCA is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or dismissal from the program. Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed or referring to another student attending school in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students and parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to any school employee. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with their rights of due process. More information can be found in our Safe School Climate Plan located on our website ([RCA Website](#)).

Administration of Medication: If a student needs medication during RCA hours, or has doctor's orders to self-administer medication during school hours, we must have a copy of the physician's orders. All medication, except those approved for self-medication, should be delivered to school by the parent and received by the principal or school nurse. At RCA we can administer acetaminophen or ibuprofen with parental permission. Trained staff can also administer epinephrine (Epi-pen) for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who are experiencing allergic reactions and do not have a prior written authorization. If you do not wish your student to receive epinephrine in such an emergency you must inform the principal in writing.

Protection of Children from Abuse: C.E.S. requires employees, designated by state law, to report suspected cases of child abuse/neglect or at risk children in order to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect. The Executive Director is authorized to establish administrative procedures, including appropriate staff training, so as to ensure the recognition and reporting of suspected child abuse/neglect or at risk children by personnel as specified in the Connecticut General Statutes, and as amended.

Search and Seizure: Consistent with CT Education Law, the C.E.S. Representative Council authorizes RCA administration to perform searches of student's desks, lockers, storage areas or other school property available for use by students if: 1) there is reasonable ground for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school; 2) the measures adopted to conduct the search are reasonably likely to produce evidence of a violation; and 3) the physical safety of members of the school community or the prevention of disruption to school operations warrant such action.

Video Surveillance: The C.E.S. Representative Council has authorized the use of electronic surveillance systems on school property. The system will be used to monitor student behavior in order to promote and maintain a safe environment for all students. Students and parents are hereby notified that the content of the surveillance system may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. Surveillance content will be routinely erased on a periodic basis or be retained if necessary for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view surveillance contents used in a disciplinary proceeding involving their child.

ABOUT US

The Regional Center for the Arts (RCA), established in January of 1990, was formed by the five area school superintendents of Bridgeport, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford and Trumbull to provide a performing arts program for talented high school students. Thirty dance and music students were selected to start classes at the Arnold Bernhard Center at the University of Bridgeport. The goal of the program was to help promising high school students from the Greater Bridgeport Region explore and develop their artistic abilities by working with master artists and other talented students from the area.

In 1993 Cooperative Educational Services (CES) was asked to administer the program for the five school districts. In 1996 RCA became a magnet school, and in November of 2007 we moved into our own state of the art facility located at 23 Oakview Drive.

Our student body is reflective of the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity of the Greater Bridgeport Region. Students attend their local public high school in the morning and attend RCA Monday through Thursday from 1:30-4:45 p.m. High school credits, which may be applied toward graduation requirements at the discretion of the sending school district, are earned at RCA through the study of dance, theatre, music, musical theatre, and creative media. Through these departments the courses provide a broad understanding of the history and criticism of the arts through interdisciplinary study. RCA's performing arts training program is designed to prepare students to pursue professional careers and post-secondary studies. The curriculum is professionally oriented, highly structured, and academically rigorous. Commitment to serious study is expected of all students.

Illness at RCA: If anyone begins to feel ill at RCA they are to report to the nurse to confirm a suspected illness. The nurse will provide care to the student. If the nurse determines the child needs to go home, the nurse will contact the parent of the student.

Class break: Each department will take a short break between classes. On days when the weather is reasonable, students may choose to have their break outside. Healthy snacks will be available for purchase for \$1.

Visitors: Visitors will not be allowed at RCA without advanced permission from the principal.

Violating the Rules: We know the importance of social interaction to RCA students, but the health and safety of the community is of paramount importance. If a student will not wear a mask, will not remain socially distanced, or violates other safety rules we will use a progressive discipline approach, which may include:

- Reminder of the rules
- Removal from class and conference with the Principal
- Suspension from the program
- Dismissal from RCA

DAILY PROCEDURES

Arrival: Students are expected to arrive from their sending schools by 1:30 p.m. We are flexible in working with specific districts so that students get the most academic time allowable before leaving for RCA. Upon arrival they should report to their first period class. During this time students will be made aware of any school-wide announcements. In the case of dance class students may use this time to change clothes. For other classes, students may prepare equipment while the teacher takes attendance. If a student arrives late, they must sign in at the main office. Classes begin at 1:45 p.m.

Attendance: It is the responsibility of students to attend all classes. The RCA curriculum is a series of inter-related classes that meet each day. Daily course work builds upon work done at previous class meetings. Therefore, consistent attendance at RCA is important for students to maintain a sense of continuity and commitment to the goals of the program. A student's absence from any class session affects their progress and all the members of the class.

RCA Attendance Guidelines

At RCA, attendance is essential to student success and is not optional for enrolled students. RCA is a credit-bearing academic program—not an extracurricular activity—and students are expected to attend whenever they are present at their home school (Monday–Thursday).

We understand that occasional absences may be necessary due to illness or academic needs at the district school. However, please make every effort to schedule appointments outside of RCA class time. Consistent attendance ensures students receive the full benefit of their RCA experience.

If attendance becomes a concern, our office will contact you. Continued issues may lead to removal from the program and notification of the student's home school. Our goal is to avoid this outcome and to support you as partners in your child's education.

Please review and keep the attendance guidelines below. Note that students who accumulate **10 or more absences in a year** may lose credit. This policy is more flexible than most district policies, in recognition of the demands of attending RCA. If a student reaches this limit, a conference will be held, and the student may request credit restoration. We are always open to discussing extenuating circumstances—**communication is key**. If you have any concerns about attendance, please contact the RCA principal as soon as possible.

We are excited to have your child with us and want to ensure they get the most out of their time at RCA!

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

1. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation; and
2. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence);
 - student's observance of a religious holiday;
 - death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
 - mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
 - the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason); or
 - extraordinary educational opportunities (ex. college visits/auditions) pre-approved by the principal and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.
 - Field trips offered by district school
 - Extra Help (if appropriate forms are submitted signed by district teacher/admin)

******Note about attendance: In almost all cases, if a student's district school is in session on a particular day and the student does not attend their district school that day, the student may NOT attend RCA for that day. Students should consider this a consistent rule. Students may request an exception in advance from the principal. Example: A student has a performance at RCA on Wednesday night. The student decides to sleep in on Thursday and does not attend their district school even though they are in session. That student may not come to RCA that day and may not take part in any RCA activity that day. Therefore, if they had a performance on Thursday night, they would not be allowed to participate in that performance. Exceptions are sometimes made for things like doctor's appointments or family emergencies. Those exceptions must be requested as early as possible from the principal (not when the student arrives at RCA for the day).**

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

1. the absence meets the definition of an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
2. the absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

Communication about Absences: It is a parent's responsibility to communicate with our school the reason for all absences. Parent notes or phone calls to excuse an absence or lateness must be received within two school days to be considered excused. Parent notes for absences must include the following: 1) the student's name; 2) the date(s) of the absence(s); 3) the specific reason for the absence, tardiness or dismissal; 4) the signature of the parent; and 5) a daytime phone number where a parent can be reached to verify the note or phone call. Parent notes or phone calls to request an early dismissal must be presented to the office before the student is dismissed. For your convenience, the office has voice mail during non-school hours (203-365-8857).

Disciplinary Action: In the event that an RCA student receives disciplinary action in the form of suspension from their district school, they may NOT attend RCA for the duration of their suspension. In most cases, districts will also honor an RCA suspension and the student will not be allowed to attend their district school for the duration of the suspension. RCA works in partnership with district schools.

Excessive Absences: The importance of daily attendance cannot be stressed enough. Coursework is predicated on the student being present for all classes. Student attendance is monitored daily. If a student is excessively absent, even if the absences are technically excused, their parent/guardian will receive a letter from the school alerting them of our concern and the student will have a conference with the principal. If the student's attendance does not improve significantly, they risk losing credit and their place at RCA.

Verifying an Absence: If a student is absent from RCA, and is not excused for the day through a parent call or the school schedule, we will send a robo-call to the number on file to let parents know their child was absent from RCA. We prefer parents to contact us to let us know about an impending absence.

Class Periods: First period class runs from 1:45-3:15 p.m.; second period is 3:30-4:45 p.m., and there is a fifteen minute break between classes. Students may bring a snack or they may purchase a healthy snack at break for \$1.

Early Dismissal: If a student is leaving early for an appointment or other reason, a note or phone call from the parent is required. When a parent is picking up a student early they must come to the office and sign the student out.

Dismissal: All classes dismiss at 4:45 p.m. Students proceed to the front of the building for their bus or other transportation. If students are being picked up, parents may not drive into or park in the circle in front of the school, since buses are parked there. Parents must pick students in our upper parking lot, which is accessible from 25 Oakview Drive. Also remember that passing a school bus with the lights flashing is illegal and could result in a \$450 fine for each bus you pass.

Dress: There is no formal dress code at RCA, however, clothing should neither distract other students or teachers, disrupt the education process, pose a health or safety threat to anyone, or cause damage to the school facility. Clothing should be free from promotion of or reference to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and free from violent signs, symbols or words of which are obscene, lewd, vulgar or defamatory. Clothing should also be free of slogans, names, titles or the like which are likely to incite or inflame. The serious nature of our school and pride in the reputation of our school require a positive, safe, and non-disruptive learning environment.

As young performers attending a professionally oriented school, students are expected to dress and groom themselves for the business of school. In many classes students are required to move and dance, so they must have appropriate clothing (including shoes) in order to participate. Students who do not have the appropriate clothing may not be able to participate in class, and therefore lose credit.

Dance Dress Code:

FEMALE

(or those who identify as female)

Dance Wear: flesh-colored tights and single-colored leotard

Shoes: flesh-colored ballet slippers

Optional for classes other than Ballet & Modern:

black jazz pants w/black leotard

MALE

(or those who identify as male)

Dance Wear: fitted sweat pants or tights, fitted white or black t-shirt

Shoes: black ballet slippers (put your name in both

*****We recommend that students put their name in all dance shoes to avoid confusion**

***Hair must be put up in a bun or pulled back and secured. No jewelry.**

The dance department is open to a conversation with any student that would like to understand more about their dress code options.

Musical Theatre Dress Code: Students are required to come dressed everyday in comfortable movement attire, prior to the start of first period. Movement attire means clothes you can freely move and sweat in, including masks. Dressing daily for class and rehearsal is part of your grade.

-NO jeans/skirts/dresses or dangling jewelry.

-Long hair should be pulled up and out of the face.

Being properly dressed and prepared for class and rehearsal is part of being a young professional performer.

Dance Shoes

Option 1:

-Any Color Character Heels 1.5-2.5 Inch

-Any Color Heeled Tap Shoes 1.5-2.5 Inch

-Sneakers, any type is acceptable

Option 2:

-Any Color Flat Character Shoes

-Any Color Flat Lace Up Tap Shoes

-Sneakers, any type is acceptable

Bloch, Capezio, and So Danca are great brands for Character and Tap Shoes. Below are a few suggestions of where to purchase:

● Dancer's Price (1001 Main St, Bridgeport, CT 06604)

● DanceWear Depot (42 Halley Ct, Fairfield, CT 06825)

● ONLINE at <https://us.blochworld.com>, www.discountdance.com, or Amazon

The deadline for obtaining required shoes is due Monday, September 15th. Shoes can be left at RCA as you will need them daily. If you have any concerns or need help purchasing shoes, please see a teacher in the musical theatre department.

Theatre Dress Code: All theatre students must wear clothing that allows for movement.

Driving to School: Students with parental permission may drive to school. Parents must complete the permission form included in the appendix of this handbook. Also be aware that newly licensed drivers (16 and 17 year olds) may not drive with passengers other than immediate family members for their first year. For further information on teen driving, please refer to <http://www.ct.gov/teendriving>.

Electronic Devices/Cell Phones: We recognize the reality that most of the students at RCA have a phone or electronic device with them. Phones are NOT to be used during class time unless they are utilized by the teacher as part of planned instruction (C.E.S. Policy 6.025). Phones may be used for appropriate purposes during break between classes. Students bring these devices to school at their own risk. Students RCA assumes no responsibility for the loss of phones, earpods or other electronic devices.

Emergency Contact/Medical Information: If they have not already done so, parents/guardians should complete and sign the Data-Emergency Contact Information form and have their student give it to the main office secretary as soon as possible. This

information is crucial to us in the case of an emergency, and for our emergency alerting system.

Fire/Emergency Drills: Fire and emergency drills will be held periodically during the school year. At the sound of the fire alarm everyone is to leave the building immediately by the nearest exit. Students are to remain with and under supervision of their teacher. Attendance will be taken. If unassigned, students should report to the closest faculty member. Students should stand away from the building to allow a fire lane and should maintain order and quiet so that emergency procedures can be executed. No cell phones or electronic devices should be in use during a drill. No one is to re-enter the building until instructed to do so by an administrator. In the case of a lockdown, students will remain in the classroom and follow the instructions of the staff.

Grades: In meeting state requirements RCA is in session from late August through early June, meeting 450 contact learning hours equivalent to 2 credits for the year. Although RCA recommends that school districts grant 2 credits per year, each sending school district decides on the number of credits that students may receive per semester at RCA. Instructors assess students quarterly. An average grade for the four classes is sent to each student's high school for each marking period. Parents will have access to their student's individual class grades through our PowerSchool parent portal. These credits may be used toward their sending school district's graduation requirements. Grades are weighted according to the amount of time spent weekly with each instructor, and then averaged to create one RCA grade. Students are expected to maintain an average of C or above. A student may be removed from RCA at the end of a semester if they have not maintained appropriate grades or progress.

EXPLANATION OF LETTER GRADES:

- A** Student has excelled in all evaluation areas and has shown a high level of commitment to the program.
- B** Student has done better than average in all evaluation areas and has displayed commitment and energy to the program.
- C** Student has performed average work.
- D** Student is not working up to potential; work is poor and student is not showing commitment to the program. Placement at RCA is in jeopardy.
- F** Failure – Placement at RCA is in jeopardy.

Parents will receive a copy of the quarterly grades for each of the four classes.

Inclement Weather: In the event of inclement weather affecting the schedule at RCA, we will use our message system to e-mail and send text messages if the parents opt for that service, so please ensure that your e-mail and cell phone records are up-to-date with our main office (203-365-8857). If you prefer to receive our emergency alerts by text message, you can opt for that service on our website [Opt Into Notifications](#). In addition, RCA will post on Facebook in the event of cancellation. You may also check the websites of local media outlets including www.wtnh.com and www.wicc600.com for school closing under CES (Cooperative Educational Services - Trumbull).

The following is a list of general guidelines regarding inclement weather:

- If the home school is closed due to inclement weather, the student is excused for the day. (If RCA is in session, students may attend but transportation will likely not be provided.)
- If the home school has an early dismissal due to inclement weather, the student is excused for the day. Early dismissals are usually announced by 11:00 a.m. (If RCA is in session, students may attend but transportation may or may not be provided.)
- We will notify all district schools of an RCA closure that occurs during the school day.
- In case of a closing we will use our messaging system, so please be sure that your contact information is up-to-date.
- Please call our office at 203-365-8857 if you are unsure.

Participation in Class: RCA is a place where we encourage students to stretch themselves and to try new things. For that reason it is very important that students fully participate in all classroom sessions. Students who do not participate or who are unprepared will receive a lower grade for the class.

Performances and Demonstrations: Performances and demonstrations are a critical part of a student's experience at our school. Rehearsals, performances and demonstrations are the equivalent to tests and final exams in other subjects. We expect students to attend rehearsals and performances at the scheduled time of the productions in which they are involved. Failure to participate in scheduled rehearsals, performances or demonstrations will affect a student's grade. In addition, students are encouraged to support their schoolmates by attending any or all of the performances and demonstrations given by other students here at RCA.

Photography/Video Recording: In the course of our school year we photograph and video record student performances and other activities. Please notify the principal immediately if you do NOT want your child photographed, video recorded or images of them to be present on advertisements for RCA.

Schedule Changes: If a student wishes to change their schedule, they must have the permission of both the instructor of the class the student is leaving and the one they wish to join. Schedule changes also require the approval of the principal. First semester course changes can be made through September 19, and second semester course changes can be made through January 30.

Shortened Days by Home School: When days are shortened due to teacher workshops, parent conferences, or school based testing, sending districts will decide whether to provide transportation. If the district does not provide transportation, the student is excused for the day. As always, they are encouraged to attend but must provide their own transportation. In some cases (Bridgeport and Stratford for example), the district **DOES**

provide transportation. *If transportation is provided, students are expected to be in attendance at RCA and will be marked as an unexcused absence if they do not attend.*

Tardiness: Students are expected to arrive at RCA in time for their first period class. Students who are tardy must sign in at the main office. At minimum, excessive tardiness will result in a conference with the principal.

Technology: In order for students to use computers, access the internet, or use similar equipment, students will need to read and sign the Technology Appropriate Usage Contract. Without this signed form, students will not be permitted to use computers at our school. There is a copy of the contract attached to this handbook for your information.

Transportation: Transportation is provided by the sending school districts. On shortened days school districts provide transportation at their discretion. If the district provides transportation on a day when the home school has a shortened day, we expect that our students will be joining us at RCA. The absence of a student who does not attend RCA on a shortened day when their district provides transportation will be unexcused.

Visitors: On occasion we've been asked to have a cousin or a friend of a student visit RCA for a day. Due to insurance and liability questions **VISITORS ARE GENERALLY NOT ALLOWED AT RCA.** Visitors who do arrive at RCA will remain in the office until they can arrange transportation home. Exceptions are occasionally made for alumni who visit to share their updated progress with staff and students. Alumni wishing to visit must make an appointment through the main office.

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Rules of conduct and regulations are intended to benefit the school as a whole, to foster a productive environment, and to show respect for all members of the school community. We expect all students and adults to be treated with kindness and respect. To that end, we have four broad rules to govern the behavior of all members of our school community. The rules are:

- Be Respectful
- Be Safe
- Be Honest
- Do Your Best

These qualities should guide all decisions – whether or not specific situations are addressed in this book.

- **ALCOHOL AND OTHER ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES:** The possession, transmission, and/or use of alcohol or other illegal substances and paraphernalia, are strictly forbidden.
- **ATTENDANCE:** All students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. Students and parents are expected to familiarize themselves with the provisions

and procedures noted above. It is expected that parents will support the intent of the policy and encourage their children to have good attendance.

- **BULLYING:** Bullying is not tolerated and is subject to disciplinary consequences. Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed or referring to another student attending school in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.
- **CELL PHONES:** Cell phones may not be used during class time at RCA unless requested by the teacher. Cell phones may be used appropriately during break time and before class begins. Taking photos or videos without the permission of those being photographed or recorded is a violation of personal right to privacy and is strictly prohibited. RCA is not responsible for lost cell phones or accessories such as ear pods.
- **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:** Appropriate behavior is expected in the classroom as outlined by the school rules. More specific expectations and procedures as defined by the teacher in the classroom are appropriate and must be followed.
- **COSTUMES/EQUIPMENT:** If a costume or equipment is assigned to a student, we expect that the student will use it responsibly and return it promptly and in good condition.
- **DISHONESTY:** Honesty is expected of everyone. Forgery and other dishonest activities are serious offenses.
- **FIGHTING:** Fighting, or other conduct that endangers persons or property, or conduct that is seriously disruptive to the educational process, will not be tolerated. Fighting may result in disciplinary action including removal from the program.
- **FIREWORKS/EXPLOSIVES:** The possession/use of explosives and incendiary devices is not allowed.
- **GAMBLING:** Gambling of any kind is not permitted.
- **INSUBORDINATION:** Students are expected to respond promptly and politely to requests and directions from staff members. Failure to do so will result in teacher consequences and as appropriate, referral to administration.
- **LANGUAGE:** Appropriate and non-abusive language is expected from everyone. Swearing, intimidating or harassing language is not allowed.
- **SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** Sexual harassment is illegal and is prohibited by the Connecticut Discriminatory Employment Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment. Examples of sexual harassment include: unwelcome sexual advances, suggestive or

lewd remarks, unwanted hugs, touches, or kisses, request for sexual favors, derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings, or retaliation for complaining about sexual harassment.

- SMOKING/VAPING/JUULING (including e-cigarettes and vapor products): is not permitted on school grounds.
- THEFT/DAMAGE: Property damage, theft, or endangering the well-being or possessions of others, is not permitted.
- VANDALISM: Property damage, theft, or endangering the well-being or possessions of others, is not permitted.
- WEAPONS: Dangerous weapons, or facsimiles thereof, are not permitted on school property or wherever or whenever students are under the jurisdiction of the school.
- USE OF THE BUILDING/GROUNDS: Students are responsible for the appropriate use of all common areas including dressing rooms and the backstage area. Everyone is expected to clean up after himself/herself.

Consequences: Students who violate the rules of the school will be subjected to consequences. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the following consequences may be the result of a student's actions:

Temporary Removal: C.E.S. program personnel are authorized to remove students from the classroom to a designated area and notify the program administrator when such student deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom.

Suspension: C.E.S. program administrators are authorized to impose a suspension when a student's conduct is in violation of the publicized policy of C.E.S. or of the student's local school district, endangers persons or property, or causes serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom.

In-School: A student may not be placed on in-school suspension without an informal hearing by the program administrator. In-school suspension shall be imposed when misconduct is serious, reflects chronic misbehavior that seriously disrupts the educational process, or potentially endangers self, other persons or property in school, at a school sponsored activity on or off school grounds, or on a bus.

Out-of-School: The administrator may impose an out-of-school suspension if the administration determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property, or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension; or the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, and efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary

problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies have failed.

Dismissal from C.E.S. Programs: C.E.S. reserves the right to dismiss a student from its program when a student engages in conduct on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity that is otherwise prohibited by C.E.S. policy, or code of student conduct in effect, that is 1) in violation of a publicized policy of C.E.S. or the student's local school district; and 2) is seriously disruptive of the educational process. In addition C.E.S. reserves the right to dismiss a student from its program when C.E.S. determines that the C.E.S. program/service in which the student is enrolled does not meet his/her individual needs due to conduct or disciplinary issues, consistent with state and federal law.

COMMUNICATION

In its mission to promote each student's achievement and success, RCA works in partnership with parents and families. We encourage and welcome parent/guardian involvement.

Open House: We will have a virtual open house night in the fall. This will give parents the opportunity to learn about our program and what their students will be working on. We will have breakout rooms to "meet" a teacher from each department. The open house will be on Monday, September 15 at 7:00 pm. We will share Zoom codes as time gets closer.

Parent Teacher Conferences: If you wish to arrange a conference with a teacher, please contact our office in order to arrange a mutually agreeable time to meet.

Electronic Messaging: We use a message service that allows us to send parents e-mail messages in case of emergency school closings. Parents can also opt to receive text messages as well. Please see details on our website. Please be sure that your contact information is up to date. This can be done by calling our main office at 203-365-8857.

Messages to Teachers: Each of our teachers has an e-mail address which can be found on our website [RCA webpage](#). Teachers will respond to your messages, but please be aware that most of the teachers work at our school part-time and may not always be available to respond immediately. It is best when contacting a teacher to give that person an idea of

when and how best to contact you. You may also leave a message at our main office number 203-365-8857 for any of our teachers.

POPS: POPS (Parents Of Performing Students) is a parent organization that supports the work of our school and our students with scholarships, the yearbook and in other ways that make a difference for our students. This is a great way for parents to be involved in the life of our school. Parents of current students are automatically members of POPS and there is no fee to join. Volunteer interest forms are included at the end of this handbook.

Website: Our website is available from the C.E.S. main page rca.cestrumbull.org. Our school section includes an updated calendar of important events.

Revised 8/25

REGIONAL CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Student/Parent Contract

We have read the student Handbook for the Regional Center for the Arts and agree to abide by the rules and regulations.

Please Sign:

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

If the student is providing his or her own transportation, you must also complete the release below. This is in effect whether the student is a driver or a passenger in a private vehicle.

Driver of vehicle: _____

Owner of the vehicle: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ License Plate# and State: _____

I give permission for my child to travel to RCA via the above private transportation.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

REGIONAL CENTER FOR THE ARTS

“POPS” - Parents of Performing Students

POPS is a parent organization which supports the mission and programs of The Regional Center for the Arts. POPS also raises funds to provide scholarships for students planning to continue their performing arts education beyond high school. All parents of students currently attending RCA are automatically members of POPS. If you would like to opt OUT of being in POPS, please email them at RCAPOPS@gmail.com.

I am interested in volunteering to be part of the POPS organization. Please have someone get in touch to let me know how I can be helpful!

Your name: _____

Your student: _____

Your address: _____

Your phone: _____

Your email: _____

Signature

Date

In what ways would you like to volunteer?

- Baking for concession stand or special events
- Helping out at the concession stand for performances
- Helping decorate for dances or fundraisers
- Helping to build sets for performances
- Not sure - but I do want to actively help!