



63-65 Library Avenue
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rcpsvt.org

STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK 2025-2026

August 28, 2025

Dear RIS Families,

We are excited to start the 2025-2026 school year! We look forward to welcoming our returning students and, of course, our new third graders. Rutland Intermediate School sincerely hopes our students and families had a restful summer and are as eager as we are to begin an exciting new year of learning and academic exploration!

The following 2025-2026 school year handbook outlines specific practices, procedures, expectations, and district policies. This information aims to provide transparency, clarity, and clear communication with our students, parents, and guardians. **Please review this handbook with your child, sign the last page, and return it to school with your child.** This handbook is a working draft, and Rutland Intermediate School reserves the right to revisit and adjust our practices as necessary or address unforeseen needs. The school will convey any changes or enhancements to the practices contained in this handbook to all students, parents, and guardians and posted online.

We remain committed to the importance of the home-to-school partnership and the powerful impact of these relationships. We hope to continue to strengthen these important relationships. Please know that your voice is important to us. We value your input at any time and will specifically seek it three times a year through a Google survey.

We're excited for an incredible school year ahead and look forward to working closely with our students, parents/guardians, and families. Please don't hesitate to contact the school with any questions, concerns, or suggestions—you're always welcome to reach out.

Sincerely,

Christy Coloutti, Principal
Jane Richards, Assistant Principal
Jenna Whitehorne, Assistant Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section One: General Information	
Important Dates	4
Philosophy, Mission, and Goals	5
Home School Compact	6
Visitors	7
Office Location	8
Main Office Hours	8
Student Arrival	8
Attendance & Truancy.....	9
Tardiness	10
Dismissal	10
Parent Requested Dismissal	11
School Requested Dismissal	11
School Phone	11
Parent Teacher Organization	12
Parent Involvement	12
Section Two: Academic Information	
Assemblies/Concerts	12
Confidential Biographical Information	12
Counseling Resources	13
Educational Support Team	13
Field Trips	13
Internet	14
Multi-Language Learning Services (MLL)	15
Parent/Guardian- Teacher Conferences	15
Parental Rights	15
Report Cards	16
School Records	16
Standardized Testing	16
Textbooks/Chromebooks/School Materials	16
Section Three: Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports	
Expectations	17
Leaving School Grounds	19
Public Displays of Affection	19
Student Dress Code	19
Tobacco and Vape Use	19
Section Four: School Services/General Information	
Bicycle/Skateboard/Scooter Safety	20
Building and Grounds	20
School Meals	20
Breakfast	20
Lunch	21
Snacks	21

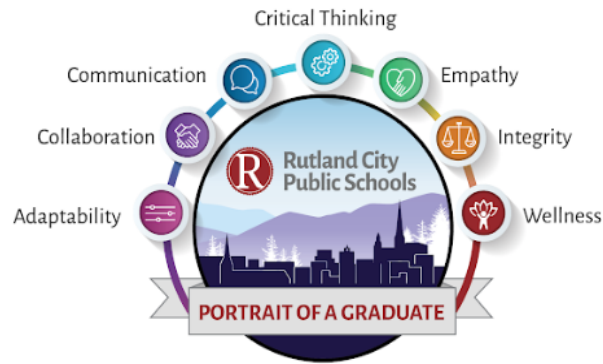
Transportation/Busing.....	21
Change of Address/Phone/Email	22
Electronic Devices	22
Evacuation/Fire Drills	22
Guest Teachers	23
Health Services and Medications	23
Injuries	24
Lost and Found	24
Playground/Recess	24
Restrooms	24
School Cancellations	24
School Notices	25
School Resource Officer (SRO)	25
Student Insurance	25
Tapestry	25
Volunteers	26
Section Five: Policies	
Student Records	26
Destruction of Student Records	26
Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure	26
Outside referrals	27
Responsibilities of Students	27
Interviews by Law Officials	27
Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying	28
Firearms, Weapons, and Fireworks	32
Search and Seizure	32
Safe Schools Ordinance (City of Rutland)	32
Video Surveillance Cameras	33
Family Engagement	34
Sign Off Form to Return to School	38

IMPORTANT DATES for STUDENTS
Rutland Intermediate School 2025-2026

8/27	First day of school
9/1	No School - Labor Day
9/17	Open House
9/17, 18, 19	Picture Day
10/9	Early release @11:30am, Afternoon & Evening Parent –Teacher Conferences
10/10	Parent Teacher Conferences from 8:00-12:00
10/13	No School - Indigenous Peoples’ Day
11/11	No School/Veterans Day
11/26-28	No School / Thanksgiving Break
12/22-1/2	Winter Recess, Students return 1/5/25
1/19	No School / Martin Luther King Jr. Day
2/16	No School Presidents’ Day
2/23-2/27	No School/Winter Recess
3/12	Early release @11:30am, Afternoon & Evening Parent –Teacher Conferences
3/13	No School / Parent Conferences 8:00-12:00
4/20-4/24	No School / Spring Recess
5/25	No School / Memorial Day
6/15	Tentatively scheduled last day of school for students

*School Calendar – see the attached one-page calendar for 2025-2026 at the end of this document.

SECTION 1 – General Information



PHILOSOPHY GOALS STATEMENT

Philosophy: Our Beliefs

- * We believe in preparing all children for the future within a nurturing, positive environment which stimulates academic excellence, creativity, self-expression, and lifelong learning.
- * We believe in personal/professional growth.
- * We believe education is a shared responsibility among teachers, students, parents, and the community.
- * We believe all children should display good citizenship which will result in respect for self, property, and others.
- * We believe that all children learn in different ways and should be in a learning environment conducive to their academic abilities, growth, and development.
- * We believe in a strong core curriculum based on national and state standards.

Mission Statement: Our Intentions

RIS is committed to developing an environment that facilitates academic excellence through a core curriculum supported by students, teachers, parents, and the Rutland community. We involve students in experiences across various settings to increase independence and community participation, develop individual goals, and enhance academic and social responsibility.

In our efforts to reach each child, we recognize and respect different learning styles and various intelligences. We encourage students to demonstrate individual strengths and needs while participating in various curricular/co-curricular activities that will prepare them for our ever-changing world.

Our faculty is dedicated to ongoing professional growth and development that motivates and inspires lifelong learning for everyone.

Goals:

- * To instruct a strong core curriculum that meets state and national standards.
- * To promote citizenship by integrating social curriculum into our learning environment.
- * To meet with parents and students to develop individual goals during parent conferences.
- * To include our students in the community through field trips, community projects, student displays, and presentations.
- * To provide children with opportunities to learn in different ways through a variety of teaching approaches and strategies, such as cooperative learning, team teaching, thematic teaching, and implementing student accommodations.
- * To measure each student's growth through formal and informal assessments such as teacher observation, student-peer evaluation, as well as traditional testing methods.
- * To continue staff professional growth through educational opportunities that broaden and strengthen knowledge and skills.

HOME SCHOOL COMPACT

The staff and parents/guardians at Rutland Intermediate School must have high expectations of themselves and the students at the school. To provide the highest quality instructional program for the students of RIS and to show how the school and family are working together to educate the children, the parents/guardians and their students agree to accept the following responsibilities as outlined in the School District's Home/School Compact.

Purpose:

To clarify our shared responsibilities for ensuring a positive school experience for all children, and to symbolize that partnership, this Compact is offered in the spirit of cooperation. We encourage parents and guardians to take these responsibilities very seriously. This document serves as a visible reminder to all of us at school and at home to work together in the best interest of our children.

Faculty and Administration of the Rutland City Public Schools will:

- * maintain a safe, orderly environment most conducive to teaching and learning;
- * treat all children and their parents with the respect and dignity they would wish for their own family;
- * enhance communication through orientations, open houses, and parent/teacher meetings;
- * encourage parents to contact us by telephone, voicemail, and/or email at school;
- * provide regular progress reports regarding student achievement;

- * assign meaningful and productive homework daily, according to school policy;
- * insist upon high expectations for student performance in and out of the classroom.

Parents/Guardians of Rutland City Public School Children are encouraged to:

- * attend school events including open houses and parent/teacher meetings;
- * treat school personnel with the respect and dignity that parents wish for their children;
- * supervise the completion of homework assignments, encourage reading, and monitor the viewing of television, video games, and use of social media, especially on school nights;
- * promote regular attendance, promptness, and readiness for school;
- * minimize medical/dental appointments and family vacations taken during school days;
- * contact teachers by telephone, voicemail, or email at school whenever appropriate;
- * volunteer to help in the school/classroom in a way that supports their child's education, and celebrates student performance in and out of the classroom.

Rutland Public School students will:

- * strive to be their best in school and to conduct themselves with dignity and respect at all times;
- * follow rules and guidelines regarding academic performance and proper personal conduct.

Note: Copies of the Rutland Intermediate Student Family Handbook are sent home at the beginning of each new school year. Parents or guardians are asked to sign off that they have reviewed the handbook and return the signed form with their student to school.

VISITORS

Ensuring the safety of all the occupants of our school facilities is a primary concern at RIS.

Please note the following:

- All visitors to RIS must sign in at the Library Ave./Keefe Gym/RMS entrance;
- All those wishing to gain access to the school facility should have a designated appointment and purpose for coming to RIS;
- In the event a visitor does not have an appointment, the school secretary will do her best to schedule a time to meet or connect with you in some other way;
- If a visitor is allowed into the building, they should plan to present a driver's license or some form of ID. Once visitors' and guests' ID are recorded, they will be provided with a pass to be worn while in the building;
- Parents or guardians picking up students from the nurse will be notified by the school nurse and use the Library Ave./Keefe Gym/RMS door when called for pick up. In the

event the nurse needs to speak with the family member, the nurse will accompany the student to the designated door or you will be directed to go to the nurse's office.

RIS believes in the importance of working with families to improve the learning outcomes of our students.

OFFICE LOCATION

Christy Coloutti, Principal, is located adjacent to the Main Office on the main floor. Student concerns and the daily operations of RIS are the primary focus of this office. Veronica Carrier is the Administrative Assistant for this office and can be reached at 773-1932.

Jane Richards, Assistant Principal, is located on the third floor in the sixth-grade wing. Ms. Richards serves as the administrator overseeing Curriculum and Data, ESTs, and HHBs.

Jenna Whitehorne, Assistant Principal, is located on the main floor unjust across from the main office. Mrs. Whitehorne serves as the administrator overseeing Special Education and 504 Plans.

Ed Dechen, Director of Student Engagement, is located on the upper corridor in addition to the catwalk.. Mr. Dechen leads our MTSS to support students and staff with community building, student engagement, and restorative approaches.

RIS Administrators work together as a team and often share responsibilities. Parents/guardians and others who wish to speak with school administrators are encouraged to call in advance and make an appointment.

MAIN OFFICE HOURS

School offices are open from 7:45 am to 3:30 pm each weekday. The official school day for students is 8:00 am - 2:22 pm.

STUDENT ARRIVAL

Students walking to school or using car drop-off will enter the school using the Church Street Entrance starting at 7:50 AM. If a student is a bus rider, they will be dropped off in front of the school at the Library Avenue entrance. Doors will remain locked until 7:50 AM each day, regardless of weather. Please plan accordingly.

Students wishing to have breakfast at school will be able to go directly to the cafeteria to pick up breakfast. They are then expected to proceed directly to their classrooms to eat breakfast and prepare for the day.

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Regular attendance is important, not only because it helps the student stay up-to-date with daily learning objectives, but it also helps the child develop good working habits and solid friendships.

If your child is too ill to attend school, please call Kim Newton at 786-1936 and follow the prompts for student attendance. If a child is absent and we have not heard from a parent, we will

contact you at home or work using your contact information. If we are unable to reach you, we will attempt to call the person listed as an emergency contact. This process will assure both school and home that a child has not had an accident or changed direction on the way to school. A call from a student reporting his/her own absence will not be accepted.

A phone call notifying RIS of a student's absence does not take the place of a **written excuse** after the absence. Per Vermont guidelines, after 10 days absent, a student who does not have a written excuse for illness will be counted as an **unexcused absence**.

After a student has missed **10 excused** days of school, RIS requires a note from a doctor or a related health professional. If there are any further absences, the child may be considered truant.

When a student is ill, homework may be requested by calling the teacher's voicemail number before noon. Otherwise, when the student returns, it is their responsibility to work with the teacher to make up the work that was missed. Unfortunately, homework assignments alone cannot take the place of classroom instruction, projects, demonstrations, or discussion. Upon return to school, students need to check on what they have missed and seek assistance in addressing any gaps.

***If a student is absent from school, they will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored after-school function, such as a concert or club.**

Any student who is expected to be out of school because of a serious illness (homebound/hospitalized instruction) for more than 10 consecutive days is entitled to a tutor in order to maintain their skill level. Please obtain a doctor's written order and contact the school if this situation occurs.

School vacations are planned to give students the opportunity to travel and visit relatives who live great distances. We encourage you to plan any trips during these times. If you are unable to do so, please prepare a plan for your child's instruction while away. You will be responsible for providing for your child's educational needs. **Trips of more than three days** require an approved plan signed by the principal at least one week prior to your departure. Time off requests will not be granted for more than 10 total days in one school year. Teachers will not be required to provide work for your child. As work is presented in the classroom, it can be set aside for your child to complete upon their return. You may need to help your child with any new tasks missed while away. Your child will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete this work.

COURT APPOINTMENTS FOR MULTIPLE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Parents of students who have excessive absences will receive additional school correspondence.
2. Notices will be sent home after 10 days of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.
3. Once a child has reached the 10 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES mark, a meeting will be set up with the student, the parent(s), the classroom teacher, a counselor, and an administrator to resolve the attendance issue. Additionally, a Balanced and

- Restorative Justice (BARJ) and representative from DCF will be invited to attend.
4. If a child reaches the 20 day UNEXCUSED ABSENCES mark, the school district is mandated to send a *20 day UNEXCUSED ABSENCES letter to the State's Attorney and* carbon copies (CC) to the Department of Children and Family (DCF). This is a directive of the Rutland County State's Attorney.
 5. The court will decide whether to set up an appointment with the student and parents to review the attendance record.

TARDINESS

All RIS students will be starting each school day with a morning meeting and relationship building period, referred to as Community Block. We are confident that this time will establish an environment that is nurturing and supportive of students. As such, punctuality at school is extremely important. All students arriving after 8:10 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students arriving after 11:30 a.m. will not be able to participate in after-school or evening activities.

DISMISSAL

The school must have any special custodial arrangements, dealing with who may or may not pick up children, **in writing**, for the protection of your child. Please do not call the school and leave a message regarding a change in dismissal for that day. Messages may not be heard until after dismissal.

The process of dismissal for almost 500 students in a period of about fifteen minutes requires student and parent cooperation. Dismissal starts promptly at 2:22 pm. The current system is as follows:

Students riding the bus will be dismissed from the front doors (Library Avenue Entrance) and escorted to the bus driveway in front of the school. **No cars may enter into or park in the front bus driveway. This driveway is for buses only and is labeled as such.** *Students are not allowed to change buses for any reason. If daycare changes, those changes need to be made clear to our maintenance department ahead of time. If a child is on the wrong bus, they will be brought back to school and a call will be made home.*

Students being picked up by parents in cars will be dismissed from the Church Street exit. In keeping with Vermont State law and Rutland City Public Schools' policy, all school grounds are idle-free zones. Vehicles may idle for up to 5 minutes according to law and policy, but we request that all cars be turned off upon stopping on school property.

Parents and other drivers **must** use the curved driveway off Church Street for pickup and dropoff purposes. **Please do not enter the driveway until directed to do so by a staff person. No parking of cars in the circular driveway is allowed during student dismissal.** When picking up a child, please line up on the west side of Church Street, alongside the playground, and make a right turn into the Church Street circle. For everyone's safety, *parents are asked not to make a left turn into the circle from Church Street coming from Library Avenue.*

***Please do not park in the street on Church Street or the ends of the side streets, such as Kendall Avenue or Chestnut, and expect your child to walk to your car. Parking of cars on the side streets causes congestion, and buses have difficulty making it through the tight**

streets. More importantly, it becomes a safety concern for our students.

Students walking will be dismissed from one of two exits depending on the destination. One group will use the Church Street (*Walkers East*) door. These students are headed towards North Church Street and Lincoln Avenue. Another group will be walked to Grove Street through the door under the catwalk between RIS and RMS (*Walkers West*). Those students needing to cross Grove Street will be walked to the corner by RIS staff to meet the crossing guards. Issues that occur when walking home from school, once students are off school property, should be referred to the Rutland City Police Department. Meeting your student at the crosswalk is the best way to ensure they will make it home safely. Please remind your student/s to obey crossing guards and to use the sidewalk. Failure to follow these rules will result in a referral to the School Resource Officer (SRO).

Students riding bicycles will be dismissed from the door on Church Street. **Please remind your child to lock their bicycle every day and wear a helmet!** RCPS is not responsible for stolen property.

Changes in homebound transportation (buses, car riders, walkers)

When there is a change in the way your child will go home or a change in the person who will pick your child up, it is necessary to send a note to the child's teacher providing this information. **Students are not allowed to change buses for any reason. If daycare changes, those changes need to be made clear to our maintenance department ahead of time.** Your understanding and support of this are greatly appreciated.

PARENT REQUESTED DISMISSAL

Students who need to be dismissed early must have **written consent** from the parent or guardian. Students must be accompanied to an appointment when dismissed during the school day. Children must be signed out by a guardian.

**Please note: the child will not be waiting for the parent at the entrance. Please plan a minimum of five minutes for children to move from their classroom to the Library Ave/Keefe Gym entrance for dismissal.*

SCHOOL REQUESTED DISMISSAL

In the event of an accident, illness, or other problem, it may be necessary to dismiss a child from school. Having accurate and updated emergency contact information is essential in order to ensure the health and well-being of all our learners. Please return school forms, with updated emergency contact information that is complete and accurate. Notify the school if any changes occur. Please include the telephone number of a parent, guardian, relative, or neighbor who would care for your child in Rutland City. This is required. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

SCHOOL PHONE

The phone number for the Intermediate School is 773-1932. Parents may leave messages for teachers in their voicemail, and messages regarding attendance should be left by following the recorded instructions.

Students may use the phone only if the call is related to school activities. They will not be allowed to call home to make after-school plans. We discourage calls home asking parents to bring in forgotten items. Please help your student/s develop a routine for being responsible for school items.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

RIS has a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), which meets monthly to plan family activities and organize fundraisers to support school programs. The PTO will meet once a month from 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. There is an option to join virtually. Please refer to the newsletter, “What’s Buzzin’ at RIS?” or school website for the exact dates of our PTO meetings.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

RCPS Policy for Parent Involvement (number 3142)

The Rutland City Board of School Commissioners and schools shall seek to involve parents in the education of their children by employing the strategies outlined in school handbooks and administrative procedures. Coordination and integration of Rutland Public Schools’ strategies for parental involvement are coordinated with other Rutland City programs, such as Head Start and other federally funded or state-run programs, and will be accomplished through the collaborative agreement in place at the primary schools

*We invite all parents to present the school administration with any ideas or thoughts on services that would support all of our students within our school-wide plan.

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC INFORMATION

ASSEMBLIES/CONCERTS

A variety of educational experiences are presented through assemblies or concerts. We hope these events will be interesting, informational, and fun. Students will be expected to be follow our schoolwide expectations at these events. Specific behavioral guidelines for assemblies are reviewed at the start of the year. Behavioral guidelines remain in place for evening events. *Students wishing to attend performances outside of the school day must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 18.* All those attending must respect school rules and abide by concert etiquette, to include:

- Turning cell phones off and only using them outside of the performance/activity area.
- Restricting movement (entering/exiting) to transition times only.
- Displaying quiet behaviors and voices.
- Applauding politely and only at appropriate times.

CONFIDENTIAL BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Annual Notification of Designation of Directory Information and Right of Refusal:

Schools in the Rutland City Public School District may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students without the prior consent of the parent of eligible students, and without any records of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information are included in directory information:

- Student's name, address, date of birth, dates of enrollment;
- Parent or legal custodian's name and address;
- Student's grade level classification;
- Student's participation in recognized school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of member of athletic teams; and
- Student's diplomas, certificates, awards and honors received.

Disclosure may include such personally identifiable information contained or reflected in photographs. If you are an eligible student and are currently attending Rutland City Public Schools, or if you are the parent of a student currently attending Rutland City Public Schools, you have a right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of these types of information as directory information concerning your child by providing written notice of your refusal, listing the type(s) of information which you refuse to have so designated, to the principal of the school your child attends on or before the opening day of the school year

COUNSELING RESOURCES

Our mission is:

- to support children's education by finding and encouraging their strengths
- to support family's efforts in raising healthy and happy children
- to build relationships between school, home and the community
- to help families in meeting basic needs
- to consult with children, families, school staff and community members towards resolution of identified concerns
- to help children remain secure in unsafe or risky situations
- to consult with and support teachers in all of their efforts
- to respond to families in their homes or at school, to promote children's learning
- to connect children and families with potential community resources

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM (EST) The Vermont Agency of Education requires every Vermont public school to offer Educational Support Team services to students that may need additional support. The EST uses problem solving techniques to assess needs, identify resources, and follow the Multi-Tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) model adopted by the State of Vermont. The purpose is to assure each child's success in a regular classroom setting. The team will continue their involvement and support by developing a follow up plan, which may, if needed, recommend further adjustments, modifications and support. Parents are invited to participate in this process. For any questions or concerns about your student/s needs please contact your student's classroom teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips, both historical and cultural, are part of the curriculum. A general permission form for all trips will be distributed in September. Please sign and return promptly. If the permission slip is not signed, your child will not be allowed to attend field trips, and the school will make other arrangements for your child. *Parents will receive notification of each trip shortly before the actual date.* If you do not want your child to attend a particular trip, RIS will make arrangements for your child to remain with another class at school. A student who does not attend a field trip is still required to attend school that day. Parents may be asked to chaperone some of these trips.

Chaperones will need to complete a background check prior to being allowed to chaperone. Bus transportation for chaperones will be dependent on group size and availability per the administration. Chaperones should anticipate driving themselves to and from the field trip location.

It is the intent of the school that **all students will depart and return to RIS on the school bus and not be dismissed to a parent/guardian at the field trip location unless it is an **emergency and/or pre- approved** by school administration.*

****The school retains the right to exempt students from field trips when they have demonstrated an inability to control personal behavior and the behavior would interfere with the learning experience or jeopardize the safety of themselves, students or other community members. Note, as field trips are connected to deepening student understanding of the curriculum, removing a student from an out of school experience is a last resort as a means to reinforce student safety.**

The following process is to be adhered to:

- 1. The parent is notified **in advance** by the classroom teacher that a child's behavior is placing them at risk for not attending a field trip. The conversation should be around what the child needs to improve upon in order to attend the upcoming field trip.*
- 2. If the child's behavior does not improve, the classroom teacher calls the parent at least 24 hours in advance to let the parent know they are not attending.*
- 3. On the day of the field trip, the child will remain at RIS and be assigned either to another classroom or the office with work to complete independently.*

INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY USE

AT SCHOOL

The smooth operation of our Internet network system requires the proper conduct of its users who must follow guidelines explained in the Acceptable Use Contract. At the start of the school year, students and parents will receive a copy of this contract to review and sign. Signing the Acceptable Use Contract will allow students to access the Internet, under appropriate supervision, while at school. Please contact the main office if you have any questions about this contract. The contract is available on the RCPS website if further information is needed.

**Failure to comply with the Acceptable Use Contract can and may result in the termination of a student's ability to use any technology in RCPS for part of or the remainder of the school year.*

AT HOME

Your partnership in monitoring your child's screen time, social media platforms and applications is crucial to your child's social development and mental well-being. Applications' Terms of Services indicate the platform's age requirement in accordance with the U. S. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. While social media and technology can bring us closer together, these freedoms do come with great safety risks and dangers for users.

It's important to be aware of what your kids do online. The key is to stay involved in a way that makes your kids understand that you respect their privacy but want to make sure they're safe. Tell your kids that it's important to:

- **Be kind.** Mean behavior is not OK. Make it clear that you expect your kids to treat others with respect and to never post hurtful or embarrassing messages. Ask them to always tell you about any harassing or bullying messages that others post.
- **Think twice before hitting "enter."** Remind your child that what they post can be used against them. For example, letting the world know that you're off on vacation or posting your home address gives would-be robbers a chance to strike.
- **Follow the "WWGS?" (What Would Grandma Say?) rule.** Teach kids not to share anything on social media that they wouldn't want their teachers, relatives — and yes, grandma — to see.
- **Use privacy settings and read the Terms of Use policy.** Privacy settings are important. Go through them together to make sure your kids understand each one. Explain that passwords are there to protect them against things like identity theft. Passwords should never be shared with anyone, even a best friend.
- **Don't "friend" or "follow" strangers or influencers.** "If you don't know them, don't friend them." This is a plain, simple — and safe — rule of thumb.
- **Educate.** Explain to your child how application and social media platforms generate algorithms and "For You" pages based on the posts, videos, photographs that they like, watch, and in many cases, auto-populate through audio and microphone. Additionally, applications and platforms are designed to keep users continuously engaged (think of a slot machine). This design can lead your child to many endless and mindless hours scrolling through posts that expose them to inappropriate and/or risky content.

MULTI- LANGUAGE LEARNING (MLL) SERVICES

Rutland City Public School's Multit-Language Learners are identified upon enrollment or through a referral process to the MLL Coordinator. Information about these services may be obtained through the administration at RIS.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled during October and March. Students will be dismissed early on these days. Teachers are also available to consult with parents at any time during normal school hours or directly before or after school, upon request. If you wish to have a conference, please contact your teacher through the voicemail system or by email.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND CONCERNS

You have a right to:

1. Inspect and review records
2. Challenge content of records
3. Obtain copy of records

Parents/guardians have the right to request information regarding the credentials of their child's teachers. They can request the teachers' level of certification, areas of licensure, and "highly qualified" status. Requests for information should be made in writing to the school building principal. The school requires 72 hours to process these requests to ensure that materials provided are thorough and accurate. We are unable to provide photocopies of information immediately.

In the event that a parent/guardian has a concern, please start by contacting your student's classroom teacher. If the concern cannot be resolved by the classroom teacher, reach out to a building administrator by contacting the RIS main office at 773-1932.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards are based on Year End Standards. Specifically, the report card will indicate how a student is progressing toward end of school year standards. This is based on a **0-4 scale** for all K-6 Rutland City Public Schools. Report cards will be distributed three times per year for all grades, with the exception of ART and GENERAL MUSIC, which will be distributed twice each school year (3rd and 4th grades will receive reports in the second and third trimester; 5th and 6th grades will receive reports in the first and third trimester.) While report cards are a good measure of how your child is doing in school, there is no substitute for a conversation with your child's teacher about how your child is doing in school.

SCHOOL RECORDS

The Principal is the legal custodian of all student records. Each student's records are kept on file and made available for parent/guardian review according to established guidelines. **Note:** Please give the office staff at least 3 days notice if you will need records copied. **Parents/guardians will not be granted a copy of records immediately without prior notification.** If a student transfers to another school, the new school will request the student's records, and RIS will mail the file directly to the new school.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program (VTCAP) - All grade 3 - 6 students will take the VTCAP in April, or May. Exact dates will be published in the "What's Buzzin' at RIS?" and posted to our website.

Vermont Science Assessment (VTSA) - Grade 5 students take the science assessment each spring as directed by the Agency of Education.

TEXTBOOKS/CHROMEBOOKS/SCHOOL MATERIALS

Textbooks, Chromebooks, chargers and a variety of other school materials are loaned to students throughout the school year. Students are asked to take proper care of them. Students are responsible for these borrowed materials and must pay the replacement cost if borrowed materials are lost or badly damaged. Students who do not pay the school for lost or damaged materials will not participate in any co-curricular activities until payment is made.

SECTION 3 – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

EXPECTATIONS

School rules essentially exist for four purposes:

- Be Kind
- Be Brave
- Be Your Best

- Be You!

Classroom Behavior:

RIS has fully adopted Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in conjunction with Restorative Practices. Students know their expectations as to what it means to **Be RIS! “Be Kind, Be Brave, Be Your Best, Be You!”** These frameworks emphasize positive choices and positive reinforcement over consequences for negative behaviors.

Rules and procedures are developed and modeled with students during the first few weeks of school and reinforced positively throughout the year. We also focus monthly on school-wide character traits. Classroom procedures for safeguarding these rights and promoting a pleasant and cooperative working environment are developed by the teacher with the class.

When teachers see a pattern of misbehavior, they will talk directly with the student in a quiet setting to discuss alternatives to misbehavior and to consider whether class activities or the pace of learning needs modification.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a basic value of Rutland Intermediate School. Research and teaching are possible only in an environment characterized by honesty and mutual trust. Academic integrity requires that one’s work be one’s own.

Behavioral Response:

Minor violations are handled in class with the teacher unless they are recurring frequently. The student will process with an adult to reflect on how one or more of the expectations were not followed. A referral will be made in response to a major school violation. We will use a restorative process to address the concerns/behavior. *The referring teacher is required by the School Administration to call the parent/guardian that day and explain why the major behavior observation referral form was completed.* This phone call serves to open the line of communication with the parents/guardians and the teacher. If a pattern of misbehavior is identified, the student, parents, teachers, counselors, and administration will together develop an appropriate behavior plan.

Lunchroom Behavior:

Our standards of behavior at lunchtime are similar to those during academic times. We encourage appropriate social interactions and believe that lunchtime provides an opportunity for students to engage in conversation. Good manners and the need for order are discussed with students. Serious misbehavior during lunch may result in the child being removed from the class at lunchtime to work with a counselor or staff member to assist with learning the necessary skills to be successful in the cafeteria. Intensive Repairs (formerly known as In-house suspension) will be used as a last resort. If misbehavior persists, a parent meeting will be scheduled by the administration.

Playground Behavior:

The playground is a place for fun and relaxation. Our expectations for playground behavior align with our expectations. Physical activity is a critical component to student success and our

students are encouraged to use recess as a period to be able to refocus for the remainder of the day. Appropriate activities that avoid rough and physical contact are allowed. Pushing and shoving on playground equipment and throwing snowballs can cause serious injury and are prohibited. This behavior will result in a “repair” through our restorative process. This typically consists of processing and reflecting with a counselor or staff member to assist with learning the necessary skills to be successful on the playground and connecting with the individual harmed by the actions.

At the beginning of each year, school personnel explain dangers to children and expect their cooperation in making recess a safe time. Serious misbehavior, such as fights, inappropriate language, etc., may result in loss of recess time and/or alternative plans related to recess time. Staff will work to provide opportunities for students to recognize the harm caused by the behavior and restore relationships with those who have been harmed.

School Safety Community:

We expect that students will work with us in helping to make the school a place where all students feel safe and welcome. At RCPS we use the motto “See something, say something.” We ask that students and adults report any safety concerns or the presence of strangers in or around the building immediately. We expect that students will keep their hands and feet in their own space, speak to others kindly, and follow adults' directions. Harassment, bullying, threats, and physical aggression are not acceptable and will necessitate a meeting with parents and corrective action per school district policies.

Serious Offenses:

Students displaying or engaging in the following behaviors should be referred directly to the school administration. These include but are not limited to:

- Harassment, hazing, and bullying
- Possession of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and/or paraphernalia
- Possession of weapons or dangerous items (pocket knives, box cutters, and any implement that can be potentially harmful).
- Destruction of school property/vandalism
- Elopement of the complex
- Threats to harm (RCPS Policy # 7492)

Disciplinary Measures for Serious Offenses:

Depending upon the circumstances and level of severity, it shall be the judgment of school administrators as to the appropriate disciplinary measures. These may include: Behavioral referral, Intensive Repair, out-of-school suspension from school, and expulsion from school, in accordance with the procedures and policies of the Rutland Public Schools. If physical damage or vandalism occurs to the school, restitution may be required. In addition, the School Resource Officer (SRO) may give a student a “Safe Schools” ticket that results in a court appearance. Parents will be notified as soon as reasonably possible and will be asked to meet with an administrator to discuss the matter.

Suspension:

Suspensions are assigned by the school administration and reflect the severity of the incident. An

Intensive Repair (formerly known as an In-House Suspension) results in students completing their assignments and engaging in a reflective, restorative process. Students completing Intensive Repairs do not attend recess, lunch in the cafeteria, grade level/school-wide celebrations, or extracurricular activities. An Out of School Suspension will result in the loss of all privileges during the period of suspension (school concerts, clubs, field trips, Field Days, etc.). The loss of privileges may extend beyond the period of suspension. Multiple suspensions may impact one's ability to attend other functions beyond suspension time.

Expulsion:

Vermont state law provides that a student may be expelled for up to 90 days for misconduct on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity. In addition, the superintendent or principal may immediately remove from school a pupil who poses a continuing danger to persons or property, an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school, or a pupil who brings a weapon to school. [16V.S.A.81162] A student may also be expelled in accordance with procedures adopted by the Rutland City School Board.

Appeal:

The student or parent or guardian of a student may appeal a suspension or expulsion by giving notice of appeal to the principal. The appeal shall be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Rutland City School Board. Suspensions are assigned at the discretion of the principal or the superintendent. The filing of an appeal shall not automatically stay the imposition of the suspension or expulsion

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Parents expect students to be in school throughout the entire school day. Therefore, students may not leave the building without written permission from their parent or designated adult and a dismissal slip from the office. The consequence for a student leaving school grounds without permission will entail RCPD being called, up to ten days of suspension, and a parent meeting.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Schools, like adult workplaces, are not appropriate locations for physical expressions of affection nor are relationship labels. Families will be contacted in the event of such an incident.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Student apparel should be suitable for school activities and weather appropriate. **Hats and hoodies are not allowed in the building.** Attire or footwear that is deemed by school personnel to be disruptive, exposing, viewed as harassing, or representing a safety or health hazard to the wearer or others is not allowed. Such attire would include, but is not limited to: *apparel that promotes violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, or obscene/derogatory language.* Student midriffs and bottoms must be completely covered at all times. Students will be required to change their attire if their apparel is inappropriate for school. We will ask your child to change if they are wearing pajama bottoms to school.

TOBACCO AND VAPE USE

RIS is a tobacco/vape-free facility. This includes the grounds that surround the building. No one (adult or student) is permitted to smoke, use chewing tobacco, or possess tobacco products on

school property. Electronic nicotine delivery or vaping devices (e-cigarettes) and associated materials are not permitted on school grounds. Students who violate this rule will be subject to suspension and referral to the SRO. All school-sponsored trips are included in this policy. In addition, it is a civil violation for a person under the age of 21 to possess or purchase tobacco products. Violations of this statute can result in fines and a delay in the issuing of a driver's license.

SECTION 4: SCHOOL SERVICES/GENERAL INFORMATION

BICYCLE/SKATEBOARD/IN-LINE/SCOOTER SAFETY

Students who ride bicycles to school should be reminded to wear helmets/protective equipment, not to ride double, to obey the traffic regulations, and to walk their bikes on any school property, including playground areas. We do not allow the use of skates, scooters, skateboards, or shoes with wheels at school at any time during the school day. Students may ride skateboards to school but must pick up and carry the boards on school property, just as bike riders must walk their bikes on and off school property. Students who do not obey these safety measures will be asked to leave their bicycles, scooters, or skateboards at home. Bike racks are located on the side of the building near the Church Street Circle. We strongly encourage bike locks and are not responsible for stolen bicycles, scooters, or skateboards.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Our complex is open for school between the hours of 7:55 AM and 2:45 PM. Tapestry uses our complex until 5:30 PM each day. Therefore, students not enrolled in Tapestry are not allowed to be on the grounds until after 5:30 PM.

We are fortunate to have a fantastic custodial staff, all of whom work hard to prepare the building and grounds for our students each day. RIS encourages students to do their part as community members in our school. Trash receptacles, compost bins, and recycling bins are placed throughout the building. Please discuss the importance of using the appropriate bin for items that must be discarded with your student.

SCHOOL MEALS

Meals are provided to all students at no charge. Purchases made beyond the first breakfast or lunch require payment, and a la Carte items must be paid for, they cannot be charged to a student or adult account unless there are funds in that account. The food service vendor outlines how the items may be paid - through cash or online accounts. Our vendor manages accounts and the collection and depositing of these funds in the school district accounts.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is available every morning in the cafeteria. Upon entering school, students wanting breakfast can go directly to the cafeteria, pick up their meals, and then go directly to class to eat.

LUNCH

The cafeteria provides a choice of menu for lunch. Lunch is free for all students regardless of income. Students will also be expected to compost any food scraps. Each student has a 20-minute lunch period. If your child has a specific allergy, such as peanuts or milk, please notify the school nurse and classroom teacher, who will then notify the cafeteria. The RIS/RMS cafeteria serves no nut products.

SNACKS

All students are encouraged to bring a *low-sugar*, healthy, mid-morning snack to keep energy high. The consumption of sugar-based and/or caffeinated drinks, such as soda, coffee and energy drinks are prohibited by school administration and will be confiscated. We ask that if students bring drinks from home, they are in clear containers. Water is always best for hydration. For the past several years, RPCS has participated in a USDA food grant supplying fresh fruit and vegetables for our snack three days per week.

TRANSPORTATION/BUSING

Bus transportation is provided for students who live outside the direct Intermediate School area. The Board of School Commissioners has determined that this *privilege* is conditioned on students complying with established rules. The most important factor in bus transportation is safety. RIS maintains its right to suspend busing privileges for students who demonstrate unsafe behaviors and have failed to reasonably respond to interventions to address problematic behaviors. RCPS buses are outfitted with cameras and microphones. These are used by the Administration and our SRO for bus incidents. RCPS retains the rights to these videotapes and will not provide a copy to the parent/guardian.

Bus Consequences

Bus drivers will issue a bus referral for students violating the rules for appropriate bus behavior stated below. The administration will address bus referrals. RIS has the following tiered disciplinary practices:

- First referral: Phone call, letter sent home, and conference with the student.
- Second referral: Phone call, letter sent home, and conference with the student and parent
- Third referral: Phone call, letter sent home, and removal from the bus for up to 5 days. If behaviors continue, removal from the bus may consist of an extended period of time, up to and including the remainder of the year.

The school bus is a privilege and not a requirement of the school district unless transportation is stipulated in a student's Individualized Education Plan. The school district must maintain appropriate safety and conduct of students on the bus. If a student is removed from the bus for any duration of time, the parent must arrange alternate transportation.

Bus Expectations

- Cell phones are kept away in backpacks.
- Be Your Best, use appropriate language.

- Please wait until you arrive at school or home to eat or drink.
- Help keep the bus clean.
- Cooperate with the driver's instructions.
- Stay in your seat, keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus and out of aisles.
- The bus driver is authorized to assign seats to students.
- Be kind, physical or verbal aggression/abuse toward others will not be tolerated.
- Smoking/vaping prohibited.

Bus Stops

Students are expected to be on time at the designated bus stop. **Student behavior at the bus stop is the responsibility of the parent; RIS staff members do not supervise these areas.** We kindly ask those parents who walk students to the bus stop to remain there until the bus arrives.

Switching buses or bus stops: Students may not get off the bus anywhere other than their assigned bus stop unless the school has a letter from the parents/guardian requesting such permission be granted. Since our buses are full, we cannot allow students to change buses to visit another child even with a parent/guardian note. Students who do not regularly ride the bus may not ride a bus without school approval, even with parental permission. Students must get on the bus at their assigned location in the morning. We encourage consistency in transportation plans.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/EMAIL

Please inform the main office of any address, phone number, or email changes. This will help us maintain good communication and contact you if the need arises. This includes up-to-date information on emergency contacts listed for your student/s.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES INCLUDING CELL PHONES

Student/family owned cell phones, wearable personal devices (smartwatches, earbuds), and gaming devices are to be turned off and stored away in a backpack or locker during the school day, including bus times. These personal items are prohibited from student use during the school day. **We encourage these devices and other items (toys, sporting equipment, games) to be left at home to avoid any problems.** The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. For recurring violations, confiscation of said items will occur, as well as disciplinary action including a parent meeting with the student and a school administrator.

EVACUATION/FIRE DRILLS

Students and staff at RIS follow the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) for emergency procedures developed by the I Love U Guys Foundation. These procedures are reviewed with students throughout the year. In addition, we promote “See Something, Say Something” as a community-wide safety expectation.

The law requires regularly scheduled fire and evacuation drills. Teachers will review these procedures with their class. When the evacuation occurs, students and staff leave the building immediately in a quiet and orderly manner. Teachers take attendance once students have arrived at their safe location. Students are to remain at “No Voices” for the duration of the fire or

evacuation drill. This is to maintain the safety of our learning community.

GUEST TEACHERS

When a teacher is absent, the school will employ a guest teacher. We expect the teaching/learning process to continue, uninterrupted. We also expect the guest teachers to be treated with the same respect and courtesy given to the full-time teacher.

HEALTH SERVICES AND MEDICATIONS

The Health Office is located opposite the cafeteria, with a nurse available at all times for illness or injury. Each student has a health record. In order to keep these records valuable and useful, significant health concerns need to be relayed to the school nurse by the student's parent/guardian. Information such as allergies, current medications, fractures, and head injuries, can be key information for the school to utilize in planning appropriate educational activities.

All students must have an emergency sheet on file in the health office. The emergency sheet should include all medications a student currently takes, including instructions and any important medical background information. Please be sure we have the most up-to-date information about your child's health history. Per Vermont law, all children must have a record of current immunizations on record at school.

Medications:

If a student must take any form of medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, parents must file a medication form with the nurse. Medications prescribed three times per day or less generally can be given at home, before and after school, and during the evening. *We cannot administer a pain reliever without written permission.* Forms are available in the nurse's office or from a secretary. **At no time is a student to have prescription medication in their possession.**

Vision and hearing screenings, along with height and weight checks, are done according to state regulations. Nutritional and dental assessments occur as necessary. Parents/Guardians are contacted if problems are identified or suspected. Parents/Guardians have the option to decline any and all screenings by contacting the school administration in writing.

Contagious diseases, such as head lice, scabies, bed bugs, COVID, and bacterial infections need to be reported to the school nurse.

Head Lice: Rutland Intermediate School follows the *RCPS Policy #7692* for all cases of Head Lice.

Medical Excuses from Physical Education and Recess: Participation in recess and physical education is recognized as an important function of the school day. Students will not be excused from participation unless a written note from the student's physician exempts the student from such activity. Reentry dates need to be provided by the physician.

INJURIES AT SCHOOL

Students must report **any** injury that occurs during the school day to the nurse as soon as possible. We cannot be responsible for the proper care of an injury unless it is reported immediately. Please remind your child that they are not in a position to decide whether an injury is serious. It is up to the nurse to make that determination. The parent or guardian will be contacted if the nurse deems this to be necessary.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find misplaced articles are asked to bring them to the main office where they may be claimed by the owner. Items that are not claimed will be collected through trimesters. Near the end of each trimester, unclaimed items will be given to a community service agency.

PLAYGROUND/RECESS

All students will have recess, unless it is their music lesson; or they have been asked to stay in for an academic/disciplinary reason, or their doctor has written a note concerning a health issue. Students should be prepared for outdoor play, with appropriate clothing, such as sweaters, winter parka, hat, mittens, and appropriate footwear. Students not appropriately dressed for the weather will still be expected to go outside; however, their play and ability to move around the playground will be limited. While we do not take children outdoors when it is steady rain, we often go out when it is sprinkling or the ground is wet. If the temperature drops below 10 degrees, including wind chill, we do not take students outside.

*-Cell phones and other electronic devices **are not allowed** on the playground and are subject to being confiscated by school personnel until a parent/guardian can come pick up the device.*

We do not have available staff to supervise children whose parents request that they remain inside during recess. Therefore, if a child has a chronic or occasional health problem that necessitates they remain indoors, we require a doctor's written and signed order with reasons and expected duration. In these instances, an alternative plan will be implemented.

RESTROOMS

Students are expected to do their part to keep the restrooms neat and clean. Misbehavior in the restrooms may involve student discipline and a referral to a private, single bathroom for student use. Students are to follow the "two person" rule for the bathrooms. There should be no more than two people in the bathrooms at one time and no more than two people waiting outside the bathrooms at one time.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

Rutland City Public Schools uses an automated system referred to as "School Messenger" for all cancellations/delays. At the time of printing, the school closings/delays are also made over the local radio stations, WSYB, and WJJR after 6:00 AM.

It has been the procedure of the Rutland Schools that when inclement weather begins after students are safely at school, we will likely not dismiss early. The logistics of contacting parents to ensure that a child would be supervised at home is too difficult. It is felt that children are safer in the school building until the usual dismissal time. If a parent finds it necessary on such a day to pick up a child earlier, permission will be granted to do so. If the opening of school is delayed, an announcement will be made and dismissal times will remain at 2:22 PM.

SCHOOL NOTICES

The school makes every effort to publish a monthly newsletter, known as the “What’s Buzzin’ at RIS” and will post it to the school’s website. We will post school communications on both our Facebook page and RIS website. If you need a hard copy sent to you instead, please notify the main office to request paper copies. If you utilize social media, we encourage you to follow us on Facebook.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (S.R.O.)

The School Resource Officer is assigned to work with students throughout the district. The S.R.O. focuses on developing rapport with students, presenting information to students on various crime prevention subjects, providing law enforcement resource assistance to school personnel, parents, and students, and identifying and counseling young people. Through these activities, the S.R.O. helps students, parents, and educators develop a better understanding of the role of the law enforcement officer, thus creating a more positive concept of our legal and judicial system.

STUDENT INSURANCE

The school offers insurance to students for accidents and mishaps that occur during the school year. Parents need to fill out the insurance forms and return them directly to the insurer. Students participating in co-curricular activities are required to have insurance coverage whether it is through the school or not.

TAPESTRY

Tapestry is the RCPS afterschool and summer (out-of-school) program for K-6. Tapestry provides intentional programming to promote a culture of learning in tandem with our schools and support youth as they transition from grade to grade and school to school. They do this by providing opportunities for youth to do things they enjoy, and by exploring new things.

Tapestry is a 21st Century Community Learning Centers and State of Vermont Licensed Child Care Centers, which means that we are highly regulated for the safety of kids and staff, and that we embrace continuous quality improvement, to provoke learning and inquiry, for students and staff.

Afterschool programs begin the Monday after Labor Day (9/8/25) and run from the end of the school day until 5:30 pm daily. Currently, Tapestry does not operate on school breaks or half-days. Summer programming is full day, 8:00 am-5:30 pm, typically, for seven weeks, beginning during the last week of June.

We serve Rutland Intermediate School (RIS) students at the RIS campus. Bus transportation home at the end of the day is available for students outside of the walking radius.

To learn more about Tapestry at Rutland Intermediate School, please contact Marie Gilmond, Tapestry Director at Marie.Gilmond@rcpsvt.org, or (802)786-1935. You can also reach the administrative office at (802)786-1959 or info@tapestry-epic-afterschool.org.

VOLUNTEERS

We welcome volunteers to participate in before, during, and after school activities. Please call the school if you'd like to help the RIS community in some capacity. The main office phone number is 773-1932, or reach out directly to your child's teacher. One volunteer program offered at RIS is "Rutland Reads." This is a reading program in which community members read to students on a regular basis. We look forward to connecting our community readers with our students this year. If you are interested in volunteering to read with a student throughout the school year, please call the main office and we will be happy to help get you started.

SECTION 5 - POLICIES

The following items are the result of federal, state and local law as well as Rutland Public Schools' District Policy:

STUDENT RECORDS

(Rutland Public Schools District Policy #7370 in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) The Principal is the legal custodian of all student records. Parents of students (and eligible students over the age of 18) have the right to inspect the student's education records; request amendments to them; consent to disclosure of certain information; and file complaints with appropriate agencies. A copy of the school's policy regarding student's records and their disclosure is available from the Office of the Superintendent of the Rutland Public Schools.

DESTRUCTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Rutland High School will maintain cumulative student records for approximately five years after graduation. Each summer the records of the graduating class from five years earlier will be destroyed. IEPs and the last comprehensive evaluation will be retained for appropriate students. Rutland High School will keep students' transcripts in perpetuity.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy #7430: Students of the Rutland City School District shall not knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any drug prohibited by law on any property under the control of the school and at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school. Students shall comply with all training and co-curricular policies. For purposes of clarification, the following categories are identified:

- a) Students exhibiting inappropriate behavior which may be related to use/abuse of alcohol and/or drugs;
- b) Students under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs;
- c) Students in possession of alcohol, drugs, and/or drug paraphernalia;
- d) Students selling or furnishing alcohol, drugs, and/or drug paraphernalia.

Students who are experiencing problems with alcohol and/or drugs are in need of assistance. The type of assistance needed may vary; however, the school system is committed to provide the most appropriate response to each individual.

The actions identified in the Administrative Handbook will be considered routine disciplinary measures for each category. In incidents where extreme violations occur, the specified actions may be waived by administration in favor of stronger measures such as longer suspensions (not to exceed 10 days), expulsion, or other appropriate measures. Similarly, Administration may consider lesser penalties or alternative measures in situations that may warrant a change in routine policy. Any adjustments to routine policy will be explained in a written report and sent

to the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: V.S.A. Title 16, Section 1165

Reviewed and Affirmed: 9/25/18

Supersedes policy of: 1998 & 2009

TOBACCO USE POLICY:

Tobacco Use Policy #7440: It is the policy of the Rutland City School District that no student at any time shall possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit any tobacco product, electronic nicotine cigarettes, “vape” products or any related paraphernalia on school owned or leased property or at any school sponsored activity off school grounds. Any student in possession of any of the above shall have the product confiscated immediately by an employee and reported to the principal or his/her designee who shall make a referral to law enforcement.

Consequences for the student shall be consistent with the discipline procedures in the individual schools.

Consistent with state statutes, 16 VSA §140, no person, including adults, shall be permitted to use tobacco on school grounds.

Legal Reference: V.S.A. Title 16 §140

Reviewed and Affirmed: 9/25/18

Supersedes Policy of: 2014

OUTSIDE REFERRALS - Students, staff, and parents will be given information, when necessary, about outside agencies and encouraged to take advantage of their services and programs. The Rutland Public School System has arranged to work cooperatively with AIRC, Rutland Mental Health, Inc., Balanced and Restorative Justice, and Evergreen Center in assisting students who have alcohol and/or drug related problems. The outside referral process shall be made by appropriate administrative personnel with input as necessary from guidance counselors, school nurses, teaching staff, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS - All students are responsible for understanding the Rutland Public Schools' Substance Abuse policy. Students who voluntarily request assistance or counseling where no offense has occurred as specified in this section of school policy, will not be punished. It is the intent of the School System to provide students experiencing alcohol and/or drug problems with all possible assistance and support.

“Any student who commits a second offense, in the same year, of the school district’s policy may not represent the school and consequently the student will immediately be dismissed from all co-curricular activities (athletic and non-athletic) for the remainder of the school year.”

INTERVIEWS BY LAW OFFICIALS

- 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.
- A student in school may not be interviewed by any authority without the knowledge of the school administrator and knowledge and permission of parent or guardian, unless the interview is part of a child abuse or neglect investigation conducted by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services in accordance with Chapter 49 of Title 33 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated.
- Any interview by non-school personnel must be conducted in private with the principal or his or her designee present.
- A student may not be released to the custody of persons other than the parent or legal guardian, unless placed under arrest by legal authority.

- If a student is removed from the school by legal authority, the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) should be notified of this action by school officials as soon as possible.
- No questioning by non-school personnel of a student under the age of eighteen who may be accused of an offense shall occur unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) have been notified and have been given the opportunity to be present at the time of the questioning. Questioning may, however, take place without notification of parents if such questioning is required due to an emergency or urgent potential danger to life, or property, as determined by the principal, and reasonable efforts to notify the student’s parents are unsuccessful.

HARASSMENT/HAZING/BULLYING

POLICY Rutland City Public Schools	Policy Number 7400
	Student

Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students

I. Statement of Policy

The Rutland City Public School District (hereinafter “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.

It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont’s Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful hazing and bullying of students. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board’s disciplinary policies, the school’s code of conduct, school rules regarding behavior, or expectations for employees.

II. Implementation

The superintendent or his/her designee shall:

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy.
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.

3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.
4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

Serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. It may also involve penalties or sanctions for both organizations and individuals who engage in hazing. Revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the District's purview may also be considered if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes or condones hazing.

III. Constitutionally Protected Speech

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 policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

IV. Definitions. For the purposes of this policy and the accompanying procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. **"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.
- B. **"Complaint"** means an oral or written report information provided 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 hazing, harassment or bullying.
- C. **"Complainant"** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment or bullying.
- D. **"Designated employee"** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.

- 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, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.
- F. **“Equity Coordinator”** is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race- based discrimination) for the District and for coordinating the District’s compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the District’s *Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees* policies. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.
- G. **“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 disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, 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.

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

- (1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations 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.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive so as to deny or limit the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program on the basis of sex.

(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.

- H. **“Hazing”** means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

- (1) Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (1) The goals are approved by the educational institution; and
- (2) The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

With respect to Hazing, “**Student**” means any person who:

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

- I. “**Notice**” means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment or bullying, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school’s response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment or bullying.
- J. “**Organization**” means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.
- K. “**Pledging**” means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- L. “**Retaliation**” is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying 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.
- M. “**School administrator**” means a superintendent, principal or his/her designee assistant principal//technical center director or his/her designee and/or the District’s Equity Coordinator.
- N. “**Student Conduct Form**” is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

This policy replaces the following policies upon its adoption by the Board of School Commissioners:

Policy 7400: "Prevention of Harassment of Students"
Policy 7401: "Policy on the Prevention of Bullying of Students"
Policy 7493: "Hazing"

First Reading: February 23, 2016

Second Reading:

Adoption: February 23, 2018

FIREARMS, WEAPONS, & FIREWORKS

Student possession or use of firearms, weapons, knives, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, or any potentially dangerous devices or substances of any kind are forbidden and will result in immediate suspension, possible expulsion and legal action. [RPS Policy 7490]

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

- Desks, lockers, textbooks and other materials 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 emergency, they will be confiscated and a report will be made to the Principal who will determine whether further investigation is warranted.
- School property may also be searched by school employees upon reasonable suspicion on the part of the Principal, 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.
- Searches of students' persons or vehicles will be conducted if there is reasonable cause 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.
- A copy of the Search and Seizure Policy [7450] can be found in its entirety in the Principal's Office.

CITY OF RUTLAND - SAFE SCHOOLS ORDINANCE

On February 28, 1995, the City of Rutland Board of Aldermen passed Ordinance Number 187. Following is a condensed version of the ordinance and its purpose. A complete copy may be obtained at City Hall or from our Main Office.

The people of the City of Rutland find it necessary to prevent disruption of the educational process by prohibiting individuals who have no educational purpose, who disrupt, or may disrupt the educational process from entering or remaining upon school premises during school hours. Further the safety and welfare of the public within school premises must be protected. **To this end, every school in the City of Rutland will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized use of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.**

It is important to point out that "school premises" means any building, public or private which is used primarily for educational purposes, the land upon which it is situated, and any (public) property within five hundred (500) feet of the land upon which the building is situated.

As part of the ordinance, a schedule of fines and waiver fees has been established as listed below:

Schedule of Fines for Violation of 25R0R 94610-4614

Section	Waiver Fine	Minimum Fine:
4611(a)(1)	75.00	50.00
4611(a)(2)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(1)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(2)	100.00	75.00

4611(b)(3)	100.00	75.00
4611(b)(4)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(5)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(6)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(7)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(8)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(9)	175.00	150.00
4611(b)(10)	175.00	150.00

Vermont State Law currently establishes that parents are, or can be, responsible for up to \$1,000.00 in fines or fees incurred by their children. It is, therefore, extremely important that everyone become familiar with the particulars of this ordinance.

Use of Video Surveillance Cameras *RCPS Policy Number 7411*

The Rutland City Public Schools Board of School Commissioners recognizes the District’s responsibility to promote order, safety, and discipline on school grounds. The Board recognizes the value of electronic surveillance systems in monitoring activity on school property in protecting the health, welfare, and safety of its students and staff, and to facilitate investigation of incidents on school grounds.

The Rutland City Public Schools Board of School Commissioners authorizes the use of video surveillance cameras in Busses, District buildings, and on District grounds to promote a safe school environment for students, staff and visitors, and to further maintain a safe and respectful environment.

The use of video surveillance equipment on school grounds and on other District property shall be supervised and controlled by the building administrator or his/her designee. At no time should students, staff, parents and/or community members have any expectation that anyone is monitoring events on the surveillance cameras as they occur. Nor should they assume that someone will immediately respond to an incident in progress. All incidents of concern need to be reported immediately to the administration.

Video cameras shall be placed in locations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent upon the recommendation of the site. Video cameras shall not be placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy (U.S. Const., 4 Am.; New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325 (1989)). The District shall provide written notice to staff, students and parents/legal guardians that video surveillance may occur on District property. The notice shall be present in student/family handbooks. This policy serves as written notice to all students, staff, and parents that video surveillance occurs on school property.

To the extent video images create student records or personnel records, the District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention and disclosure including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).

Video images obtained by the District shall be viewed by authorized District personnel as necessary. The District may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of Board policy, administrative regulations, building rules and other applicable law including but not limited to student and staff disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law.

The Superintendent shall prepare appropriate administrative regulations and written notice consistent with this policy.

Legal Reference: CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES U.S. Const., 4 Am.~ 20 USCA 1232(g) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Reviewed and Affirmed: 9/25/18
Supersedes policy of: 2016

SUBJECT: TITLE I, PART A FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Policy

It is the policy of Rutland City Public Schools (District) to plan and implement effective needs- based Title I and School wide Programs, with meaningful consultation and involvement of all participating parents and family members that comply with all parent and family engagement requirements, specifically those required by federal statute. As such the LEA (Local Education Agency) is responsible for ensuring compliance with development and implementation of the following three documents:

- 1. LEA PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY.**
- 2. SCHOOL-LEVEL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE**
 - 2 a. HOME SCHOOL COMPACT**

Definitions:

Parent: Includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

Parent and Family Engagement (PFE): The inclusion of parents, families, schools, and communities in order to support learning and improve schools. Opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members, including those who have limited English proficiency, those who have disabilities, and those of migratory children.

Implementation

The District will ensure the successful development and implementation of the written Parent and Family Engagement Policy, School Parent and Family Engagement Procedure, and School-Parent Compact and will address all requirements in specific detail with review and revision on a periodic and timely basis.

1. Family Engagement Policy

In order to provide all children with significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high- quality education, and to close educational gaps, the District receives Title I, Part A funds. This policy will outline the District's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and the ways in which the LEA will implement and support opportunities for parent and family involvement in order to improve student academic achievement.

Part I: General Requirements and Expectations

1. In order to support increased parent and family engagement to improve student academic achievement, the District will actively engage all families, while mitigating barriers to engagement.

2. The District agrees to take the following actions to involve parents and family members in the joint development of its Continuous Improvement Plans, including the support and improvement thereof:

- Invite participation in the development of the plans,
- Make public the drafts of the district and school plans, and seek meaningful engagement,
- And, seek the approval of the Board of School Commissioners.

3. The District will include family engagement as a school wide investment for each school annually to target training, barrier mitigation for families, as part of each School wide Continuous Improvement Plan.

4. The District will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent & Family Title I, Part A Parent & Family Engagement Policy, connected with the annual Title I part A school meetings, in an effort to support:

- Mitigation of barriers to greater family participation in Title I parent and family engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background)
- The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers
- Strategies to support successful school and family interactions

In order to complete this evaluation, the District will include this policy as part of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Policy Committee and actively invite in-person and written participation by families.

5. The District agrees to take the following actions to use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise the LEA Parent & Family Engagement Policy, if necessary:

- Each school's Continuous Improvement Planning Team will analyze the input of families, following the annual meeting, and adjust their plans and engagement procedures.
- The Rutland City Board of School Commissioners' Policy Committee will review this policy annually, following the completion of the school level Title I, Part A meetings and meaningful engagement to consider adjustments to this policy.

6. The District and its schools will actively invite families and their participation to all schoolwide community events, conferences, and performances. Each event is an opportunity for engagement.

Part II: Building Capacity for Involvement

To promote effective involvement of parents and support a partnership among the schools, parents, and the community in order to improve student achievement, the District will use the following strategies:

7. Provide assistance to parents of children served by the LEA in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging State academic standards
- State and local academic assessments
- Title I, Part A requirements
- How to monitor their child's progress
- How to work with educators to improve their children's achievement

The District will take the followings actions in order provide this assistance to families that will allow for greater engagement:

- Virtual or phone meetings
- Translation of materials, into the primary languages of our family's
- Multiple avenues of communication, that meet the needs of families
- Support and education on successful guardianship and parenting
- Invitations to all school events

8. The District, in collaboration with local agencies, will provide materials and training, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement.

9. The District will provide professional development in improving family engagement.

PART III. Policy Adoption

The District's Parent & Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with parents of children participating in Schoolwide and Title I, Part A programs. It will be reviewed annually, following each schools' Tile I, Part A meeting, and meaningful engagement.

Legal Reference:

20 USC § 7801(38)

20 U.S.C. § 6318

16 V.S.A § 43

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, it is the policy of Rutland High

School that no person, upon the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or faith, gender or age, handicapping condition and/or disability, shall be excluded from participation in any educational program or activity at the school. Rutland City Public Schools and its designees operate its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin as stipulated in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you feel you have been discriminated against based on your race, color, or national origin, you may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights at 802-828-5858 and stating that you would like to make a Title VI complaint. If you would like more information about your Title VI rights, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/T6manual>.

2025-2026 RIS Student-Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I have read and understand the 2025-2026 Student-Family Handbook. If I have questions, I will bring them to the attention of my child's teacher or school administration.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Date

Student Signature

Date

Teacher's Name: _____

