



# Lower School Handbook (PreK-6)

## 2023-2024

Ridgefield Christian School  
3824 Casey Springs Road  
Jonesboro, AR 72404  
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*This handbook is subject to change without notice as deemed necessary by the school administration or board*

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## Administration and Staff

Head of School	Dr. Bryan Easley	<a href="mailto:easleyb@ridgefieldchristian.org">easleyb@ridgefieldchristian.org</a>
Educational Administrator	Kayla Davidson	<a href="mailto:davidsonk@ridgefieldchristian.org">davidsonk@ridgefieldchristian.org</a>
Advising & Admission	Courtney Odom	<a href="mailto:odomc@ridgefieldchristian.org">odomc@ridgefieldchristian.org</a>
Accounting & HR	Gabbi Barnett	<a href="mailto:barnettg@ridgefieldchristian.org">barnettg@ridgefieldchristian.org</a>
Athletic Director/Facilities	Morgan Colburn	<a href="mailto:colburnm@ridgefieldchristian.org">colburnm@ridgefieldchristian.org</a>

## Important Contacts

For assistance regarding...

Grading questions, classroom incidents, dress code, homework, academic performance	Classroom teacher
Attendance, class schedules, report cards/progress reports, other academic questions	Kayla Davidson, Educational Administrator
Issues with other students or faculty, behavior concerns, learning difficulties	Kayla Davidson, Educational Administrator Dr. Easley, Head of School
Participation in athletics, physical education	Coach Morgan Colburn, Athletic Director
Billing, payment plans, charges, financial aid, fees	Gabbi Barnett, Accounting
Internet access, school-issued devices, other technical or facility questions	Courtney Odom Dr. Easley
Facilities issues	Coach Morgan Colburn
Other school policy or personnel issues	Dr. Bryan Easley, Head of School Kayla Davidson, Educational Administrator

## Office Hours

M-F, 7:30 am – 4:00 pm (during school year)

M-Th, 10 am – 3 pm (summer hours, subject to change based on staffing)

## **100. Our Foundation**

### **101. MISSION & VISION**

The mission of Ridgefield Christian School is to provide Christ-centered education guiding students into the knowledge of God, the development of Christian character, and academic excellence anchored in a biblical worldview.

Our vision is to be the premier Christian school choice in Northeast Arkansas known for our purposeful discipleship of students, high-quality academic programs, competitive athletics, thriving fine arts programs, and accessibility to families regardless of financial or academic need.

### **102. SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

RCS views the role of private Christian education as a means to help parents fulfill God's command to "train up a child in the way he should live" (Proverbs 22:6). According to this scripture, God has made it clear that children are to be taught and trained to live daily according to the truth and principles found in God's written Word, the Bible, and through the living Word, Jesus Christ.

Our academic program comes from the conviction that "knowing God results in every other kind of understanding" (Proverbs 9:1). We believe that knowing God, through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the first step to becoming truly educated. All students will be encouraged to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and to grow and mature in their walk with Him.

True Christian education extends far beyond daily Bible classes, opening prayers, and chapel services, although these are an important part of Ridgefield's program.

### **103. GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Through our programming, personnel, and practices, Ridgefield Christian School aims to:

- Lead students to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Help students gain a good understanding of the basic principles found in the Bible.
- Prepare students for advanced studies by providing a quality elementary and secondary education that is taught from a Biblical perspective.
- Help grow the whole student through extra-curricular activities that lead to good physical, mental, spiritual, and psychological development.
- Equip students to be positive members of society who will impact their world for Christ and bring glory to God with their lives.

### **104. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The basis of RCS is the revealed Word of God, the written Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as they are generally interpreted, in the historical evangelical confessions of faith. In accordance with these confessions, we hold unreservedly to the sovereignty of God, revealed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, over the world and thus over every department of human activity, and submit unconditionally to the authority of Holy Scriptures, thereby recognizing these Scriptures as the supreme and final standard for Christian

education and all matters of faith and life. Therefore, we hold to the following:

1. We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by who's indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the Biblical account of creation and reject naturalistic and theistic evolution.
7. We believe in God's design for marriage, sexuality, and human personhood as revealed in Scripture and consistently taught throughout Christian tradition.
8. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life; and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
9. We believe in the unity of believers, based upon the above statements of faith.

### **105. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, & SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). We honor and respect marriage. However, married students may not be enrolled at RCS.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including sex outside of marriage, adultery, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual or groups are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the beliefs of RCS.

RCS students must refrain from premarital sex, whether at home, school, or elsewhere. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school. Violations of this policy will be thoroughly investigated by the RCS Administrator with recommended disciplinary action presented to, and approved by, the RCS Board. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the violator(s) as well as to make counseling services available to the students and their families, if appropriate.

In order to preserve the function and integrity of RCS as part of the Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to RCS's students, their families, and the community, all persons attending, or employed by, RCS in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, or who wish to use the school facilities, must agree to and abide

by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).

### **106. STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF LIFE**

God created human beings in His image and values each life as sacred and holy. Thus, every person, from conception to death, possesses inherent dignity and inestimable worth – including preborn infants, the elderly, those with special needs and others marginalized by society. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Ps 139).

### **108. AUTHORITY STRUCTURE**

Ridgefield Christian School is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization with a self-perpetuating governing board. In accordance with the school charter, the Board of Directors is the final authority for the school and elects new board members from among parents and others who demonstrate spiritual maturity, leadership wisdom, and committed support for the school and its mission.

The Board of Directors follows a policy governance model. Authority and responsibility for operation of the school is delegated by the Board to the Head of School, who hires and supervises all other administration, staff, and teachers. The Board maintains policy oversight and final authority for the vision, direction, and mission of the school as well as the direct oversight of the Head of School. Trustees stay informed and active in school matters but exercise their authority through establishing an ongoing strategic plan, reviewing and approving school policy, setting the annual budget, establishing guidelines for facility development, and operating capital campaigns.

The Board's exercises its authority through policy making and broad strategic decisions rather than through any single member. However, each Board member is involved and interested in the life of the school and works to maintain a strong level of awareness within the school community.

Questions or concerns with school personnel or operations should be addressed in accordance with the Conflict and Grievance section of this Handbook. Contact can certainly be made directly with the Head of School or the Chair Board for questions or concerns about overall school direction.

### **109. FACULTY & STAFF**

Our teachers are trained and equipped academically, as well as spiritually, to be Godly models for the students. All teachers in Grades K-12 have at least an undergraduate degree and most hold some form of teaching certification. Several teachers have advanced degrees either in teaching or in their subject field.

### **110. ACCREDITATION & ASSOCIATIONS**

RCS is fully accredited through the Arkansas Non-Public School Accreditation Association (ANSAA). RCS is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ASCI). RCS participates in the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) for varsity and junior varsity sports.

### **111. CHAPEL**

All students at RCS are required to attend chapel. In keeping with our non-denominational status, all chapel programs are geared toward Biblical truths and principles, not specific denominational theology.



## 200. Admissions

### 201. ADMISSIONS PHILOSOPHY

Ridgefield Christian School is a distinctly and unapologetically evangelical Christian school. We have an open admissions policy which means we do not require parents or students to be adherents to the Christian faith or practice. We willingly enroll families of other religions or faiths. However, we do require that all parents recognize our statement of faith and agree to support RCS in teaching these beliefs and those of the Christian faith to their child as described in our goals and beliefs in this Handbook.

### 202. APPLICATION CRITERIA

RCS admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Students have all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available through the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school-administered programs. Admission is open to students who:

1. Are not presently under disciplinary action by their school. Any student with a history of suspension/expulsion must disclose the issue in their application and provide documentation from previous school. After a review and investigation of the records, the administrator will make a recommendation to the board. The final decision of admission will be made by the board.
2. Have performed at grade level or above on a standardized test or an equivalent thereof. Students performing below grade level and/or less than 70% on standardized testing will be required to score satisfactorily on a pre-admissions test. All students and parents must be willing to subscribe to the school philosophy, goals, objectives, discipline, and academic standards of RCS.

If a parent, guardian, or student applying for admission has been found to have falsified records or been dishonest in relating student behavioral and/or academic history, the student may be dismissed from RCS without reimbursement of registration fees and tuition.

All students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before August 1 and students entering 1st grade must be six by August 1. All students entering PreK 4 must be four years of age on or before August 1 of the current year. All students entering PreK 3 must be three years of age on or before August 1 of the current year and must be potty trained.

### 203. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

RCS admits new students based on a completed online admissions application, required records, academic screening exam, and a family interview.

1. **Student Shadow (optional).** Experience a day in the life of an RCS student! All applicants are encouraged to spend a day with us.
2. **Application.** Interested families apply for admission online through the school website ([ridgefieldchristian.org/apply](http://ridgefieldchristian.org/apply)). A nonrefundable application fee will be paid at the time of application.
  - a. **Provide school records.** A Records Release and Request allows RCS to access current school records to determine class placement and other information key for admissions. This is required for all applicants. Homeschool families are asked to submit detailed records, including a homeschool transcript. The application will not be processed and considered for

admissions until all records from previous school have been reviewed and approved by Admissions office.

- b. **Academic Screening.** All applicants will be given an academic screening to determine proper grade placement, readiness, or any possible learning support needs.
  - c. **Family Interview.** Parents/Guardians and student(s) will meet with the Admissions team, Head of School, and related teachers for a family interview. The purpose of this meeting is for both family and administration to get better acquainted, discuss core principles, philosophy, and goals, and address any remaining questions.
  - d. **Decision.** The school reviews the application, previous records, assessment results, and family interview feedback before making the decision whether to admit the applicant(s). Parents/Guardians will be notified of the admissions decision.
3. **Enrollment.** Upon being accepted for admissions, an online enrollment packet must then be completed along with setting up student billing and financial payment information for the admissions process to be complete. New students in graders 7-12 will need to meet with the academic advisor to discuss scheduling and any transfer credits.
  4. **Financial Aid.** Families needed financial assistance for tuition may also apply for financial aid at this point in the process. That is a separate application process. See the financial aid section in this handbook.

#### **204. TRANSFER CREDITS**

For transfer students, approval must be granted for all coursework from other schools counted toward graduation from RCS. This includes homeschool courses. (See Homeschool Students policy for more info.) The Academic Advisor will review transcripts during the admissions process before with the family to discuss arrangements for any missing credits. Weighted credits will be transferred to a transcript without the weighted grade. The exception is any AP class taken after the 10th grade. RCS reserves the right to deny credit for coursework earned at schools without regional/national accreditation.

Missing credits that constitute schedule conflicts (so that they are impossible to be made up at RCS) must be made up through Independent Study, at the student's expense, either in the summer or in a regularly scheduled class period at RCS.

#### **205. TRANSFER STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS**

Students who have transferred or will transfer to RCS with previously earned credit/grades will be subject to the following guidelines:

1. Once an official transcript is received from the student's previous school and the transcript has been reviewed by the Administration, the student will be notified of the transfer credits accepted and the credits will be added to the RCS transcript.
2. All transfer credit will be marked as such on the RCS transcript.
3. Transfer courses will fall under clear headings on the transcript, naming the school from which the credit was earned.
4. GPA earned at other schools will be included in the RCS cumulative GPA.

#### **206. HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS**

Homeschool students may attend RCS on a part-time basis (not intending to graduate) or may transfer to

RCS on a full-time basis (intending to graduate). Full-time enrollment is the equivalent of seven class periods per day for seventh through eleventh graders, and at least four class periods per day for seniors if scheduling is feasible. (See Graduating Seniors policy.)

Seniors desiring to graduate from RCS must be enrolled in four RCS classes including Bible and English and must pay full time tuition.

All homeschool students enrolling in RCS for senior high with the intent to graduate from RCS must submit the following materials, in addition to registration forms and fees, for admission and course placement:

- Homeschool Transcript, grades 9-12 (from a credible homeschool curriculum supplier, cover school, or arkansahomeschool.org)
- Course Syllabus, Scope and Sequence, Portfolio of Student Work, Textbook Samples, etc. for all transfer courses grades 9-12.

All requests for transfer credit will be evaluated by the Academic Advisor. RCS reserves the right to deny credit for coursework earned in homeschool without sufficient content.

All students desiring to graduate from RCS must be enrolled full time both semesters of senior year, and must complete Bible 12 and English 12 from RCS (no transfer credit accepted):

For part-time enrollment cost breakdown, see Part Time Enrollment.

## **207. RETURNING FAMILY ENROLLMENT**

Returning families must complete the online re-enrollment process in FACTS. RCS reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment to any student of families who have demonstrated disharmony regarding the purpose, objectives, standards, policies, or any rules and regulations of the school. No student may be reenrolled unless all financial obligations for the previous school year have been paid in full.

## **208. ACCOMMODATIONS**

RCS is a private faith-based organization and receives no state or federal funding for learning support or special needs programs. As such, RCS is under no obligation to follow federal laws such as required by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), thus not legally required to implement an IEP or 504 Plan created by public school system.

We are currently unable to provide alternative or significantly modified instruction such as might be found in a traditional special education or functional life skills program. We will accommodate as much as our resources will allow but the extent of need for support may prohibit admissions or continued enrollment.

Because of the highly specialized psychological, counseling, and environmental resources required, we are unable to accommodate students with significant behavioral struggles such as those stemming from trauma or mental health-related issues.

RCS is unable to provide embedded occupational, speech, or physical therapies as a part of the everyday classroom environment. Students needing those services as a part of the school environment are likely better served elsewhere.

See Learning Support Service under Academics for more information.

## **209. CUSTODIAL/NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

Specific custody arrangements or instructions will only be recognized and administered by the school if the school has been provided with a copy of the appropriate legal agreements. Unless provided legal documentary evidence to the contrary, the school shall assume that biological parents have joint custody. For the purposes of parental notifications, notifying either parent with custodial rights shall be the same as providing notice to both parents unless either parent makes a written request to the contrary. In the cases involving separation or divorce, the school assumes the following *unless otherwise directed by a court order or other legal documents on file with the school office*:

- Only a custodial parent has the right to make educational decisions.
- If joint custody has been awarded, each parent will have equal rights
- A non-custodial parent has the right to access the child's educational records, request school information, attend conferences, and visit the school.

The school will not knowingly release a child to a non-custodial parent or other individual prior to the end of the school day unless the custodial parent has granted written permission. RCS will release children to parents with natural, biological rights or other designees, unless legal documents are provided instructing differently. Verbal instructions are insufficient to deny access.

## **210. DISMISSAL/RESCINDING ENROLLMENT**

The board and administration are responsible for safeguarding the mission, wellbeing, and reputation of the school. Accordingly, the school reserves the right, within its sole and exclusive discretion, to suspend, expel, dismiss, refuse, or rescind enrollment and/or remove from campus any student, parent, or family member, or guest if it is in the best interest of RCS to do so.

In the event of dismissal or expulsion from RCS, all rights are waived to a refund of tuition and fees previously paid. Parents or guardians shall remain obligated by signed contract to pay the enrollment year's school tuition as agreed on during the enrollment process. A student may be dismissed/expelled for the following:

- Violation of school policies as outlined in Parent-Student Handbook.
- Student conduct, attitude, or lack of academic effort making withdrawal from the school necessary.
- Tuition is delinquent (see Financial Policy).

Parents/guardian or student who is not in harmony with the school's mission and philosophy or who engage in public comments, airing of grievances, or any other written or verbal expressions that are harmful, demeaning, or derogatory towards school staff, students, or families.

# **300. Business Policies**

## **301. TUITION & FEES**

Tuition for RCS is determined each year by the school board based on the school's vision, strategic goals, and operating and programming needs. Fees include resource and materials, athletic fees, and other activity-specific fees depending on the student's course or elective enrollments. A non-refundable enrollment fee is due upon submission of enrollment packet. Resource/material fees are billed in June or at the time of

enrollment, whichever comes later.

See the published Tuition and Fee Schedule for all tuition amounts and related school fees.

### **302. STUDENT BILLING**

#### **PAYMENT PLAN**

Parents will select a payment plan in FACTS Financial at the time of enrollment. All payments are due in the school year (July to June) in which enrollment takes place. There are four payment plan options:

1. *One annual payment* — total annual tuition due **August 5**.
2. *Bi-annual payments* — 50% of annual tuition due **August 5**. The balance is due **January 15**.
3. *Quarterly payments* — 25% due **August 5, October 5, January 15, April 5**
4. *Monthly payments* — Annual tuition is spread across 10 equal payments beginning in August. Payments are due by the **5<sup>th</sup> of each month**.

#### **FORMS OF PAYMENT**

Payments will be made through FACTS Financial Online (card, e-check, or ACH autopay). Families using credit cards to pay for tuition will assume all credit card charges. Those using direct withdrawal from their banking account will not be charged. Annual tuition payments can be made directly in the school office. However, every family must have a billing method on file in FACTS Financial for incidental and other related fees that may occur throughout the year.

#### **LATE FEES**

A \$25.00 late fee will be added to each account that has not been paid by the 10th of the month. Any monies received will first be applied to any past due fees (tuition, maintenance fee, late fees, etc.). Then the remainder will be applied to the current fees due.

#### **DECLINED/RETURNED PAYMENTS IN FACTS**

A \$20.00 return check fee will be charged for each returned check. All returned checks must be redeemed with cash or a money order. A late fee of \$10.00 per month will be applied if returned/declined payment has not been settled by specified dates in contract.

#### **REFUNDS**

All fees are non-refundable including application, enrollment, resource/materials, and athletics fees.

### **303. ACCOUNT STATUS & DELINQUENCY**

The school's financial sustainability and ongoing success depends on the commitment of families to make Christian education a financial priority. The school's operating budget, which covers payroll and personnel, facility upkeep, maintenance, and utilities, and the program/curriculum resources, is funded primarily by tuition and fee payments. Financial stewardship and accountability require that the school operate on a balanced budget while providing an excellent spiritual and educational program. Therefore, when tuition and fee payments become delinquent, it is a serious matter.

**Hardships.** In the case of an unexpected financial hardship (death, loss of job, etc.), families are responsible

for contacting the Business Office or the Head of School as soon as possible to discuss options. Families in these situations may also be able to apply for financial aid. In most cases, the school can work something out that is mutual satisfactory and allows the student(s) to continue in school. When a family must leave due to delinquent accounts, it is often because a lack of communication and unwillingness to work with the school.

### PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

Accounts are considered past due when tuition has not been received in the office by the last school day of the month. It is imperative that student billing accounts remain current throughout the school year. The school understands that unexpected situations can and do arise and the school strives to work with families in those situations.

#### **30 days past due**

- When an account becomes 30 days past due under the established tuition schedule, the financially responsible party will receive an email notification, as well as a phone call from Student Billing requesting the tuition be brought current.
- A late fee of \$30 will be applied to the account.

#### **60 days past due**

- When an account becomes 60 days past due, the financially responsible party will receive an email notification, a written notification by mail, and a phone call from the Business office requesting the tuition payment(s) be brought current. The notice will reiterate the terms of the financial commitment and request immediate attention to the matter.
- A second late fee of \$30.00 will be applied to the account.

#### **90 days past due**

- When an account becomes 90 days past due under the terms of the parent's payment plan agreement, the financially responsible party will be notified by certified mail of intent to disenroll the student fourteen (14) days from the date of the letter.
- This will be the final notice to the financially responsible party on the account.
- A third late fee of \$30.00 will be applied to the account.
- Report cards will not be issued.
- Parental access to student records via Family Portal or the app will be limited.
- Transcripts will not be released to other schools, colleges, or other institutions.
- Tuition assistance may be revoked.
- Student is ineligible to participate in co-curricular activities at school, including trips, athletic teams, and fine arts programs.

### UNRESOLVED ACCOUNTS

Unresolved billing accounts resulting in student dismissal may be turned over to a legal firm and be prosecuted through the local magistrate courts in the county of residence for collection. This will include all court costs and accumulated fees with the unpaid balance.

***Dismissal.*** If the delinquent account has not been resolved, on the date stipulated in the final letter, the student will disenrolled from the school without any further notice and not permitted to return to campus. A

disenrollment letter will be mailed on that date.

***Reenrollment with a delinquent account.*** Student with delinquent billing accounts will not be permitted to reenroll for the following school year until the account is brought current.

### **304. WITHDRAWAL & TUITION REFUND**

Because budgeting is tied to enrollment, withdrawing from RCS without completing the school year can create a budget shortfall for the school. To maintain a sound operating budget, RCS has the following refund policies regarding tuition fees when a student is voluntarily withdrawn from RCS.

- Withdrawal prior to June 1 – 100% tuition refund, no tuition liability.
- Withdrawal between June 1 and the first day of school – 25% tuition liability
- Withdrawn on or after the first day of school – 100% tuition liability

### **EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

The following will be considered by the school board for exception to the policy above. If the school board deems that a student is withdrawing based on extenuating circumstances, the parents will be responsible for tuition fees to include the full month that the student withdraws.

- Death of the student or death of a custodial parent
- Disability of a custodial parent
- Significant income change (defined as 50% or more reduction in the gross annual income of the primary income earner)
- Physical household move of a minimum of 50 miles from the RCS campus
- Student withdrawal when determined by the school administrator is in the best interest of the student and/or school
- Student expulsion

A signed Student Withdrawal/Parental Financial Responsibility agreement will be signed by each new applicant's family and will be kept on file in the accountant's office.

### **305. FINANCIAL AID**

RCS financially partners with full-time families to provide a Christ-centered education through our financial aid programs. We are committed to ensuring that any student who needs to be enrolled at RCS does not miss out because of financial constraint. Financial assistance is available on a limited basis and awarded based on financial need. All families are encouraged to apply, and many families receive some form of financial aid to attend the school. Financial aid is only available for full-time students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12. We are unable to offer financial aid for preschool, pre-kindergarten, homeschool enrichment, or part-time students at this time. RCS does not award any athletic or academic merit scholarships.

To be eligible to apply for financial assistance, you must meet the following requirements:

- Billing account must be in good standing
- New students must have been accepted. Returning students must be re-enrolled
- You should be the parent or legal guardian and be assigned financial responsibility on the family account

**ALL financial aid or scholarship requires a financial aid application.** *No discounts are automatically awarded except for the multi-child discount for families with 3 or more siblings enrolled.*

RCS uses FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment to provide the school with parent financial information and analysis of each family's need. A family financial application process is required to receive any financial aid at RCS. Aid is awarded as a percentage of tuition and is good for the school year of application.

Families applying for financial aid submit their financial information and necessary supporting documentation to FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment along with the \$40 application fee. The following documents are required by FACTS to complete the application:

- Copies of your Federal tax forms including all supporting tax schedules for the last 2 years
- Copies of your W-2 forms for both you and your spouse for the last 2 years
- Copies of supporting documentation for other sources of income

FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment conducts the financial need analysis based on family income and expenses along with the cost of all schooling (tuition and fees) and provides recommendations to the school. The school then makes the final decision based on those recommendations taking into account other extenuating circumstances. All financial aid information is kept confidential. The admissions office will notify applications of financial aid awards.

We contract with FACTS Grant & Aid as a neutral party to process aid applications and determine eligibility based on the school's fees and the family's financial situation. Applicants must provide family financial information including tax returns, W2s, and other income verification documentation and proof of expenses as a part of this process. The information provided helps the us allocate our limited financial resources in an objective, fair, and consistent manner and ensure that each student gets the necessary help to remain enrolled while still maintaining a high-quality education. FACTS Grant & Aid does not award aid or provide scholarship money of any kind; they only provide the school with verified information and recommendations. The school makes financial award decisions utilizing information from the application verification process and all financial information and aid amounts are strictly confidential.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

**ACE Scholarship Program** - ACE Scholarships is an outstanding partner organization that offers scholarships of up to 50% tuition to eligible families. We strongly encourage admitted families who have been fully accepted to RCS and meet ACE's income guidelines to apply for aid to benefit from this scholarship.

**Ministry Scholarship** - Awarded to families whose primary income is from full-time Christian ministry or who are bi-vocational pastors with executive ministry responsibilities. Requires financial aid application and employment verification. Requires FA application and employment verification. *25% of tuition.*

**Military/First Responders Scholarship** - Awarded to families whose primary income is from full-time military or first responder service (law enforcement, fire department, EMT/paramedic). Requires FA application and employment verification. *10% of tuition.*

**Alumni Scholarship** - Awarded to students of RCS alumni. Requires FA application and alumni status verification. *10% of tuition.*

**Warrior Scholarship** - Tuition scholarship award is based on family qualifying percentages and is awarded only after the ACE scholarship has been pursued and other qualifying scholarships have been awarded. Amount will vary.



### **306. STUDENT LUNCH PROGRAM**

Student hot lunches are available for purchase three days a week. Bistro on the Ridge Catering provides all meal services for the school. Their menu selections vary from week to week. A monthly menu can be found on the school mobile app. All ordering and payment are done online through MyMealOrder.com.

Lunch will include an entree with two side dishes, a dessert, and a drink. White milk, chocolate milk, and water are available. Snack machines and drink machines are in the MPR and high school wing. PreK–3<sup>rd</sup> grades are not allowed to use the microwaves or snack machines.

Ice cream and cookies are usually sold by PACE each Friday.

### **307. AFTERSCHOOL CARE**

RCS provides an afterschool program for PreK through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students for the convenience of working parents. The Aftercare program is supervised by teachers and consists of a variety of structured, engaging activities such as free play, games, arts & crafts, and homework/reading time.

- Aftercare is from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm
- Aftercare is included at no additional cost for PreK 3s and 4s
- For students K-6, aftercare is charged per day with a weekly cap limit.
- Students needing a snack or light food fare after 3:10 must bring it from home. RCS does not provide snacks during afterschool care.
- All school rules and policies apply to the afterschool program just as during the regular school day. This includes all behavior policies as detailed in this handbook.

## **400. Academic Information**

### **401. CURRICULUM**

Ridgefield does not have a single curriculum for all grades. However, a large portion of the curriculum is from Bob Jones University Press and Abeka. A variety of other materials and sources help supplement where needed to provide an excellent, engaging learning experience for students. The curriculum regularly viewed by the administration along with input from teachers and staff. We work to ensure that all our curriculum emphasizes a biblical worldview, kingdom living, and Christian values throughout the curriculum and school activities. RCS continually strives to achieve higher standards of learning.

### **402. FACTS SIS**

Like many schools, RCS uses the FACTS SIS cloud-based school management system. FACTS Family Portal provides parents and students a convenient way to access student grades, lesson plans, homework assignments, attendance, and behavior reports. The best way for parents to access student and school related information is by downloading the RCS Family app (android and iOS). Creating an app profile and logging into FACTS from within the app provides families with convenient and comprehensive access to information, calendars, student records, and other important links.

#### **403. LIBRARY**

RCS offers library services to all students. Scheduling for the library will be done in accordance with the classroom teacher. All books and library materials have been purchased or donated for use by the RCS students and faculty. Due to the limited number of books, extreme care should be taken to keep all library materials in a safe place and to return them on time so other students can use them.

Reference books can be used only in the library by the students or may be checked out by a teacher for one day of classroom use. If reference material is needed the following day, the teacher should return the material and re-check it out the next day.

Students K – 1<sup>st</sup> may check out one book at a time for a period of up to one week. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades may check out up to two books at a time with the opportunity for no more than two re-checks. Students 7 -12<sup>th</sup> may check out two books at a time for a period of two weeks with the opportunity to re-check for one additional period.

If a book is overdue, a notice will be sent home with the student. The student will not be able to check out additional books until the overdue book is returned. If the book has not been returned after three weeks, an email will be sent to the parents via FACTS with the option to return the book or pay for a replacement. At the end of each 9 weeks quarter, fines will be assessed to the parents account for the cost of lost books.

Secondary students are welcome to visit the library during their lunch time on Tuesday and Thursday only (subject to change). Students must ask permission from the lunch duty teacher prior to going to the library. Students may not be in the library at any time unattended.

#### **404. DAILY SCHEDULE**

7:15 am	Teacher Devotional/Prayer Time (Monday)
7:30 am	Office Opens / Teachers on Duty
7:55 am	School Begins
8:00 am	Tardy Bell
10:45-11:10 am	PreK3 - Grade 2 Lunch
11:20-11:50 am	Grades 3-6 Lunch
11:55-12:25 pm	Grades 7-12 Lunch
2:45 pm	PreK Dismissal
3:10 pm	Dismissal of Kindergarten - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade/ Car Line Pick-up Begins
3:30 pm	Teachers Dismissed/Office Closes
3:30 - 5:30 pm	Afterschool Care

#### **405. CLASSWORK**

##### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an educational tool that reinforces skills and materials learned in class. It prepares students for upcoming topics, teaches them to work independently, and it enables parents to become involved in the education process. Helping your child with homework shows that you value learning. You can be supportive in the following ways:

- Provide a scheduled time and quiet location where your student can work undisturbed.
- Examine the work to be turned in. See that it is neat and complete.

- Listen to his/her memory work.
- Sign his/her assignment sheet or homework, if necessary.

Because of local church worship services, there will not be homework assigned on Wednesday nights. However, work assigned earlier in the week may be due on Thursday.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Parents should check on FACTS Family Portal for lesson plans and assignments. If parents have additional questions or need to pick up textbooks and/or resources, they may call between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Materials may be picked up after 2:30 p.m. in the office or sent home with a sibling. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The number of days absent determines the number of days given to turn in completed assignments/tests. (Ex. If you are absent on Thursday and Friday, all work will be due by Wednesday.) This policy is about illness or other absences of personal nature. Students missing class due to school sanctioned activities must complete classwork by original due dates as assigned by the teacher.

Parents are encouraged not to plan vacations during the regular instructional days of school. Should it be necessary for you to take your vacation during the school year, arrangements must be made to get assignments in advance. Requests should be given to the teacher at least one week in advance. All work assignments will be due upon the first day your student returns to school.

### **406. ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

Alternative Method of Instruction (AMI) days for inclement weather makeup will not exceed five school days. Teachers are required to prepare and post lesson plans that are current, relevant, and related to curriculum frameworks to FACTS or Google classroom portal in advance as part of its normal educational process. If severe inclement weather is likely, students, parents, and teachers should make sure textbooks and other materials which may be required for lesson plans over the next several days be taken home each day. Ridgefield Christian will notify families and staff about school closures or delays via text messaging and email. Activation will be at the discretion of the Head of School based upon factors such as time of the year, school calendar, severity of the winter, snow or makeup days already provided in the calendar, etc. Upon activation, students and parents should check online in FACTS or Google Classroom (as directed by the teacher) for assignments which must be completed each day until such a time that the normal school day resumes and is in session. Students will have two days to turn in the AMI assignment(s). Teachers should be available and accessible to students from 8 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. for interaction regarding questions and help with assignments through text, email, etc. Teachers will evaluate all work.

### **407. GRADING SCALE & GPA**

<b>Performance Indicators</b>		<b>Letter/Numerical Grades</b>		
S	Satisfactory	A	90 -100	Excellent Work
N	Needs Improvement	B	80 - 89	Above Average Work
I	Improving	C	70 - 79	Average Work
U	Unsatisfactory	D	60 - 69	Below Average Work
		F	0 - 59	Unsatisfactory

#### **408. TRANSCRIPT & REPORT CARD RELEASE**

All requests for transcripts must be made to the school office. It is recommended that requests be made one business week prior to the date the transcript is needed to allow for processing time. We cannot guarantee a transcript release within fewer than five days' notice.

In addition to quarterly report cards, interim reports will be issued to families of students with a D or F at interim (mid-quarter). A student with two or more Ds (below 70%) or one F at quarter or semester's end will be placed on academic probation, and a meeting will be scheduled with parents and Educational Administrator to create an individualized intervention plan.

Report cards and transcripts will not be released unless satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Financial Office concerning financial obligations.

#### **409. ACADEMIC AWARDS & HONOR ROLL**

Academic awards will be given at the end of the year for students in grades 1-6. Awards to be given for the end of the year are honor roll certificates. These awards are determined by looking at letter grades for all four quarters. Students with all As all four quarters will be on the "A" honor roll. Students with As and Bs all four quarters will be on the "A-B" honor roll. Students with any Cs during the year will not receive honor roll certificates. Warrior, Citizenship, and Christlike Awards may also be given.

#### **410. ACADEMIC PROMOTION/RETENTION**

Classroom placement is a cooperative effort with teachers and administrators to place students in a balanced learning environment. RCS offers an advanced curriculum. You or your child's teacher may feel that it is necessary to re-evaluate the student as to grade placement or grade-level testing.

Realizing that each child's growth is individual, the promotion and retention policy is general in scope to allow for assessment of each child's complete development and the best interest of the individual child.

In Grades K-6, when retention is considered, the teacher will carefully evaluate the student's work, and with documented material will meet with the Administrator and parents to discuss the child's development and the possible benefits of retention. Every effort will be made to reach a unified decision regarding what is best for the child in terms of maturity, social adjustment, emotional stability, and academic progress.

Realizing that each child's growth is individual, the promotion and retention policy is general in scope to allow for assessment of each child's complete development and the best interest of the individual child.

#### **411. ACADEMIC PROBATION**

In keeping with the mission and aims of the school, students at RCS are expected to demonstrate a positive attitude and strong effort in their work as a learner. Students should give their very best, regardless of their academic capability.

However, as young adults still in the maturing process, students may perform below their capability and below minimal academic expectations, whether it be through carelessness, poor effort, or lack of interest. Academic probation will include a closer scrutiny and accountability toward student achievement. If a student is placed on academic probation, it is expected that parental involvement along with Learning Services, where applicable, and faculty resources will be jointly used to help the struggling student achieve to the best of his/her ability. Our goal is to encourage and guide students to take ownership and great personal

responsibility for their own academic success.

#### **412. ACHIEVEMENT TESTING**

Ridgefield Christian School conducts standardized achievement testing each spring. Students in grades 1-9 take the Stanford-10 Achievement test. Parents will be notified of test results as soon as results are returned to the school.

#### **413. PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

RCS offers a full-time physical education program. Scheduling of elementary PE is done in accordance with the classroom teacher. All students are required to participate in P.E. classes unless given written permission from a parent or doctor.

#### **414. LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES**

RCS is in the earliest stages of developing learning support services. This means that the support we can provide significantly depends upon the student and their needs and available staff and program resources. It may not be possible in given cases to provide or continue to provide the learning environment for students needing support.

However, individual classroom teachers communicate with parents and education/psychological professionals to ensure each child has access to the best educational opportunities. RCS is dyslexia-friendly and has trained teachers who use whole group science-based reading instruction. Teachers work collaboratively with the Educational Administrator in determining appropriate accommodations to assist students in being more successful in the general curriculum.

Parents or teachers suspecting a student needs additional learning support should contact the Educational Administrator. When a student suspected of having a disability is brought to our attention, we will document the referral, provide written notice to the student's parent/teacher, and determine, in a collaborative meeting with parent and teacher, whether the student is a candidate for evaluation. RCS works closely with the Jonesboro Public Schools' Special Education Department to provide onsite consultation, evaluation, and services, such as Speech Therapy, to referred and qualifying students. The parent will be involved in every step of the process, and no testing or treatment will be provided without the parent's approval.

#### **A) SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS**

A *diagnosed* special learning need requires identification of the learning need or disability by a qualified professional such as a psychologist, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, educational psychometrist, or medical doctor, along with a diagnostic assessment appropriate to the disability. Diagnostic assessments must be current, having been done within the past three years. In cases where supporting diagnostic assessment data is available but more than three (3) years old, RCS reserves the right to request new assessments as a part of the enrollment or service placement process.

We welcome students with special learning needs or differences for inclusion in our academic program based on the following:

- Student must be able to perform successfully without academic *modification*.
- Parents fully disclose any previous or ongoing assessments, diagnoses, or educational interventions, or special learning services.

- Parents regularly keep the school informed of any changes in diagnosis, learning assessment results, treatments, or medications directly affecting the learning environment.
- Availability of support depending on grade level, classroom teachers, student needs, and support staff.

## **B) SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

While we are committed to a continuously improving, positive, encouraging, and stimulating learning experience for students with special learning needs, all our students are included in the general classroom and school environment. As such, there are minimum expectations for social behavior necessary for the well-being of all members of the community and to help avoid persistent disruptions to the learning environment that interferes with the ability of other students to do their work. Consequently, all students must be able to habitually operate within the following parameters:

- Function in the classroom without the need of additional staff being constantly present in the room.
- Regulate anxiety enough to avoid repeated or regular verbal outbursts and emotional meltdowns that disrupt the environment.
- Perform in-class or assigned work without a teacher regularly prompting each step or task.
- Refrain from excessive hand-raising and question-asking that stalls the flow of classroom activities or instruction.
- Demonstrates self-management when moving between classes or going to the bathroom, lunchroom, library, gym, etc.
- Abide by the policies and procedures described in the Handbook, including having a signed parental statement of commitment.

By “habitually operate,” we mean that the student’s normal, regular pattern of behavior can be maintained within these parameters. We are mindful that there is often a transition period as students begin a new year, move to a new building, start a new grade, or adjust to a new environment. Our focus here is on a student’s habitual patterns after a reasonable period of adjustment. Every student has rough days or moments of frustration, fatigue, or still-developing maturity and thus occasional or episodic occurrences of poor behavior can be understood. But these should be the rare exception, not the norm. Students unable to habitually maintain within these parameters are likely better served in a learning environment able to provide highly individualized support, instruction, and embedded therapeutic learning.

## **C) STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN**

Students needing support services will have a Student Accommodation Plan (SAP) tailored to a student’s individual needs. This plan provides a valuable planning and communication tool for parents, teachers, and staff. The SAP may describe the student’s strengths and weaknesses, summarizes the assessment data that shows learning needs or difficulties, and outlines the support, accommodations, or interventions the school can provide during that current school year. SAPs are updated yearly (or more often, if needed). The SAP is produced by the school staff in close consultation with parents and teachers. Classroom teachers supported by school administration will oversee the implementation and monitoring of the student’s plan.

## **D) ACCOMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS**

Accommodations are changes to how a student learns and are meant to give that student a fair opportunity for learning relative to their typical peers. Accommodations involve:

- Changes in instructional method, such as printed or digital copies of notes/lectures, use of a screen reader for books, use of a calculator for basic math operations, or, in extreme cases, reduction in volume (but not difficulty) of homework material.
- Changes in the environment, such as preferential/different seating, noise-blocking headphones, or foot-fidget devices.
- Changes in assessment format, such as extended time for texts/quizzes.

Students receiving accommodations study the same material, complete the same type of assignments, are expected to demonstrate the same competencies or learning outcomes, and are assessed with the same grading scale as the regular classroom.

Accommodations are not a guarantee that the student will receive a particular grade, earn a diploma, or achieve any other kind of academic success. Those must be earned based on the student's work.

**Accommodations for a particular student will be based on observation and assessment screenings conducted by school staff. *Accommodations are not granted solely based on parent or student request.***

**Modifications** involve a change in *what* a student is learning and the outcome or competency they are expected to demonstrate. Modifications or remediation instruction are not presently available as a part of Ridgefield's learning environment. Students needing this degree of support will be unable to enroll at RCS.

## E) TUTORING

In some cases, private tutoring may be helpful for a student's progress. At present, RCA does not provide tutoring services of any kind beyond what may happen within the general classroom. Families needing tutoring will need to find outside providers. On occasion, RCS teachers may be available to do independent tutoring for a fee.

# 500. Policies & Procedures

## 501. ATTENDANCE

For each student to realize the full benefit of our program, it is imperative he/she attend school every day possible. Students in K-6 may miss up to 6 days per semester with a note from a parent or guardian. All student absences require either a parent or doctor's note. A phone call to the office does not substitute a note. Signing your student in/out in the office does not constitute a parent note. A note or email from a parent or guardian must be sent to the office to excuse an absence. Up to 6 doctor's notes may be excused each semester. If more than 6 doctor's excuses are needed, parents must petition the board for additional absences. Students missing more than 12 days of school per semester may not receive credit for their classes. Doctors' notes can either be brought or faxed to the office. All excuses for illness or medical appointments should be submitted from the doctor's formally printed office notepad or stationery.

**An absence will be considered unexcused until a note/email is sent to the office within one week of the absence.** One note may be written to excuse a period of consecutive absences; however, each day in that period of absence is counted as one of the 6 allowed days. For example, if a student misses Monday and Tuesday, he or she must bring a parent note on Wednesday to excuse the 2 absences. At that point, the student has used 2 of his or her 6 allotted days. Emails may be sent to [office@ridgefieldchristian.org](mailto:office@ridgefieldchristian.org).

After 6 parent notes, only the following will be excused:

- illness or medical appointment with a doctor's note (Up to 6 doctor's notes may be excused each semester)
- death in family with documentation
- required court appearance with judge's note unless the appearance is due to student negligence/behavior
- participation in school organizations/sanctioned activities

Students with excessive absences who have not completed missed assignments will not be allowed to attend field trips or participate in special school assemblies/functions. Extenuating circumstances in reference to the specific exception items 1-5 may be reviewed by the administrator.

Students are required to attend at least a half day of classes to participate in school events or athletics.

Any assignments for which the student exceeds the allotted 12 days of absences and does not present proper documentation upon the immediate return to school will result in a grade of "0". If a student fails 3 or more subjects, they may be retained in the same grade for the following year.

Excessive absences could be a factor in a student being retained in a grade for the next year.

Parents or guardians will be notified by the administrator when a student has (1) been absent 3 days or (2) at any time when the student has accumulated an excessive number of days absent such that academic achievement is being adversely affected.

For absences due to suspension or truancy there is no opportunity to make-up work. All assignments result in "0".

## **502. TARDY POLICY**

Being tardy to class hinders achievement for the tardy student, and also the teacher and other students. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their children arrive at school on time at 7:55 a.m. and stay until the dismissal bell rings at 3:10 p.m. Elementary students signed in after 8:00 a.m. and signed out after 2:00 p.m. but prior to official dismissal time will be counted tardy. Except in cases of emergency or extenuating circumstance, students will **not** be **signed out after 2:45 p.m.**

Five tardies in one quarter will result in one unexcused absence.

Elementary students arriving after 9:00 a.m. or leaving before 2:00 p.m. will be counted a 1/2-day absence. Students checking out before lunch will be marked absent for the day.

Parents of K-6 students with 5 tardies in a quarter may be personally contacted by the Administration, asked to discuss the issues contributing to tardiness, and create solutions for ensuring children arrive at school on time. Students arriving late to school must be accompanied to the office by a parent/guardian.

## **503. ACCEPTABLE DIGITAL USE POLICY**

1. RCS provides Internet access to all employees, board members, students, and parents or guardians.
2. RCS's computer network is used for educational purposes to include classroom activities, professional or career development, limited high-quality personal research and for required and beneficial communication between school staff, parents and students.
3. This policy, related school regulations and student disciplinary policies will govern usage of the



system.

4. The Computer Use and Digital Usage policies always apply to the RCS network.

### LIMITED LIABILITY

1. RCS makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the school system will be error-free or without defects.
2. RCS will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruption of service.
3. RCS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system.
4. RCS will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.
5. Users will not hold RCS responsible for any losses sustained as the result of intentional misuse of the system by the user.

### ACCESS

1. All students will utilize the student-designated school network with limited access to Internet information resources. Student access to other networks on campus is forbidden and considered an authorized intrusion into secured systems. Students violating this network access may be held accountable in a variety of ways under the disciplinary/behavior policy.
2. Students will be assigned a school email to be used for school purposes only. The assigned email will be restricted to use within the ridgefieldchristian.org domain.
3. The student assigned email will remain with the student as long as they are enrolled in RCS. When no longer enrolled, the student email will be deleted, and all documents associated with their google account will be deleted.
4. Students cannot use their personal cell phone as a hotspot to bypass the school network for security purposes unless approved by administration.
5. The student and parent must electronically sign a “Computer Use” agreement to be granted access to school computers or accounts presently provided or to be provided in the future by RCS.
6. This agreement must be renewed on an annual basis. Parents can withdraw this approval at any time.

### DUE PROCESS

1. RCS will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the school network.
2. In the event there is an allegation that a user has violated the Computer Use Policy, the student will be provided with a notice and an opportunity to be heard in accordance with usual procedures related to applicable discipline policy
3. A user’s privilege to access and utilize school computers, the Internet, or other school technology may be terminated by any school administrator for violation of any part of the computer use policy. A student may be further disciplined according to the nature of the violation in accordance with student discipline policies as stated in the Student Handbook.
4. Students will be held financially responsible for any damage to RCS computers they use and/or check out for the school year.

## MONITORING, SEARCH AND SEIZURE

1. RCS staff and other approved personnel will monitor use of the Internet, through either direct supervision or by monitoring Internet use history to ensure enforcement of the policy.
2. System users have no reasonable expectation of privacy for the contents of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the RCS network.
3. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the network may lead to discovery that the user has or is violating the Computer Usage Policy or the law.
4. An individual search will be conducted at the discretion of RCS officials.
5. Parents of students have the right at any time to request to see the contents of the student's school-assigned Google account.

## UNACCEPTABLE USES

1. **Personal Safety.** Users will not engage in any computer use activity that puts the personal safety, character, or peace of mind of the user or any other individual at risk such as but not limited to:
  - a. posting personal contact information without approval of RCS Staff.
  - b. agreeing to meet in person with someone they have met online without their parents' or guardians' approval and participation.
  - c. use of chat, text, or message applications on RCS networks.
  - d. use of profanity or other language that is inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful.
  - e. harassing, personally attacking, or bullying another person through language or activities conducted via the school network.
2. **System Security and Privacy.** Users will not violate system security or violate individuals' privacy through activities that include but are not limited to:
  - a. attempt to go beyond their authorized access, including attempting to log on to another person's account, attempts to access another person's files, or attempts to access a secured network.
  - b. users should not attempt to download any software without proper authorization and supervision.
  - c. engaging in other illegal acts such as arranging for a drug sale or purchase of alcohol.
  - d. posting a message sent to the user in private without permission of the sender or posting private information about another person.
  - e. posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming."
3. **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement:** The user will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet and will respect the rights of copyright owners.
4. **Inappropriate Access of Material:** Users will not use the network to access material that is pornographic, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (i.e., hate literature).

Note: Users will promptly disclose to the system administrator, administrator, teacher, or school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate, makes them feel uncomfortable, and is pornographic or illegal. If a student has any doubt about the appropriateness of anything received on the Internet, from another individual or about any activity occurring on the system, the student should notify a school employee or parent as soon as possible.

## **504. CELL PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students may not use cell phones or any other electronic or digital devices for calls, texts, or email at RCS between the hours of 7:55 a.m. and 3:10 p.m. for personal or entertainment purposes. Devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smart watches, iPods, cameras, video equipment, personal computers, etc. When students are in possession of these devices, the devices must not be visible and must be turned off during school hours. If a student is caught using an electronic or digital device during school hours for any reason other than education purposes, the device will be confiscated and returned to the parent/student at the discretion of the administrator. Please see Behavior and Discipline Policy for more details.

For educational purposes, students may use digital tools in the classroom or library including computers, laptops, iPads, tablets, and digital readers under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher.

The following are prohibited:

1. No audio recording, video recording, or making of photos without the expressed permission of faculty for educational purposes
2. No use of social media, including but not limited to Tik Tok, Snap Chat, Instagram, etc. without the expressed permission of faculty
3. No purchase via digital device while at school without written permission from parents
4. No unethical usage of devices which utilize any forms of cheating or plagiarism via applications (i.e., fill in blanks) at any time
5. No utilization of any device in any way that may be deemed wrongful usage by any staff member or administrator at any time.

All students and parents must agree in writing to the Acceptable Digital Use Policy and cell phone/electronic device policies as a part of the enrollment process.

## **505. CONTACTING STUDENTS**

If for any reason you need to contact your student during the school day, you should call the school office rather than calling or texting your student's cell phone. To protect the academic integrity of their educational time at school, students are not allowed to use cell phones for communication purposes (even with parents) during the school day. If your student needs to contact you for any reason, he/she will be given permission and will be allowed to use an office phone.

## **506. VIDEOS & MOVIES**

Only G-rated movies/videos will be shown at school unless a permission slip is issued and signed by parents.

## **507. PUBLICATIONS & INFORMATION**

For general school information, please visit the RCS website at [ridgefieldchristian.org](http://ridgefieldchristian.org). In addition to the website, regular updates and communication are sent via email to RCS students, staff, and families. Information on upcoming events, as well as periodic photos and reports on recent events are regularly posted on the school's social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.

For information specific to your child, FACTS Family Portal is a private and secure website that allows you to view information such as attendance, daily grades, lesson plans, homework, and report cards. The Admissions Director is the contact person for parent FACTS access. The Academic Advisor is the contact person for student FACTS access.

Lesson plans are subject to change; teachers may adjust plans daily according to student learning. Lesson plans and assignments on FACTS help parents see the general flow of class, but students still need to be responsible to write down specific assignments as given in class.

To log on FACTS for the first time, find the FACTS page on the RCS website. Click the First-time Users tab and enter an email address that is on file with the school. A password will be emailed to that address which will allow you to log on under the Parent tab.

### **508. LOST & FOUND**

We strongly advise parents to label all personal items. All unclaimed items are turned into the office to go into a lost-and-found box. Items remaining for an extended period will be given away.

### **509. FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are considered an important part of the educational program at RCS. The trips are carefully planned to give students educationally enriching experiences that are not available in the confines of the classroom. Participation in school field trips is required unless written notice is given to the teacher. Students not returning a permission slip for the field trip will not be allowed to attend. Parents will be called upon to help provide transportation. Parents or other approved volunteer drivers will be required to provide a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of adequate insurance.

At the teacher's discretion, parents and siblings may be invited to accompany the class and enjoy the field trip. Parents serving as chaperones are asked to not bring any other children/siblings on the field trip, in order to focus on the safety and supervision of the participating class. Money for field trips must be turned into the office.

RCS-branded shirts must be worn on field trips. All other apparel must conform to the regular dress code.

### **510. FUNDRAISERS**

All fundraisers proposed by clubs, athletics, activities, and classes (including t-shirt sales, tag days, clinics, etc.) must be pre-approved by school administration. For business transactions, please see policy below regarding orders made by students.

### **511. ORDERING/BUSINESS BY STUDENTS**

Students are not allowed to conduct business transactions on the school's behalf (i.e., t-shirt orders, photography, etc.). These transactions must be done by the club, sport, or class sponsor. Parents who oversee a club/sport (including room moms) must seek administrator approval before conducting transactions.

### **512. CONFLICT & GRIEVANCE POLICY**

We recognize that conflict is inevitable at some point in any given relationship. Scripture reminds us that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Differences of opinion, misconduct, hurtful words, or violations of trust occur even within the Christian community. As persons who have agreed to participate in the community of a Christian school, we are to be different in how we handle disagreement and conflict. The principles of Matthew 18 are to govern how members of the Ridgefield Community handle conflict, disputes, and grievances.

*"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your*

*brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." (Matthew 18:15-17)*

Based on this, the following steps are to be taken in such situations:

1. Spend time in thoughtful prayer and reflection before taking any next steps.
2. Do not talk to others about the individual(s) involved in the conflict, thereby avoiding the sin of gossip and division. If counsel is needed, do so while protecting the identity of those involved.
3. Schedule an appointment to speak privately with the teacher or staff member (or another parent) with most directly involved in the conflict. Approach the conversation with the willingness to listen and seek mutual understanding. As a rule, classroom issues should first be discussed with the teacher, athletic issues with the coach, and administrative issues with the appropriate administrator.
4. If the conflict is not resolved through this initial meeting, the parties should schedule an appointment to discuss the matter with the next level of administration up to the Head of School.
5. If the matter is not resolved after this meeting, the parties may appeal to the school Board of Directors.

### **513. PARENTAL COMMUNICATION**

Good learning encompasses much more than what is taught in the classroom. Good coordination between the school and the home is a key ingredient student success. Therefore, communication with parents is a major priority at RCS. Teachers are responsible to keep parents informed of student progress. Parents are responsible to support the learning process and to contact the teacher when questions arise. The following methods have been instituted as a means with which to keep the lines of communication between home & school open:

**Parent/Teacher Conferences.** These are scheduled during the first and third quarters of the school year to give opportunity for evaluation of student progress and to establish a good working relationship between teacher and parent (see the school calendar for specific dates). Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of the parent or the teacher.

**School app / Family Portal.** Specific information about class assignments, homework, and grades can be found in the RCS Mobile App or online via the FACTS Family Portal. Teachers update weekly, and this is a great first step to finding the information you need to stay connected. Each quarter, report cards are available for viewing through the Family Portal. Students will have four grading periods on their progress in each subject area.

**Communications by Email.** Much of the information about the school year is communicated to parents via email. Please make sure that your email addresses are accurate (contact the office for changes) and inform the office if you cannot receive information through email. Teachers often email parents with updates, news, and other reports and communication.

**Teacher Meeting.** Often a face-to-face meeting with the teacher can help resolve concerns much more quickly and smoothly than electronic communication. Meeting in-person is especially recommended when essential information or issues are involved.

### **514. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

We consider it an honor and privilege to partner with parents in the education of their children. In this

partnership, we depend on the involvement and investment of each RCS parent in the school. Through PACE (Parents Advancing Christian Education), parents provide countless volunteer hours, resources, leadership, service, skills, and resources, without which our school would not exist.

PACE is led by the PACE Leadership Team, and there are no membership fees or dues. Parents obtain the privilege of membership just by virtue of having students enrolled at RCS. Parents may sign up for volunteer positions, including school committees, room moms/dads, volunteer coaches and sponsors, and much more at our annual Orientation/Open House, by contacting the office, or by contacting a member of the PACE Leadership Team.

As always, we also encourage parents to share their talents and abilities in the classroom when appropriate. For the continued safety of all students, all visitors to school must check in to the office and obtain a visitor lanyard before entering the building. To protect teachers' schedules, please call the office or email your child's teacher to schedule appointments and/or coordinate volunteer opportunities and other visits.

## 600. Dress Code

At RCS, we believe that maintaining a modest and respectful appearance is an important aspect of our Christian values and contributes to a positive, Christ-like, and focused learning environment. Our dress code reflects our commitment to upholding these principles, ensuring that students are dressed appropriately for school and social activities in a relaxed yet conservative atmosphere.

It is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of acceptable and unacceptable attire. It is not meant to take the place of parental rules, which may be more restrictive than those set down here. Nor is it meant to relieve the student of the opportunity to grow in personal responsibility for his or her own appearance. We expect all students to adhere to the following guidelines to promote a sense of unity, professionalism, and dignity within our school community.

### **GUIDELINES**

#### **TOPS/SHIRTS**

- **Shirts** must be either plain/solid color or Ridgefield t-shirts, polos, or button down. Ridgefield shirts are any *school-issued shirt*, including t-shirts, with school branding or the official school logo.
- **Colors:** navy, hunter green, white, black, gray, gold
- Tops must have sleeves and cover the shoulders and midsection, with no low-cut necklines or transparent materials, and not be excessively tight, clinging, or revealing. The bottom hem line of the shirt must extend below the waistline.
- Tops with slogans, images, or messages contrary to Christian values or inconsistent with a Christian lifestyle are not allowed.

#### **OUTERWEAR**

Outerwear can be worn over an approved top or shirt. Outerwear must be RCS branded or solid color with no imagery, slogan, or other graphic image. RCS spirit wear may be worn any day of the week as long as it is the outermost layer.

## BOTTOMS

- Pants, skirts, and shorts must fit comfortably without being too tight, be worn at the waist, and be free of rips, tears, or holes. Clothing must not reveal undergarments or excessively cling to the body.
- Jeans are allowed.
- Joggers or sweatpants are not permitted except on designated occasions.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be of modest length, touching no more than 3” above the knee when standing (the short side of a 3x5 index card).
- Leggings and yoga pants may only be worn under skirts or dresses. Tunic-style tops are acceptable provided they meet the minimal length requirement.
- Permitted colors are khaki, navy, denim blue, gray, black, plaid (for skirts or dresses)

## FOOTWEAR

Shoes must have enclosed toes and heels. Sandals are not permitted because of playground gravel. Rubber flip-flops, athletic slides, and house shoes are prohibited.

## ACCESSORIES

- Jewelry and accessories should be minimal and non-distracting and should not include symbols or messages that contradict Christian values.
- Hats, caps, headgear, or hoods that cover any portion of the face should not be worn inside school buildings, except for medical reasons, or on special designated occasions such as Spirit or tag days.

## GROOMING

- Hair should be clean and neatly groomed, avoiding extreme styles or colors that may distract from the learning environment, and worn in a style that does not obstruct the view of the face.
- Facial hair must be well maintained.
- Makeup and nail polish should be kept modest. Boys are not permitted to wear makeup; e.g., eyeliner or lipstick
- Visible tattoos are not allowed.
- Girls may have no more than two earrings per ear. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings of any kind. No body or facial piercings are allowed.
- Any jewelry deemed excessive, dangerous, or representing an ungodly segment of culture will not be permitted.

## P.E. ATTIRE

- Students may wear appropriate t-shirts, including tank tops without enlarged armholes, shorts, and athletic shoes. Athletic shorts must meet the regular guidelines for length.
- Leggings are NOT allowed as PE attire unless worn under shorts.
- Closed-toe athletic shoes must be worn for PE activities.
- Sweatpants, sweatshirts, jackets, and coats may be worn in cooler weather.

- Changing rooms are available for changing back into regular school attire.

## **THEME/TAG DAYS**

Upper School students may wear theme-oriented clothing on approved and specified theme/tags days only. Theme/tag day exceptions will apply only as specified in the particular activity, i.e., hats may only be worn on a hat theme day, not on any theme/tag day. Theme/tag day attire may include but be limited to things such as sweats/pajamas, athletic attire, favorite college spirit wear, superhero days, hats, or costumes.

Theme/tag day dress code allowances do not apply to non-participating students. Students must be wearing items specifically and obviously related to the theme/tag day to be considered as participating.

## ***EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES***

Students will be expected to dress appropriately in a modest way when attending extracurricular school functions. Students should remember that they are representing Ridgefield at all events. **Students dressed inappropriately or immodestly will be asked to leave the event.**

When students are out of dress code during school hours for special events, they should be dressed in the spirit of the dress code. Skirt and short length should follow regular guidelines. No spaghetti straps, tank tops, tube tops, halters, short tops, excessively tight clothing, etc, will be permitted. All athletic uniform requirements will be handled by the Athletic Department.

## ***FORMAL/SEMI-FORMAL EVENTS***

The following are the approved guidelines for formal and semi-formal functions including athletic banquets and homecoming at RCS:

- No jeans, shorts, or athletic wear.
- No caps or unapproved hats.
- Dresses should be modest, not tight-fitting, and not show cleavage.
- Dresses should not have cutouts or sheer fabrics except on the sleeves or shoulders.
- Dresses should fall no lower than the middle of the back.
- Bare sides or midriffs should not be visible.
- Hemlines or slits in dresses or skirts must touch below the fingertips when the arms are fully extended along the sides.
- Pants are to be worn at the waist.
- Student dates from other schools must also abide by this policy. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they know.

## ***ENFORCEMENT & VIOLATIONS***

It is important to note that these guidelines are subject to the discretion of the administration, and exceptions may be made for special events or circumstances. The administration reserves the right to make the final decisions concerning compliance with the standards. Repeated failure to comply with dress code standards could result in more significant disciplinary action.

- Initial violations will be dealt with by a warning and a reminder to dress appropriately. For elementary students, a note may be sent home to parents to ensure effective communication.



- Questionable violations of the dress code will result in a student/administration conversation that will result in an administrative decision about the possible violation.
- Students in egregious violation of the dress code, such as vulgar/inappropriate messages or immodest dress, will be removed from class by the teacher, counted absent, and sent to the school office. They will remain in the office or be sent home (parental choice) until the student is able to return to class in appropriate attire. A behavior note will be entered for tracking purposes (but no demerits or other discipline, etc.)
- Dress code violations will not be considered disciplinary violations unless there are numerous/repeated clear violations.

Please read and address these standards with your child. Parents are responsible for sending their children to school with correct dress and grooming. Clothing embroidered with the RCS logo may be purchased through The Toggery at [toggerykids.org](http://toggerykids.org). Numerous stores also offer khaki/navy pants and shorts and plain polo style shirts. Gently used uniforms may be purchased from PACE's clothing closet.

## 700. Code of Conduct

At Ridgefield Christian School, we set a high priority on training students in personal manners and character development. A consistent Bible-based discipline standard, loving correction, and cooperative parent-teacher relationships will enable your child to develop self-control, accept responsibility, and mature socially.

Our goal is to train each student to govern his/her own conduct according to the principles in the Scriptures. We believe that parents and teachers are set in authority by God to train children until they learn how to act correctly on their own. The instruction that we give concerning discipline has at its core these primary truths:

- God gives us principles to live by for our own good; to protect us, guide us, and bless us.
- These principles are written down in the Bible.
- Teachers and parents have the responsibility of translating these general principles into rules for specific settings; i.e., the classroom or the home.
- Rules are necessary for order and peace which are prerequisites to learning.
- Obedience results in rewards and blessings.
- Disobedience results in negative consequences.
- Parental or teacher administered correction is an act of love that is meant to warn children so that they do not experience the full effects of their disobedience.

Students will always be treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and love during the entire disciplinary process. If the disobedience involves conflict with another child, the teacher will guide the students to forgive and reconcile.

Ridgefield Christian School holds that the Bible is the infallible, divine Word of God and that salvation by faith in Christ is the initial step on the Christian life. There is adequate Biblical basis for the idea of spiritual growth into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), which is the work of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 3:18). This growth begins with the initial act of saving faith and continues throughout life. The Holy Spirit makes the Christian conscious of the Biblical demands for a holy life that fulfills both God's moral law and high law of love (Matthew 22:27-39; Romans 13:8-19; Galatians 5:15). The result is a life consecrated unto God and separated from the world.

Ridgefield Christian School must, therefore, provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth and development of young people who are not yet mature Christians. A standard of conduct based on the following Biblical imperatives is necessary to provide such an environment. All the activities of the Christian must be subordinated to the glory of God who indwells us (I Corinthians 8:9, 12-13; 10:32). The Christian will endeavor to avoid practices which cause the loss of sensitivity to the spiritual needs of the world and loss of the Christian's physical, mental, or spiritual well-being.

A sense of the needs for spiritual growth in the light of these principles has led RCS to adopt the following standards which are believed to be conducive to the environment that will best promote the spiritual welfare of the student. RCS, therefore, requires each student--whether at home, school, or elsewhere:

- To refrain from participating in activities such as profane and/or indecent language, smoking, possession or use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco, vaping/e-cigarettes, gambling, pornography, premarital sex, homosexual activity, or sexual perversions and to abide by the RCS Statement of Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality.
- To maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness, honesty, morality, and modest attire.
- To refrain from verbal, sexual, physical harassment, and/or bullying, etc.

The selection of the restrictions mentioned in the pledge may appear arbitrary to some, but while not condemning others who see differently, Ridgefield Christian School believes that the restrictions named are outstanding types of conduct which are detrimental to the standards established as its objective. Students are expected to abide by these standards throughout their enrollment whether at home, school, or elsewhere.

We firmly believe that the most important keys to a successful disciplinary process are (1) the heart and attitude of the child and (2) the degree of cooperation and support given to the school by the parents. When students know that the parents and teachers are working as a unified team, they tend to quickly respond to discipline. Your child's teacher and/or administrator will contact you regarding any problems with your child. We ask that you support us in our discipline process, and we encourage you to call us if you have any problems.

### **701. PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS**

Parents/guardians are expected to know and adhere to all school policies and to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with School administration and faculty. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the biblical principles found in Matthew 18. When questions or problems arise, parents or students should speak first with the teacher or responsible party. *Refrain from talking to other parents about a problem; it is divisive and not unifying.* If a problem persists, then make an appointment to meet with the teacher, the Educational Administrator, or Head of School.

Parents/guardians should also be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions, including in private and public communications, text or email messaging, and social media postings. *Complaints or derogatory comments about teachers, staff, or the school posted on social media accounts are a violation of the school's behavior policy for students and parents and may result in administrative dismissal of the student from RCS.*

### **SEEKING GRACE AND TRUTH**

Conflict between students often entails differences in details or perceptions about the incident. We recognize that, as children growing in maturity, students can and do skew their accounts of incidents, intentionally or

unintentionally, to shift blame to others or avoid consequences. Therefore, every reasonable step will be taken to examine all sides of a situation with the goal of guiding those involved in a deeper pursuit of truth and grace, emphasizing the need for honesty, accountability, forgiveness, and kindness. Parents need to agree to see school staff and administrators as partners in helping their child to mature rather than as hostile opponents out to mistreat their child.

## **702. BULLYING**

The willful and harmful treatment of students is contrary to Scripture, morally wrong, and illegal. In accordance with Arkansas state law, Act 681 of 2003 and Act 115 of 2007, RCS prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. RCS expressly forbids bullying, sexual harassment (opposite sex or same sex), or any threatening and offensive conduct or expressions with respect to gender, race, color, national origin, disability, or age.

Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, robs a person of his/her dignity, detracts from the safe environment necessary to promote student learning, and will not be tolerated. Students who bully another person shall be held accountable for their actions whether they occur on school equipment or property; off school property at a school sponsored or approved function, activity, or event; going to or from school or a school activity in a school vehicle.

RCS is committed to providing an environment in which every student is treated as an image bearer of God. Treating each other with dignity and respect is key to a healthy community. Every effort will be made to create a community where dignity for the individual is the expectation. We will promptly address instances when students are treated in a disrespectful manner.

A school administrator or his or her designee who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall promptly investigate the complaint or report and make a record of the investigation and any action taken because of the investigation.

*Definition: Bullying, harassment, or intimidation like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.* Bullying includes but is not limited to, any written or verbal expression or physical act or gesture or a repeated hurtful behavior pattern directed toward another person. This behavior may include physical, verbal, written, and/or emotional abuse intended to harm another person.

- Physical harm to a school employee or student or damage to the school employee's or student's property.
- Substantial interference with a student's education or with a school employee's role in education.
- A hostile educational environment for one (1) or more students or school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act; or
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment

This policy includes cyber-bullying which is an electronic act using technology to systematically harass or bully a person or persons on or off school premises with the result or intention of substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment. Cyberbullying of School Employees is expressly prohibited.

“Electronic act” means without limitation a communication or image transmitted by means of an electronic device, including without limitation a telephone, wireless phone or other wireless communications device, computer, or pager that results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or

educational environment.

Electronic acts of bullying are prohibited whether the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment. If the electronic act is directed specifically at students or school personnel and maliciously intended for the purpose of disrupting school and has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose, the act will be investigated by school officials and may result in a report being filed with the local police to conduct further investigation.

“Harassment” means a pattern of unwelcome verbal or physical conduct relating to another person's constitutionally or statutorily protected status that causes, or reasonably should be expected to cause, substantial interference with the other's performance in the school environment; and

Substantial disruption means without limitation that any one or more of the following occur because of the bullying:

- Necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities.
- Inability of students or educational staff to focus on learning or function as an educational unit because of a hostile environment.
- Severe or repetitive disciplinary measures are needed in the classroom or during educational activities; or
- Exhibition of other behaviors by students or educational staff that substantially interfere with the learning environment.

Examples of "bullying" may also include but are not limited to a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

- Sarcastic "compliments" about another student's personal appearance or actual or perceived attributes
- Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate
- Mocking, taunting, or belittling
- Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as “fronting” or “chesting” a person
- Demeaning humor relating to a student's race, gender, ethnicity or actual or perceived attributes
- Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans,
- Blocking access to school property or facilities
- Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property
- Stealing or hiding books or belongings
- Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others
- Sexual harassment is also a form of bullying
- Teasing or name-calling based on the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles

Students are encouraged to report behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to their teacher or the administrator. The report may be made anonymously. Teachers and other school employees who have witnessed, or are reliably informed that, a student has been a victim of behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident(s) to the administrator. Parents or legal guardians may submit written reports of incidents they feel constitute bullying, or if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to the administrator. The administrator shall be responsible for investigating the incident(s) to determine if disciplinary action is warranted.

The person or persons reporting behavior they consider to be bullying shall not be subject to retaliation or

reprisal in any form.

Parent/guardians are encouraged to take what their children say seriously and to report bullying concerns to the teacher first. Parent/guardians should understand that the whole story may be quite complex and trust the school to resolve bullying issues. Parent/guardians not satisfied with the action may refer to school administration if the need arises.

It is important for parents/guardians and students to recognize that not all instances of teasing or name-calling constitute bullying. Not all behaviors should be considered bullying or willful violation of this policy. Typically, bullying behavior occurs across social peer groups while students within the same peer group will often tease or joke with one another. Behaviors will be assessed by the teacher and/or administrator and addressed according to the following procedures.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. All parties – including the victim, alleged perpetrator, and sufficient bystanders – will be interviewed to establish the facts of the situation and to determine accountability for their actions/inaction.
2. All incidences are to be documented and written reports will be kept on the behavior by those staff members to whom the incident was reported.
3. Pertinent staff will be informed about and have access to the information recorded on all incidents so that they may be aware of any issues between students.
4. Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimize the risk of escalation.
5. All incidents of bullying will be followed up by those staff members originally informed to parent/guardians of at least the victim(s) and suspected bully.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred.

Any individual found to have made a false charge of bullying will be disciplined by an administrator.

### **703. DRUGS/ALCOHOL**

If a student is guilty of possession of unauthorized or illegal drugs or is found selling drugs to others, he or she will be expelled from school immediately and turned over to local authorities. A student guilty of such an offense will not be allowed to reapply for admission to RCS in the future.

### **704. FIREARMS/WEAPONS**

If a student is found to have in his or her possession a firearm or illegal weapon on the campus, the student will be expelled from school and turned over to local police authorities. The student guilty of such an offense may not be allowed to reapply for admission in the future.

### **705. DAMAGE POLICY**

It is expected that any damage to school property be acknowledged and paid for by the student or students involved.

## **706. CHEATING & PLAGIARISM**

Academic dishonesty is a serious issue. Students are expected to complete assignments independently of other students' efforts and to prepare adequately to pass exams without aid of hidden notes, help from other students, and numerous other methods. Additionally, plagiarism is unacceptable when completing research papers and projects. This includes submitting a partial or complete paper from the internet or failure to cite quotations giving authors credit for their creative labor.

Students should recognize that one or more zeros from cheating/plagiarism could result in a significantly lower grade in the course for the semester or even a possible failure of the class.

Upon determination of this offense, the following will occur:

- Conference by teacher with student
- Assignments resulting in a grade of zero with notification to parent(s)
- Disciplinary referral to the office for file with the possibility of additional consequences at the administration's discretion depending upon the circumstances, attitude of the student, or number of offenses.

Depending upon the circumstances, the student may be allowed to redo an assignment/project with a reduced/limited number of points at the teacher's discretion. Repetitive cheating/plagiarism will result in more serious consequences including ISS/OSS.

## **707. DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES**

When elementary children face difficulties whether it be academic and/or behavioral challenges, the elementary teachers will seek clear communication with parents immediately to help resolve problems and to ensure the success of students. These may include daily notes, e-mails, texts, calls, and/or conferences. Teachers may refer children to the administrator's office. Upon more extreme issues or repeated behaviors, the administrator will assist in the evaluation of circumstances and contact parents or schedule conferences to discuss recommendations or disciplinary measures.

To accomplish these student expectations, certain student behaviors cannot be tolerated and will result in action by the teacher or the administration. Violations are classified in 3 different levels with increasingly significant consequences, including but not limited to the following.

### **MINOR VIOLATIONS**

- Inappropriate class behavior
- Violation of classroom rules
- Disruption of the learning or social environment, including horseplay, running, excessive noise in the halls, classes, or chapel
- Throwing things in class, hall, cafeteria, etc.
- Public display of affection
- Other minor offenses that do not involve verbal or physical behavior, negative or disrespectful attitudes, or unethical/immoral behavior

### **MODERATE VIOLATIONS**

- Disobedience or disrespect (including towards fellow students)
- Use of physical force or verbal intimidation or demeaning speech and behavior

- Profane language, including racial comments or slurs
- Willful damage to or destruction of property of the school or another student
- Unsafe driving on school grounds
- Lying to a faculty member or administrator
- Misuse of school-provided technology including internet/wi-fi access
- Dress code violations
- Student use of cell phone and electronic devices during the school day without expressed permission from teacher
- Student use of social media under any circumstance during the school day, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, Tik Tok, etc.
- Student use of cell phones, iPads, or any other device to take photos of classmates, teachers, or staff during the school day without expressed permission from teacher
- Leaving campus without permission
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Gambling
- Unauthorized entry into buildings and facilities after school hours is strictly prohibited.
- Other offenses that involve minor verbal/physical (heat of the moment) altercations, negative/disrespectful attitudes, or neglect/lack of care

### SEVERE VIOLATIONS

- Bullying/harassment
- Plagiarism and cheating on assignments
- Gross disrespect towards authority
- Drugs, tobacco, alcohol (See Drug Policy)
- Purposeful physical intimidation, use of force, or threats of violence
- Possession of obscene material
- Acts of profanity, vulgarity, or indecency
- Sexting or possession or distribution of inappropriate images or language on social media or cell phones
- Student use of social media for the representation and/or distribution of negative comments, photographs, videos, or posts directed toward individuals, schools, or other entities of any sort; includes any form of profanity, pornography, sexting, sexual perversion, or homosexuality.
- Vandalism, theft, or willful destruction of property
- Possession of a weapon with intent to harm
- Involvement in immoral activities or activities contrary to the philosophy of RCS

School staff will typically respond to disciplinary situations involving students using the steps below. However, RCS administration reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to elevate the response to specific situations where behavior is more egregious or serious.

### STEP I – TEACHER-MANAGED DISCIPLINE

**Minor** violations are handled by teachers themselves in their classrooms or in other student spaces (hallways, cafeteria, gym). Each teacher establishes classroom rules that students are expected to abide by. Disciplinary action in the classroom may involve things such as redirection, warnings, reviewing of rules, one-on-one conference, time out/isolation period, extra work assigned, and so forth, at the teacher’s discretion. Teachers may utilize classroom behavior charts and reward systems appropriate to the grade level.

Teachers should communicate with parents by email through FACTS SIS where such behavior becomes a pattern (3-4 times) or where the teacher feels the parent needs to know about the behavior to intervene at home. All communication regarding classroom behavior and discipline from teachers should be done through FACTS SIS.

Students are not sent to the office for minor violations unless there is a continued pattern in which the teacher has been unable to correct the behavior after reasonable and appropriate effort in the classroom or learning space

## **STEP 2 – REFERRAL**

Other violations or continued/repetitive minor violations result in the student being referred to the front office (a disciplinary referral). A Disciplinary Referral typically results in the student receiving 1 or more Behavior Demerits according to the nature of the violation as determined by the administration. Demerits are issued only by the Head of School or the Educational Administration through the Behavior report in FACTS SIS. A copy of the report, including the offense, and the resulting demerits and consequence will be emailed to the parent via FACTS SIS. Parents can view all behavior reports at any time through the FACTS Family Portal.

- Minor violations: 1-2 demerits; may include lunch detention or loss of free time/recess.
- Moderate violations: 2-4 demerits; may include lunch detention, loss of free time/recess, loss of participation in certain activities, or additional work projects, duties, or activities
- Severe violations:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 4+ demerits, parent conference, automatic Behavioral Probation
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 2 demerits, OSS, possible expulsion
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: expulsion

*In certain situations, the Administration reserves the right to send a student home during the day to remove them from a situation involved in a minor or moderate violation. This is not a suspension, and the student will be able to return the next day barring any subsequent disciplinary action that may be later deemed appropriate.*

## **STEP 3 – DETENTION/ISS**

Any student who accumulates excessive Behavior Demerits during the school year will be subject to the following sequence of disciplinary actions:

- 4 demerits – 1 Detention period (Before/After School)
- 5 demerits – one-half day of In-School Suspension, parent conference
- 6 demerits – full day of In-School Suspension, parent conference, behavioral probation
- 7 demerits – see Behavior Probation

## **STEP 4 – SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

Repeated occurrences of the same or similar violations or disciplinary action while on probation indicate a student's inability or unwillingness to follow RCS rules and respond to correction. Such repeated offenses are major disciplinary offenses and, at the discretion of the Head of School, will result in out of school suspension, behavior contract, administrative withdrawal, expulsion, and/or other serious consequences.



## **708. PROBATION, DETENTION, & SUSPENSION**

### **PROBATION**

A student on behavioral probation is subject to some or all the following conditions:

- Weekly meeting with Head of School, Educational Administrator, or designated staff/teacher.
- Suspension from participation in all or specific athletic and/or school activities for the period of probation.
- Loss of student or student leadership privileges or positions
- Appropriate acts of restitution
- Referral for professional counseling.
- Additional conditions as determined at the Head of School's discretion. The probation period will be for a period designated by the administration.

A student on Behavioral Probation who receives a disciplinary referral will receive at minimum an automatic two (2) days OSS. Depending on the nature and severity of the offense, additional consequences may be imposed, including longer OSS periods or expulsion.

In addition to automatic probation for violations above, behavioral probation may be applied at the discretion of the Head of School or Educational Administrator. Behavioral probation can be implemented for, but is not limited to, the following:

- The student has demonstrated a pattern of disobedience or insubordination.
- The student has demonstrated an unrepentant and/or negative attitude.
- The student has committed a single major offense.

### **DETENTION**

Students are required to attend Detention when assigned. As a rule, detention is held on designated days and times as needed and assigned by administration each semester. Athletics practice is not an excuse to miss detention. If a student fails to appear for detention, the student will still have to serve the detention period and an additional Behavior Demerit will be assigned.

### **SUSPENSION**

Students assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) will report to the front office at the beginning of the day on which they are to serve the suspension. ISS is served in an assigned location with a supervising teacher or substitute. Students assigned ISS will be charged a fee of \$30 for half-day or \$50 for full day to defray the cost of supervision. This charge will be added to the student's FACTS account. A student who calls in sick the day of an assigned ISS will still have to make up the assigned suspension period.

When serving a suspension period, the student is not eligible to participate to any school-related activities (field trips, special events, athletic events, practices) for the day(s) assigned. Any assignment that is due on the day of suspension may be made up for full credit. Students must contact the teacher to reschedule any missed assessments during their suspension.

Students assigned Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) are counted absent for the suspension days and not allowed to be on school premises. The school is not responsible for any childcare or supervision needs resulting from OSS.

## **709. EXPULSION PROCEDURE & POLICIES**

Expulsion is defined as the immediate termination of school attendance due to extreme and blatant disregard for school policies. With the final decision being determined by the Ridgefield Christian School Board of Directors, expulsion is the highest level and most extreme measure of discipline. The circumstances and details of an act or acts leading to recommended expulsion are prayerfully evaluated and considered carefully.

Expulsion can result from the culmination of serious offenses over time in which it is determined the student cannot conduct him or herself in a manner that promotes a positive learning environment for other students, does not display respect and esteem for faculty and staff, or does not represent RCS positively in the community. In some cases, it may be appropriate to consider the age of the student and the attitude toward correction.

Secondly, expulsion can result from an immediate, serious offense which requires instantaneous review and evaluation which could be considered a detriment to the safety and security of the school, or other legal and/or moral ramifications. These acts can be evaluated whether on campus or off campus. The more serious offenses include but are not limited to:

- Possession and/or consumption of drugs; possession of drug paraphernalia; selling drugs
- Possession and/or consumption of alcohol
- Possession and/or use of tobacco / tobacco related products
- Possession of firearms, weapons, or any threat of violence whether intentional or not that creates campus disturbance, unrest, or fear
- Destruction/vandalism of school property
- Any act that intentionally promotes discrimination in any form or incites racial tension
- Theft

### **EXPULSION PROCESS**

1. Review of previous disciplinary referrals
2. Review of nature and seriousness of the offense, number of offenses, age of student
3. Notification of parent
4. Indefinite OSS
5. Review of School Board

Upon determination of expulsion, the Board will determine that indefinitely or for a specific period, the student will not be allowed on campus for any reason or activity.

## **800. Health and Safety**

### **801. ILLNESS, MEDICATION, & INJURY**

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified by the office. It is essential that you keep all health records, as well as emergency phone numbers, current in the office.

\*Students with symptoms such as the following will not be admitted to class or will be sent home should these symptoms develop during the day:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more within the last 24 hours

- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Contagious Rash
- Head Lice

RCS has a “no nit” policy in dealing with head lice. Any student with head lice or nits will be sent home and not allowed to return until all nits have been removed. Should the same student have recurring instances of head lice, proof of treatment will be required. All returning students must be cleared through the school office before being re-admitted to class.

If your child is seriously injured while at school, you will be notified immediately. If the injury is serious enough, he/she will be taken to a hospital.

When your child has a prescription or over the counter medication to be taken at school, there is e-signature authorization form to be completed. This form must be updated with any changes. This gives us permission to administer that medication to your child. The medication must be in the original container. Students should turn in all medications to the office for administration immediately upon arrival to school. When no form is on file, verbal permission over the phone by a parent to school personnel will be accepted. Students are prohibited from having any drugs or medication in their possession. Emergency medications such as inhalers and EpiPens will be kept in the Office for elementary students. High school students may obtain written permission from the office to keep inhalers, epi-pens, etc. on their person. Non-prescription performance enhancing substances, diet pills, or other vitamins and supplements may not be possessed or taken at school or school activity.

If your child has an underlying medical condition that causes frequent nausea and/or vomiting without a fever, your child may be allowed to remain at school. Proper documentation must be obtained from your child’s doctor prior to symptoms.

## **802. IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

According to state law, students K-12 must comply with immunization requirements within 30 days after the beginning of the school year. They will not be allowed to attend class after that 30-day period until all immunizations are up to date. This includes parents seeking exemption status for their student as well. All exemption paperwork must be turned in to the state health department and be in process for RCS to verify within the 30-day period.

According to state law, students PreK3-PreK4 must comply with immunization requirements within 15 days after the beginning of the school year. They will not be allowed to attend class after that 15-day period until all immunizations are up to date. This includes parents seeking exemption status for their student as well. All exemption paperwork must be turned in to the state health department and be in process for RCS to verify within the 15-day period.

## **803. DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES**

### **MORNING DROP-OFF**

- Parents may drop off students at the front entrance of school from 7:20 – 7:55 am
- Students arriving after 8:00 am must be walked into the office by a parent.

### **AFTERNOON PICK-UP**

- Car line pick-up is 3:10 – 3:25 pm.
- Only PreK parents may choose to pick up their children beginning at 2:45 pm by pulling up to the awning.
- Except in cases of emergency or extenuating circumstance, K-12 students will not be signed out after 2:45 pm and must dismiss at 3:10 pm.

#### **804. TRAFFIC SAFETY**

Traffic rules are in place to protect our students from injury, and for the flow of traffic to run smoothly.

- Drop-off begins at 7:20 pm. Pick-up begins at 3:10 pm.
- Pre-K pick-up begins at 2:45 pm.
- Crosswalk and observance of the traffic sign is to be used by all persons traveling between the parking lot and the building.
- All secondary students exiting the gymnasium or high school doorways must stay on the sidewalks and observe the designated crosswalk areas and signs.
- There is only one lane of traffic under the awning during inclement weather.
- Licensed drivers only on school property.
- All visitors must park in the parking lot.
- Be respectful and considerate of those behind you in line by having students prepared to exit the vehicle promptly (backpacks, money, notes, goodbyes, etc.)
- Obey One Way traffic signs.
- Parents should not summon students from their parked cars in the parking lot area.
- All students should be picked up through the car line pick up.
- Secondary student drivers should not return to their car throughout the day without permission.

#### **805. CELL PHONE LAW**

Effective 10-1-11 Arkansas State Law #27-51-1609 was enacted. Wireless telephone use restrictions in school zones – (a) Except as provided under subsection (b) of this section, a driver of a motor vehicle shall not use a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle when passing a school building or school zone during school hours when children are present and outside the building. (b) A driver of a motor vehicle who is passing a school building or school zone during school hours when children are present and outside the building may use a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle for an **emergency purpose**.

#### **806. STUDENT INSURANCE**

The school’s general liability policy provides limited excess only insurance coverage under an accident insurance for all students. This coverage is for injuries which occur while an enrolled student is participating in school-sponsored activities in the United States or traveling during school activities in transportation furnished or arranged by the school in the United States.

#### **807. LEAVING CAMPUS DURING SCHOOL**

- RCS observes a “closed campus” policy including lunch and break times. Students are not allowed to leave campus without permission from RCS.
- At other times during the school day, students are not allowed to leave campus, for illness, doctors’

appointments, etc. without permission from a parent/guardian.

- Any student leaving campus without permission is considered truant and will be placed in In School Suspension or Out-Of-School Suspension.

### **808. SECURITY**

Because of the increase of violence within our society, RCS seeks to provide a secure and safe learning environment. Cameras throughout the school premises and restricted access to the playground, patio and school provide security for our students, faculty, and staff. Visitors will remain in the mantrap until they have been validated by the Hall Pass system and issued a Hall Pass badge. Any visitor that does not pass validation will not be allowed into the school and will be asked to leave. Any issues with an unvalidated visitor will be referred to Administration. The badge must be always worn in an easily visible spot while on the school grounds. All school staff members have been instructed to escort all persons without a badge to the office immediately. All badges issued will be returned to the office upon signing out. After hours, security is provided by means of a school wide security system. Parents should not seek school personnel or accompany students in the hall/classroom areas before, during, or after immediate school hours. If a teacher conference is required, parents should call the office leaving a message or send an email with requests.

All volunteers must check in with the office and state their purpose. Volunteers may not use a key card without the knowledge of administration.

### **809. HANDGUN CARRY POLICY**

Ridgefield Christian School prohibits any person, including handgun carry permit holders, from carrying handguns anywhere on its campus, except for qualified personnel or members of a campus safety team who are specifically and individually issued written authorization by the Head of School, under authority granted by the Board of Trustees.

### **810. PROHIBITED PERSONS ON CAMPUS**

Ridgefield Christian School takes seriously the safety and welfare of our students and staff. As a private entity, we have the right to determine who can or cannot be on school property. Persons who are registered sex offenders; who are currently in legal proceedings for sexual crimes against children; who have restraining orders or no contact orders against members of the school students or staff; or are otherwise considered to pose a possible threat to others are prohibited from being on school grounds. Where such person is a current parent with custodial rights, not otherwise prohibited by judicial act, that person may pick up their student in carline under the supervision of school staff; such parent may not, however, attend other school functions or events or otherwise be on school grounds. The school reserves the right to enforce this policy by contacting law enforcement and requesting violators be criminally banned from entering school grounds.

### **811. HALLPASS SYSTEM**

When entering the facility, each visitor must present a Driver's License to the front office. The ID is scanned using the HallPass optical scanner and the information is checked against the National Sex Offender Registry and the School Visitor Restricted list. If the visitor is found on either list, the system will display a pop-up of the offender with photo and email to the appropriate staff and District Police Officers. If the visitor is cleared, Hall PASS will print a time/date badge with photo and School logo for the visitor to wear while on school grounds.

Each visitor can be labeled for the reason of the visit. These include visitor, volunteer, visiting faculty, substitute.

Hall Pass Custody Care application allows the automation of custody care, parental request, court orders and parental contact request without having to search through the folder when a visitor enters the campus.

## **812. SEARCH & SEIZURE**

To maintain order and discipline in the school and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student use areas, student lockers/cubbies or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. The Head of School or another staff person designated by the Head of School may request authorization for a search or conduct an emergency search when a threat to staff or students is deemed imminent. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

### **PERSONAL SEARCHES**

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, book bag, cubbies, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

### **AUTOMOBILE SEARCHES**

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not of right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on school property. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

## **813. SEVERE WEATHER**

When it becomes necessary to dismiss school for inclement weather or other perils, an announcement will be carried over the following media outlets:

- [kait8.com](http://kait8.com)
- KAIT-TV Channel 8 (Cable Channel 9)
- Jonesboro Radio Group 100.5, 104.9, 106.3, 107.5, 92.7
- East Arkansas Broadcasters FM 95.3, 95.9, 101.7, 107.9, 101.3, and AM 970 and 1230.

Parents will also receive email notice and RCS Facebook notifications.

When school is dismissed early during a regular school day, an email will be sent to parents by administration.

## **900. Athletics**

## **901. ATHLETIC RESOLUTION**

Whereas, RCS has the unique opportunity through participating in athletic events with public schools to bear witness of the love of Christ, the grace of God, and the message of salvation, and

Whereas, the conduct of RCS fans, players, and coaches is observed by the fans, players, and coaches of the opposing team, as well as by the officials, and

Whereas the conduct of RCS fans, players, and coaches is an important criterion by which other schools will judge RCS and what we proclaim about Christ, and

Whereas RCS elected to join the Arkansas Activities Association not only for the competition that it would provide for our students, but also as a witness to bear testimony of Christ to other schools, therefore

Be it resolved that the RCS Board of Directors calls upon every member of the RCS family to remember the importance of Christ-like conduct during athletic events and to conduct themselves in a manner that will bear positive testimony of our faith in Christ.

Be it further resolved that the RCS Board of Directors calls upon every member of the RCS family to refrain from any conduct, which potentially hurts the cause of Christ. The kind of conduct that should be avoided includes loud criticism of officials, expressed displeasure with a call that an official makes or does not make, facial expressions and gestures that communicate anger and /or displeasure.

Be it finally resolved that the RCS Board of Directors calls upon every adult member of the RCS family to view each athletic event as an opportunity for our students to learn from their example how to handle victories as well as losses in a gracious, Christ-like manner.

## **902. PARTICIPATION**

In order to participate in sports, every athlete must pay a \$100 athletics fee along with a uniform fee for each individual sport. (The uniform fee varies from sport to sport.) All players and their parents must sign a commitment contract. Finally, the following forms must be on file with the Athletic office BEFORE the first practice the player attends:

- Player Information Sheet
- Athlete Commitment Contract
- Parent/Guardian Commitment Contract & Player Participation Consent
- AAA Preparticipation Physical Evaluation: History Form (to be completed before the physical exam)
- AAA Preparticipation Physical Evaluation: Physical Examination Form
- AAA Participant Agreement, Consent, Release, and Venue Form
- AAA Sports Medicine Fact Sheet Form

## **903. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

RCS is a member of the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA). There are several guidelines that impact athletic eligibility for all member schools, both public and private. These include minimal academic standards, such as a GPA of 2.0, transfer rules, attendance, etc. Information governing athletic eligibility (AAA Handbook) is available from the Administration or Athletic Director (AD) or on the Arkansas Activities Association website.

RCS is committed to the development of student as a whole person. Sports can be a key part of a well-

rounded education. However, because of the unique nature of competitive sports in the school environment, along with our aims as a Christian school, it is essential that sports support rather than hinder a student's overall growth. Thus, at Ridgefield Christian School, athletics has a higher academic standard than what AAA requires.

To remain eligible to compete, RCS student-athletes in grades 7-12 must have a passing grade of 70 or higher (C) at each weekly progress monitoring period. A student-athlete who receives a grade of 69% or below in one or more classes on the weekly report will be ineligible to compete for that week (this is different than the academic watch guidelines). If a student has a passing grade in the class at the next progress check, the student will regain eligibility.

The ineligibility period will begin on the Monday after the grade check report is run and the student and coach are notified. It ends on the following Monday only when the Registrar's office has cleared the student in writing as being academically eligible. If the student has not remedied their low grade(s) at the subsequent weekly check, they remain ineligible for another week.

During the ineligible period, the student may practice with their team, and they may travel to games. However, they may not dress out or wear any kind of uniform or other apparel that might result in them accidentally being placed into competition.

Student-athletes on academic probation are automatically ineligible for the duration of their academic probation period. ***Students on academic probation are not allowed to practice or otherwise participate with the team during the probation period.***

## 904. EXPECTATIONS

### EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS

1. **Remember who you represent.** We are representatives first and foremost of Christ and second of RCS. We are called to "conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." Therefore, we are to treat all teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents with respect. Also, we are to be people of integrity, honesty, and of good sportsmanship!
2. **Be a good teammate.** Treat all participants and coaches with respect. Encourage teammates and help build team spirit. No bullying or putting others down will be tolerated! (Philippians 1:27; Matthew 7:12; Romans 12:10)
3. **Have a positive attitude and good sportsmanship.** Both winning and losing are great lessons and teaching moments. (Philippians 4:8)
4. **Give your best effort, work hard, and do not give up.** Learning something new doesn't always come easy, so we need to keep persevering and trying while also learning to deal with our frustration gracefully. Players must remain in good academic standing. They are student-athletes; "student" comes first. Therefore, time management is essential to balance school and sports. (Colossians 3:23-24; Galatians 6:9)
5. **Be present and prepared.** Be on time to and attend all practices and games unless given permission from the coach ahead of time. Players should wear proper attire and bring a water bottle. (Proverbs 6:6-8)
6. **Deal with conflict properly.** Handle the situation in the right PLACE, at the right TIME, with the right PERSON, and in the right MANNER. Deal with conflict properly when it arises. If you have a problem with someone, go to them first and talk to them. This includes coaches. If that doesn't



work, ask coaches or staff privately for help. Don't make a private matter public; avoid gossip. (Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:32)

7. **Take care of your body.** This includes proper hydration and nutrition, proper warm-up and cool-down, and following doctor's orders if injured. (1 Corinthians 10:31)
8. **Listen to your coaches.** (Hebrews 13:17)

### EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

1. Teach the rules, skills, and fundamentals of the game.
2. Help the players develop their skills and abilities and to guide them to improve.
3. Hold players to a high standard to help realize their potential.
4. Be a role model in godly conduct, character, wisdom, speech, and sportsmanship.
5. Treat all players, parents, officials, and opponents with respect.
6. Determine playing time for individuals (which will most likely not be equal among players) based on skills, abilities, roles, and commitment.
7. Build positive relationships with the players and create a positive learning environment.
8. Maintain necessary coaching endorsements or credentials according to the Arkansas Activities Association.
9. Provide clear communication to players, parents, and any other constituents.

### EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

1. Be supportive of their child and their teammates.
2. Be a role model in conduct, character, speech, and sportsmanship/
3. Do slander or speak negatively of opponents or teammates, especially to other players or in front of other parents/
4. Show respect and kindness towards officials/
5. Be a positive voice from the sidelines.
6. Let coaches coach and support the coach's decisions.
7. Communicate with the coach if there are any medical issues to be aware of pertaining to their child.

### **905. ILLNESS AND INJURY**

If a player misses school due to illness, he/she will not be able to practice that day or, if it's a game day, play in the game.

If a player is injured, he/she will not be able to return to practice until he/she has a doctor's note clearing them.

### **906. TRANSPORTATION**

RCS is now equipped with a school van and bus to help transport students to and from events off campus. RCS has a commitment to the safety and security of their athletes, therefore, the following guidelines will be enforced.

**Departure from RCS:** It is expected that athletes will travel as a team on the school vehicles to away games. In the event that more space is needed to transport students, parents will be contacted to help provide rides.

**Returning to RCS/Jonesboro:** When the game has finished, students are not obligated to ride on the school vehicle; only approved adults may transport students back to Jonesboro. The parent will need to come to the coach to notify that they are taking their child. Adults that are not a child's parent will need to be on the child's pick up list in RenWeb and provide the coach with their license to prove their identity.

**Approved Pick Up List:** Any adult that a parent allows to transport their child must first be approved through the office at least 3 days prior to the away game. The office will need either an email or written note specifying that the parent gives permission to that person. The following information must be provided for each adult a parent wishes to add to their child's pick up list: full name, phone number, email address, and relation to their child.

**Transportation Log:** For safety purposes, the coach must keep a log of who each athlete is riding with to and from games.

**Drivers:** The van may be driven by an approved adult with a normal license; however, the bus must be driven by an approved adult with a CDL Class B license. Drivers must have a copy of their license made in the office for insurance purposes.