



Upper School Handbook (7-12)

2024-2025

Ridgefield Christian School
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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	easleyb@ridgefieldchristian.org
Educational Administrator	Kayla Davidson	davidsonk@ridgefieldchristian.org
Advising/Guidance & Admission	TBD	
Accounting & HR	Gabbi Barnett	barnettg@ridgefieldchristian.org
Athletic Director/Facilities	Morgan Colburn	colburnm@ridgefieldchristian.org

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	Advisor/Guidance
Issues with other students or faculty, behavior concerns, learning difficulties, other academic questions	Kayla Davidson, Educational Administrator
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	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 AND 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

At Ridgefield Christian School, we believe that great education is about equipping minds and shaping hearts for a Christ-centered future. Our philosophy of education revolves around the pillars of *biblical worldview*, *parental partnership*, *holistic education*, and *love of learning*. It's deeply rooted in the principles of a vibrant Christian faith, fostering a nurturing environment where students can flourish with purpose for a purpose.

Biblical Worldview: Learning is grounded in a biblical worldview, recognizing God as the ultimate source of truth and wisdom. Knowing God personally, through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the first step to becoming truly educated. We integrate the teachings of the Bible across all subjects, encouraging students to view all things through the lens of a biblical worldview. By instilling a strong foundation on biblical truth, we aim to equip students with a moral compass that will guide them through life's challenges and choices.

Parental Partnership: We strive to cultivate a strong collaborative partnership by fostering open communication, regular updates, and opportunities for parents to participate in school activities. Together, we aim to create a supportive community that empowers students to thrive academically and grow in their Christian faith.

Holistic Education: We focus on the holistic development of each student – academically, socially, physically, and spiritually. Our curriculum goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge to focus on character formation, critical thinking, and practical application of skills. Through a blend of rigorous academics, creative expression, and spiritual and social formation activities, we nurture well-rounded Christ-like individuals who are prepared to make positive contributions to their communities and the world.

Love for Learning: We aspire to create an engaging and inspiring learning environment that sparks curiosity and a love for learning. Our dedicated teachers strive to encourage and challenge students to explore, question, and discover. By fostering a curiosity-driven approach to education, we aim to prepare students not only for academic success but also for a lifelong journey of continuous learning and growth.

Together, we aspire to mold young minds and hearts, preparing students to navigate the complexities of the world with wisdom, integrity, and a strong foundation in their Christian faith.

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 worldview.
- 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 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).

106. 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, staff, and registered volunteers must refrain from premarital sexual activity, whether at home, school, or elsewhere. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Violations of this policy will be thoroughly investigated by the Head of School 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, if appropriate.

The preceding Statements apply to all policies in the Ridgefield Christian community:

- 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 these Statements (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).
- Events held on the RCS campus or on behalf of RCS that pertain to marriage shall involve only marriage consistent with our Statement.
- All community representatives, staff, and registered volunteers are required to live by our written beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage.
- Members of the RCS community, including parents and students, regardless of profession of faith or personal belief, are prohibited from advocating for or speaking out in support of same-sex marriage, same-sex relationships, or views of sexual orientation contrary to our school statements.
- In all public settings, including social media and/or the internet, members of the RCS community, including parents and students, are expected and required to uphold our Statements and not challenge or undermine any stated belief or position in these Statements.

107. COMMUNITY COVENANT

RCS is committed to providing a nurturing and academically challenging environment for our students. As partners in the educational journey of our students, we recognize the importance of a united commitment to fostering a nurturing and Christ-centered environment. A community covenant defines the shared values and expectations that will guide our collective efforts to create a positive and supportive community. *NOTE: This list is a work in progress and will change somewhat as we work this year to better clarify our values and standards.*

1. **Commitment to Christian Values:** As parents or students attending RCS, we understand and affirm the Christian values and principles upon which this institution is founded. We commit to supporting the school's mission, statement of faith, and core values in our interactions with the school community.

2. **Spiritual Development:** Recognizing the integral role of spiritual development in our child's education, we commit to nurturing our children's spiritual growth by actively participating in and supporting the Christian teachings and values upheld by the school and engaging in regular communication with our child about their faith journey.
3. **Community Building & Culture:** We will contribute positively to the school community by participating in school events, volunteering when possible, and fostering positive relationships with other parents, teachers, and staff. We will actively promote a positive and Christ-like school culture by encouraging our child to treat classmates, teachers, and staff with kindness and respect.
4. **Respectful Communication:** We will communicate with school staff, teachers, and fellow parents in a respectful and considerate manner, promoting open and constructive dialogue. When there is a concern, we will follow the appropriate channels outlined by the school to address and resolve issues. We agree to respect and support the authority of the school's administration, teachers, and staff.
5. **Gossip-Free Environment:** Recognizing the harmful effects of gossip on the school community, we pledge to refrain from engaging in or spreading gossip about students, parents, teachers, or staff. We understand that gossip can undermine trust, create division, and hinder the positive atmosphere we aim to maintain at RCS. In the spirit of Christian love and respect, we will speak up gently against such gossip, address concerns directly with the parties involved, or bring them to the attention of the appropriate school authorities.
6. **Attendance and Punctuality:** We understand the importance of regular school attendance and commit to ensuring that our child attends school regularly and arrives on time. We will communicate promptly with the school in case of absences.
7. **Academic Support:** We will actively participate in our children's education by monitoring their progress, encouraging them to excel academically, and collaborating with teachers and school staff to address any academic challenges that may arise.
8. **Discipline and Conduct:** We agree to support the school's disciplinary policies and guidelines. We will reinforce the importance of respectful behavior, integrity, and responsibility in our children, both at school and in their interactions with others.
9. **Adherence to School Policies:** We agree to familiarize ourselves with and adhere to all school policies outlined in the school handbook. This includes but is not limited to policies related to behavior, dress code, attendance, and academic expectations.
10. **Financial Responsibilities:** We commit to fulfilling our financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, in a timely manner. We understand that consistent financial support is crucial for the continued success and operation of RCS.

Expectations for School Representatives

In response to God's calling on their lives, representatives of Ridgefield Christian work individually and corporately to advance the school's mission through Christ-centered living and learning. RCS representatives, which include all employees, members of the Board of Directors, and registered volunteers are expected to consistently model Christian belief and live in accordance with Biblical standards, including away from campus and during non-school hours.

Each representative shall affirm agreement with the school's core statements in paragraphs 101-107 of this section of the Handbook as well as any other official policies and procedures approved by the Board of Directors. Teaching staff shall sign these statements each year as a part of annual teaching agreements. Hiring of new employees shall include a thorough review of these statements and a written affirmation as a part of accepting any employment offers. Representatives shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs

inconsistent with these beliefs.

Registered Volunteers

While there are many ways people can be involved at RCS, registered volunteers are those serving in leadership positions or directly involved in the instruction or formation of students, including PACE officers, coaches, or parent sponsors of extracurricular clubs. As such, they are considered official representatives of RCS. Registered volunteers are required to submit a volunteer application and pass a mandatory background check. However, all volunteers are required to affirm their understanding and support of the school's mission, policies, and values. The school reserves the right to give preference for volunteer service to alumni and volunteers who share our Christian beliefs.

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 leadership. 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. Our open admissions policy means we do not require parents or students to be adherents to the Christian faith or practice. However, we require that all parents wholeheartedly agree to support RCS in teaching our beliefs and values.

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 fees and tuition.

203. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

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

1. **Tour or Student Shadow (optional).** Come visit our campus, meet staff and teachers, observe classrooms, and see firsthand what our school environment is like. 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. 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 cause schedule conflicts (such that they cannot be fulfilled in the normal RCS schedule) must be completed independently, at the student's expense, either in the summer or in a regularly scheduled class period at RCS.

205. TRANSFER STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS

Students transferring in previously earned credit/grades will be subject to the following guidelines:

- 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.
- All transfer credit will be marked as such on the RCS transcript.
- Transfer courses will fall under clear headings on the transcript, naming the school from which the credit was earned.
- GPA earned at other schools will be included in the RCS cumulative GPA.
- 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)

HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS

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 arkansashomeschool.org)

- Course syllabus, scope and sequence, portfolio of student work, and textbook samples 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.

206. HOMESCHOOL / PART-TIME STUDENTS

Homeschool students in grades 7-12 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.)

RCS values the mission and values of Christian homeschooling and wants to be a partner to homeschool families. Homeschool students may enroll at RCS on a part-time basis on a non-graduation track. Homeschool families must complete the admissions process just as any other full-time family including all documents and fees.

GRADES 7-12

- **Course Load.** Part-time students in grades 7-12 may take up to 4 classes per semester. At 5 classes, students are considered full-time and will pay full-time tuition and fees.
- **Athletics.** Arkansas allows homeschool students to participate in AAA-sponsored activities and athletics. Part-time students wishing only to participate in athletics will complete an alternative Part-time Athletics Enrollment Agreement and pay a participation fee along with a per sport uniform fee. *See Athletics section for more information on enrolling as an athlete only.*
- **Graduation.** Homeschool students wishing to graduate with an RCS diploma must enroll as a regular full-time student. Homeschool courses will be evaluated as transfer credits just as with any other school transfer.
- **Tuition:** See published tuition schedule.

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 not legally required to follow federal laws such as required by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) nor 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 the 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 unless otherwise directed by legal proceedings.
- 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 to pay the enrollment year's school tuition as agreed on during the enrollment process. A student may be dismissed for the following:

- Violation of school policies.
- Student conduct, attitude, or lack of academic effort making withdrawal from the school necessary.
- Financial delinquency (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 & Financial 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 **5th 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 \$30.00 late fee will be added to each account that has not been paid by the 10th of the month. Payments received will be applied to any outstanding balance with the remainder, if any, applied to the current balance.

DECLINED/RETURNED PAYMENTS IN FACTS

A \$30.00 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 the financial policy or financial agreements.

REFUNDS

All fees are non-refundable including application, enrollment, materials/technology, 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, 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. Overwhelming, when a family must leave due to delinquent accounts, it is 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. Student billing accounts must remain current throughout the school year. The school understands that unexpected situations can and do arise and 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 be 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

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. We do not offer financial aid for homeschool enrichment or part-time students.

Homeschool families qualifying for the Arkansas Educational Freedom Accounts program may be able to use EFA funds for athletic and other fees at RCS. Check the Arkansas EFA parent portal for eligibility.

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 as a neutral party to process aid applications and determine eligibility based on the school's fees and the family's financial situation. FACTS Grant & Aid does not award aid or provide scholarship money of any kind; they only provide the school with verified information and recommendations.

Applicants provide family financial information including tax returns, W2s, and other income verification documentation and proof of expenses as a part of this process. FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment conducts the financial need analysis of that information along with the cost of all schooling (tuition and fees) to provide a recommended award amount to the school. The school then makes a financial award decision using those recommendations in consideration of other extenuating circumstances. Financial aid information is kept strictly confidential.

This approach helps 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. Financial aid is good for the school year of application.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Current tuition and fees, outside funding sources, and RCS financial aid information are all available on the school website under the Admissions area.

306. STUDENT LUNCH PROGRAM

RCS does not offer a hot lunch program. Students bring their own lunches. Drinks are available to purchase through a vending machine. On Fridays, the school often will host Pizza Fridays where students can bring money and buy a la carte pizza by the slice. Ice cream/cookies, etc. are usually sold by PACE each Friday.

400. Academic Information

401. CURRICULUM

Ridgefield does not have a single curriculum for all grades in every subject. However, most of the curriculum and core subjects in grades 7-12 uses Bob Jones University Press with some Abeka. A variety of other materials and sources help supplement where needed to provide an excellent, engaging learning experience for students. The curriculum is 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. LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

RCS is in the early 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 certain cases to provide the supportive learning environment a student needs.

However, school staff and teachers will work to communicate with parents and education/psychological professionals to ensure each student has access to a meaningful and positive educational opportunity. ~~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 is identified as having some learning struggles or difficulties, we will document the referral, provide written notice to the student's parent/teacher, and determine, in a collaborative meeting with parents 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. Private agencies are also available for parent consultation. The parent will be involved in every step of the process, and no testing or treatment will be provided without the parent's approval.

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.

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 for constant redirection or the presence of additional staff.
- 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 or inappropriate behaviors that interfere with the flow of classroom activities or instruction of other students.
- Demonstrate self-management when transitioning to other spaces or activities, such as changing or going to the bathroom.
- Abide by the policies and procedures described in the Handbook and enrollment documents.

By “habitually operate,” we mean that the student’s normal, regular pattern of behavior can be maintained within these parameters. 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. The 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.

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 describes 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.

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 methods, 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, on the other hand, 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.

TUTORING

In some cases, private tutoring may be helpful for a student’s progress. At present, RCS 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.

403. FACTS SIS

Like many schools, RCS uses the FACTS SIS web-based school management system. FACTS Family Portal provides parents and students with 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.

404. LIBRARY

RCS offers library services to all students. 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, 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.

Junior and senior high students may check out two books at a time for a period of two weeks with the option to renew once for an additional two weeks.

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 parents will be asked to to pay for a replacement if the book cannot be promptly returned. At the end of each semester, fines will be assessed to the parent’s account for the cost of lost books.

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

405. CLASS SCHEDULES

Regular Schedule	
Homeroom	7:55-8:10
1 st period	8:15-9:05

Chapel Schedule	
Homeroom	7:55-8:05
1 st period	8:10-8:55

Afternoon Assembly	
Homeroom	7:55-8:10
1 st period	8:15-9:00

2 nd period	9:10-10:00
Break	10:00-10:10
3 rd period	10:10-11:00
4 th period	11:05-11:55
Lunch	11:55-12:25
5 th period	12:30-1:20
6 th period	1:25-2:15
7 th period	2:20-3:10

2 nd period	9:00-9:45
3 rd period	9:50-10:35
4 th period	10:40-11:25
5 th period	11:30-12:15
Lunch	12:15-12:40
6 th period	12:45-1:30
7 th period	1:35-2:20
Assembly	2:25-3:10

2 nd period	9:05-9:50
Break	9:50-10:00
3 rd period	10:00-10:45
4 th period	10:50-11:35
Lunch	11:35-12:40
5 th period	12:45-1:30
6 th period	1:35-2:20
7 th period	2:25-3:10

406. CLASSWORK

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

To help equip students with life skills for a successful future, students are encouraged to develop responsibility and time management skills avoiding procrastination.

When assignments are given with extended due dates (i.e., major projects, research papers, etc.), students are expected to complete and submit their work on or in advance of the due date regardless of the circumstances. Exceptions related to sports, field trips, extracurricular activities, etc. are unacceptable. Minor illnesses lasting 1 to 2 days are unacceptable. If there are extenuating circumstances regarding illness, an exemption may be requested from the teacher based on the student’s work ethic, class performance, diligence of study, and absentee rate in the class.

History Fair projects, Science Fair projects, and research papers are due on the assigned date. No exceptions.

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 AM and 11:30 AM. Materials may be picked up after 2:30 p.m. in the office or sent home with a sibling. Office hours are 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

After returning to school from an excused absence, the student has the equivalent number of days absent to turn in completed make-up work. This policy is about illness or other absences of a personal nature. Students

missing class due to school-sanctioned activities must complete classwork by the original due date 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 on the first day your student returns to school.

407. ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Alternative Method of Instruction (AMI) days for inclement weather makeup will not exceed five school days. Teachers will prepare 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 that may be required for lesson plans over the next several days are taken home each day. The school will send out notifications 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. If an AMI day has been declared, students and parents should check online in FACTS or Google Classroom (as directed by the teacher) for assignments that must be completed each day until school resumes. Students will have two days to turn in AMI assignments. Teachers should be available and accessible to students from 8 AM to 3:10 PM for interaction regarding questions and help with assignments.

408. GRADING SCALE & GPA

Scale	Letter		GPA Equivalent	Weighted (wGPA)
90-100	A	Excellent	4.0	5.0
80-89	B	Above Average	3.0	4.0
70-79	C	Average	2.0	3.0
60-69	D	Below Average	1.0	2.0
0-59	F	Unsatisfactory	0.0	0.0

Grade point averages on high school transcripts (and for determination of graduation honors) are calculated using the 4.0 scale. Cumulative GPA is determined by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of courses. Incompletes (I) are given when a student has been absent from school for an extended period just prior to the issuing of report cards and the student is eligible to make up missed work or to complete the remaining coursework. Incompletes will not be given due to excessive tardies, absences, or failing grades.

409. TRANSCRIPT & REPORT CARD RELEASE

All requests for transcripts must be made to the Academic Advisor 5 business days in advance of when they are needed to allow for processing time.

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 Academic Advisor 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.

410. ACADEMIC AWARDS & HONOR ROLL

Academic awards will be given based on academic performance in each quarter and for the school year as a whole. Students may be awarded either the A Honor Roll or the A/B Honor Roll. To receive end-of-the year awards, students must have all As or all As and Bs in each of the four quarters.

Teachers may give individual subject awards. Teachers may give individual subject awards. Warrior, Citizenship, and Christian Character Awards may also be given.

411. SEMESTER TEST POLICY

Semester exams are a cumulative measure of a student's academic retention regarding individual disciplines of study through a scored collection of questions, methods, or skills. This assessment allows students to recall facts, demonstrate procedures, utilize critical analysis, and/or make practical applications.

Additionally, the semester testing experience is a precursor to college/university semester testing wherein students are asked to experience the study, preparation, and testing experience at the secondary level before proceeding to post-secondary institutions. Semester exams also serve to recognize and reward diligent study and academic excellence.

FALL SEMESTER

All students are required to participate and complete semester tests during the fall session of the school year. The semester test is a comprehensive final covering the entire work of the semester. It counts for 20% of the student's grade.

Semester testing is a required, vital component of the educational process. The test days are planned a year in advance; therefore, students should adhere to the schedule and make every effort to comply. Families are strongly discouraged from planning events on test days. Make-up testing creates a substantial hardship and interruption of school operations and procedures.

In the event a student is preempted from testing on the said day due to personal or extenuating circumstances the following rules will apply:

- The student/parent must petition for consideration as soon as possible, but no later than 5 school days *in advance of the test* to gain approval from the Educational Administrator.
- The student/parent must make prior arrangements for testing as soon as possible, but no later than 5 school days *in advance of the test* at the discretion of the teacher. Teachers will not be able to provide impromptu testing.
- All testing must be completed before the close of the semester due to finalizing grades and the completion of permanent records.

In the event of an emergency or extenuating circumstances (i.e., illness, death in the family, accident) the following rules will apply:

- The student/parent should notify the school immediately.
- The student/parent should estimate the length of time the student will be out of school so that the administrator may work with the teachers to arrange make-up testing.

- Upon the student’s return, the student/parent will need to provide a doctor’s note, parent note, etc.

SPRING SEMESTER – EXEMPTION POLICY

Seniors will not be required to take spring finals regardless of their average. (*See exceptions.)

Students in grades 7-11 will have the opportunity to earn exemptions from spring semester texts provided the student has an “A” average (90% or higher) or “B” average (80-89%) in the class with some exceptions as listed below.

Exemptions will be based on grades and attendance. A student with a class average of:

- 90 or above may have no more than five (5) absences for the semester.
- 80 or higher average may have no more than three (3) absences for the semester.

EXCEPTIONS

The exemption policy does not apply to students enrolled in AP classes or concurrent college credit classes. RCS will follow the requirements of the partner university or educational providers for any classes taken outside of RCS.

The exemption policy does not apply to single semester courses, half-credit courses such as health, American government, economics, etc.

Students who have received in-school or out-of-school suspension are ineligible for exemption.

412. 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 learners. 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 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 academic success.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS & MONITORING

At a minimum, each RCS student is expected to maintain an average of 69 (D) or above in all classes (“Satisfactory Academic Progress”).

Each Monday morning, the Registrar’s office will run a grade check report for all students. A student with an overall average of 59 or below (F) in any single class or 69 or below (D) in any *two* classes will first be placed on **academic watch** with the opportunity to bring their grades up without any loss of privilege. Academic watch is followed by **academic probation** in which the student becomes ineligible for co-curricular activities.

ACADEMIC WATCH

Students on *academic watch* will be required to attend a regular study hall, usually after school, using this time to

complete any missing work and perform any tasks needed to return to the required academic level. This period will last for one to two weeks, as determined jointly by the classroom teacher(s) and guidance counselor and approved by the Educational Administrator. For a 1-week watch period, the lunchtime study hall shall be daily. For a 2-week watch period, the study hall shall be three days a week as determined by the Educational Administrator.

At the end of the academic watch period, a grade check will be performed to determine if the student is to be relieved of academic probation. If not, the academic watch period will be extended another week. At the end of this additional period, if the student is still not performing satisfactorily, the student will be placed on **academic probation**.

FULL ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student may be placed on full academic probation throughout the school year or as a condition of enrollment. Students will be on academic probation if they fail to meet the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of a 9-week grading term, or if they continue to have a failing grade in a class after having been on academic watch. Academic Probation lasts for the duration of the 9-week grading period from the point at which the student is initially placed on probation.

Students on Academic Probation will be ineligible for the following, including, but not limited to participation in competitive athletics or other school competitions, serving in student leadership positions including NHS, student council, or worship team (unless enrolled in Worship Arts class), working as office/class aides, or being exempted from class exams. Students on probation are not eligible to resume these activities until the beginning of the next 9-week grading period, assuming they have improved their grades and once again are showing Satisfactory Academic Progress.

413. CREDIT RECOVERY

RCS uses The Keystone School online program for credit recovery. Individual courses must be pre-approved and may be taken in the summer or during a scheduled class period in the school day. (See Independent Study policy for more info regarding courses taken during a scheduled class period in the school day.)

Keystone's online credit recovery consists of 60 hours of coursework per semester. This cost is the sole responsibility of the family. All Keystone courses will be shown on the student's transcript, as well as the failed course. The failed course will not be removed from the transcript. The credit recovery course will not replace the original grade but will be averaged with their original grade into the cumulative GPA.

Credit recovery may also be obtained from a provider of the family's choice, if pre-approved by the Administration.

A student who fails any classes and does not meet the minimum requirements at each grade level or is unable to be promoted to the next grade can recover up to one lost credit per year during the summer through Keystone's online credit recovery program or another school-approved vendor. The cost of recovery credit classes is the family's responsibility. To receive summer school credit and promote to the next grade level, a student must have the course(s) pre-approved by the Administration, complete all coursework prior to the beginning of the next school year, and make a passing grade in the subject(s) taken.

Failure to have a summer school program of studies pre-approved by the Administration and completed by the first day of school with a passing grade will result in the student repeating the grade the following school year.

414. ACADEMIC PROMOTION/RETENTION

In Grades 7-8, to be promoted to the next grade level, a student must satisfactorily complete the school's regular program of studies and pass a minimum of four core classes (Bible, English, Math, Science, Social Studies). A student will be retained if he/she receives a yearly average of 59 F or below in two core subjects.

The first year of a student's academic high school career is 9th grade. Students may earn high school credit in 8th grade by passing Algebra I, Physical Science, or a high school foreign language class.

A student's classification is determined by the number of accumulated high school credits the student has earned. Ridgefield's core courses are Bible, English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

- 9th grade (Freshman) promotion from 8th grade
- 10th grade (Sophomore) earned 5 core credits
- 11th grade (Junior) earned 10 core credits
- 12th grade (Senior) earned 15 core credits

To receive summer school credit, a student must have the course(s) pre-approved by the Administration and make a passing grade in the subject(s) taken.

415. EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

Students wishing to participate in the rich array of extracurricular opportunities at RCS must maintain a minimum level of academic performance. The privilege of extracurricular activities may be suspended or revoked if a student is placed on academic probation. In such cases, sponsors and coaches will be in communication with the Administration to monitor student progress and determine what steps are to be taken with students individually to help them maintain eligibility for programs. For athletic eligibility, please see section 900.

416. HONOR SOCIETIES

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY (NHS)

Students in grades 10-12 who embody the four membership pillars of the National Honor Society (Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character) will be considered for induction. Interested students must complete a Candidate Form. Criteria reviewed by the NHS Adviser and faculty council include a minimum 3.5 cumulative weighted GPA, volunteer hours, leadership experiences, and exemplary character demonstrated in a clean disciplinary record. This includes attendance, tardies, and other disciplinary referrals. A student who has received ISS/OSS will not be eligible for the National Honor Society. A member of the National Honor Society will be dismissed for disciplinary referrals and/or a drop in GPA under 3.5. If a student is dismissed from NHS, the student will not be allowed to wear the NHS honor cords at graduation.

SPANISH HONOR SOCIETY

Students in grades 10-12 who have received an A average in three semesters of Spanish study and exhibit the qualities of leadership and service will be considered for induction into *Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica (SHH)*. Interested students must complete a Candidate Form. Criteria reviewed by the SHH advisor and faculty council include the grade requirements, leadership experiences, and exemplary character demonstrated in a clean disciplinary record. This includes attendance, tardies, and other disciplinary referrals. A student who has received ISS/OSS will not be eligible for the Spanish Honor Society. A member of the society could be

removed for disciplinary referrals. If a student is dismissed from SHH, the student will not be allowed to wear the SHH honor cords at graduation.

417. STANDARDIZED 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. Grades 10-11 may elect to take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) at school in October. The test also determines National Merit Scholarship participants for juniors. PSAT scores may also be used to help determine student placement during the course selection process. The cost of PSAT is the responsibility of the student. The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT) are administered at area schools on designated dates throughout the year. For test dates, fees, more information, and to register for the ACT, visit www.act.org. For more resources for the SAT, see www.collegeboard.org.

418. SCHEDULING & SELECTING COURSES

RCS desires to achieve the best fit possible each year regarding course selection and load to make the most of each student's gifts and interests. The Academic Advisor and/or team of experienced teachers will consult with high school students and their families during the registration process. Students and families should consider the following during the course selection process:

Prerequisites: Enrollment in some courses requires previously specified coursework and/or a particular grade, completion of student application or interview, a particular score on standardized testing, or teacher recommendation. If a student does not meet the criteria for entrance and desires to petition that an exception be made, he or she may do so by a written appeal which will be considered by the Administrator in consultation with the Academic Advisor and teacher involved.

Advice of teachers: RCS teachers are often the best resources for knowing a student as a learner. Their input can be invaluable when selecting courses.

College and career goals: Many colleges use "academic rigor" as a leading criterion for acceptance and scholarships. Consultation with college admissions representatives can be helpful in determining if the courses selected are optimum for reaching the student's goals.

Interest and enthusiasm: Students who are enthusiastic about a particular course of study are usually the best students. We strongly encourage students to explore areas of interest and passion. Planning well when selecting courses from year to year can optimize opportunity for exploration, especially during the junior and senior years when students become eligible for Advanced Placement courses and a variety of upper-level electives.

Time management: It is important to consider how much time a student can devote to coursework outside the classroom in choosing courses, especially if the student is involved in time-consuming extracurricular activities. Students should consult with teachers ahead of time regarding the amount of time required for each course, and select an appropriate, well-balanced mix of challenge and interest. AP and college-level courses require a heavier load of independent work and work outside of class.

Number of classes: Juniors and seniors are required to enroll in at least 5 classes per semester.

419. SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students wishing to drop/add a class during the first week of a semester may do so without penalty, but they

must (1) attend classes until they have received notification that their class change request has been processed, and (2) complete a class change request form with appropriate signatures. The only exception to this policy will be for those students who have been placed in the wrong level of class through the scheduling process (ex.: student is registered in Algebra I and should be in Algebra II).

STEPS TO DROP/ADD A CLASS:

1. Obtain & complete a Drop/Add Request Form from the office.
2. Give the form to the teachers of the classes you wish to drop/add so they can indicate approval/disapproval. (This is a request form. It does not guarantee the requested change will be approved or can be processed.)
3. Take the form home and discuss the schedule change with your parents. Parent must sign the Drop/Add Request Form.
4. Return form to office, signed by teachers and parents.
5. Academic Advisor will notify the student when the schedule change has been finalized.

After the drop/add date, students will not be allowed to change classes unless new and unforeseen factors develop that merit such a change, such as a family emergency or illness. Students who are allowed to drop because of these factors will receive WP (Withdraw Passing) or WF (Withdraw Failing) on their transcript indicating that a course was begun but not finished. It is very rare and only for urgent needs that a change is made after the first week of a semester. It is also unusual to change during the first week, but factors other than illness and emergencies will be considered during that time.

420. ADVANCED / NON-TRADITIONAL COURSES

RCS students who are currently working to meet graduation requirements may earn college credit while completing their high school work on one of three ways:

- AP courses / AP exam
- Concurrent enrollment classes
- Online classes offered by partner institutions

A student who enrolls in and successfully completes a course or courses offered by an institution of higher education shall be entitled to receive both high school and college grades and credit towards graduation.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

RCS may offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses each depending on teacher availability and student enrollment. AP courses meet rigorous specifications mandated by the College Board. These courses are designed to be challenging and are geared to serious students. AP courses make for competitive resumes, and high-test scores provide a nationwide metric for universities to compare students within certain subjects.

Students earn college credit by achieving a score between 3 – 5 on the AP exam at the end of the year.

NOTE: Not all colleges accept AP credit, and those that do offer varying amounts of credit based on scores and specific majors. Each AP exam costs \$95. The money is billed by RCS and paid to College Board.

Individual AP courses have different requirements. (See RCS Course Descriptions for more information.)

However, as a basic rule, students with a GPA of at least a 3.0, a 90 average or better in prerequisite classes, and a willingness to work hard are eligible to enroll in AP classes.

Students taking AP classes may not drop the course during the year unless failing. See Grading Scale & GPA Policy for AP Grade Calculation & Weight Policy.

CONCURRENT COLLEGE CREDIT PROGRAM

Concurrent college courses afford the opportunity to earn transferable college credit through a sponsoring institution while simultaneously earning high school credit for the same course. Concurrent rates are significantly less expensive than typical college rates. This saves families money and frees students to take more courses that interest them or are required. Concurrent enrollment does not necessarily provide a more robust college application. Three semester hours of college credit taken by a student are counted as a half-credit on their RCS transcript.

Responsibility

Students who enroll in concurrent college courses at RCS must meet the requirements of the university and follow all procedures and deadlines of the university. It will be the responsibility of the student/parent to research transfer credits. All college coursework must meet the approval of the administration and board and must be in alignment with the standards and philosophy of Ridgefield Christian School. All work is the responsibility of the student and parents are responsible to monitor as needed.

Payment

Students are responsible for the cost of concurrent courses in addition to RCS tuition and fees and typically will pay the tuition for the concurrent courses directly to the other school. In some cases, the sponsoring school may require some form of admissions or enrollment paperwork. RCS is continuing to expand our partnerships with other schools and streamline the process for our participating families.

Course Offerings

The concurrent or online courses offered by RCS will vary from semester to semester depending on student interest, enrollment, and faculty availability. For information about course options, see the Academic Advisor.

Individual concurrent courses have different requirements. However, GPA, ACT scores, and teacher recommendations are all basic components of these criteria. NOTE: Individual universities have different policies regarding acceptance of transfer credit. Students should check their desired schools before registering.

Mid-term grades may be requested by the Academic Advisor.

Course Load

- Sophomores are limited to 1 credit per year.
- RCS Juniors are limited to two credits per year, i.e., four concurrent courses – two per semester.
College Algebra is not available to Juniors.
- Seniors are limited to three credits for their senior year.

ONLINE COLLEGE COURSES

Juniors and seniors who have the minimum ACT requirement, may take online classes through partner universities or colleges. A list of available courses is available from the Academic Advisor. Juniors may take up to two courses per semester and seniors may take up to three courses per semester. All fees must be paid to the college providing the course. Students are responsible for communicating with their professor(s) and

obtaining their own online course materials or textbooks.

As a normal rule, students taking an online class will be enrolled in an independent study class period as a part of their schedule. This allows students to work on their online courses during the school day while on campus. Grades for these courses will be added to the student's transcript.

NON-RCS COURSES

Unless prior approval has been given, non-RCS courses (online courses, off-campus courses, or homeschool courses) will not be credited toward graduation. Families interested in Independent Study or homeschooling a course should make an appointment with the Academic Advisor to discuss options. The parent or Academic Advisor will then submit an Independent Study Curriculum Proposal (Intent Form) to the Curriculum Committee for review. All Independent Study courses must be authorized by RCS in an Independent Study Pre-Approval Agreement signed by the parent, student, and Academic Advisor. No credit will be given for Independent Study courses that have not been pre-approved by the Academic Advisor. These courses cannot be monitored by RCS personnel.

Once enrolled at RCS, all core classes (Bible, English, Math, Science, Social Studies) required for RCS graduation must be taken at RCS. After enrollment, independent study or homeschool credits will be accepted for transfer for these core course requirements except in the following circumstances:

- credit recovery (except for English 12 and Bible 12)
- scheduling conflicts (due to missing credits)
- homebound students
- meeting student accommodations through alternative course options
- elective courses not offered by RCS.

Selection and payment for other individual courses are the responsibility of the student and are in addition to RCS tuition and fees. You should check with the Academic Advisor before signing up for courses to make sure that they meet school requirements and can be used on the transcript. Students may take Independent Study courses in the summer or during the school year for both summer courses and school year courses.

Steps to Enrolling in Independent Study:

1. Parent, student, and Academic Advisor meet to discuss options
2. Parent or Academic Advisor submits curriculum proposal in writing (Intent Form)
3. Curriculum Committee reviews proposal
4. Academic Advisor contacts parent with committee's decision/options
5. Independent Study Pre-Approval Agreement is signed by parent, student, & Academic Advisor
6. Parent orders materials, enrolls students in course, and pays fees
7. Student completes work independently within pre-approved timeframe
8. Student completes final exam at the end of the course
9. Academic Advisor requests & receives transcript from providers & awards credit to the student's official academic record (via FACTS)

421. REPEATING A COURSE

All courses taken will be reflected on student transcripts. Students are permitted to retake the same course if the grade is below 90% and the course fits in the student's schedule with all other required classes for that

school year or is pre-approved as independent study. Earning a better grade does not eliminate the first grade. In the case that a lower grade is earned when a course is repeated, it will also be reflected on the transcript.

422. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A total of 28 units earned in grades 9-12 shall be required for high school graduation. Only one of these units may be in Physical Education.

BASIC GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

- 4.0 Bible credits (or 0.5 credit for each semester enrolled at RCS)
- 4.0 English credits
- 4.0 Mathematics credits (Required: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
- 4.0 Social Studies credits (Required: World History, American History, Economics/Government)
- 3.0 Science credits (Required: Physical science, Biology)
- 1.0 credit Computer Science (can count towards mathematics, science, or elective requirements)
- 0.5 credit Fine Arts (ex. art, choir, or theatre)
- 0.5 credit Oral Communications
- 0.5 credit Health and Safety (requires CPR)
- 0.5 credit Physical Education (Athletics can count for 1 semester of PhysEd)
- 6.0+ elective credits
- One semester of a digital learning class is required for graduation
- Servant Leadership hours (see below)

423. SERVANT LEADERSHIP HOURS REQUIREMENT

Service as an expression of love is a core value for RCS. Servant leadership with the heart and hands is a core goal for RCS students. RCS requires all high school students to complete a minimum of 20 servant leadership hours of service each year they attend Ridgefield. The Guidance office will record all community service hours submitted to the office. Cumulative service hours are listed on each student's official high school transcript to be submitted with college and/or scholarship applications.

Community Emphasis

Students must complete 30% of those service hours each year outside of the school campus and the student's local church. Activities done during LOVE Week or other local missions outreach, for instance, count toward these hours. One reason for this is that we want students to be aware of local ministries in our community. School staff will work to maintain an up-to-date list of other opportunities for these outside hours.

Service Guidelines

- **NHS Service:** NHS students may count required service hours for NHS membership toward RCS graduation requirement.
- **Mission Trips:** We want our students to develop a heart for global missions. Students who participate in a mission trip (with RCS, their church, or another organization) may report 8 hours of community service per day of their trip not counting travel days.
- **Compensation:** For an activity to count as service hours, the student cannot receive monetary

compensation for the work that was completed.

- **Home:** Household chores, babysitting siblings or family members, or other similar family activities do not count as service hours.
- **Athletics:** Team Managers are considered a part of the athletic team and cannot submit service hours for this role.
- **Volunteering at School:** Students who volunteer to work concessions at games, staff the admissions table, announce, live stream, run the game clock, or similar activities for school or athletic events may receive service hour credit.
- **Fine Arts:** Some fine arts classes (theater, worship arts, etc.) require time spent outside of class time in rehearsal, set building, etc. These events are a part of the class instruction or should not be submitted as service hours. Students not enrolled in a fine arts class who volunteer for set building, costumes, or stage crew may count up to 10 hours for the year.

Documenting Service Hours

To receive service hour credit, students must submit their hours for each event/organization to the Guidance office. Repeated service for the same organization (such as teaching a Sunday School class, helping with childcare/nurse, weekly volunteering, etc) may be listed on one form with appropriate dates and hours noted and should be submitted in a timely manner. A supervising adult for the organization or the activity *who is not the parent* must sign off on submitted hours. Parents cannot be the student's *supervisor* for community service, though parents can help report.

Students and parents can keep track of accumulated hours in the Student Info section of the RCS Mobile app or online through the Family Portal. For record keeping purposes, community service hours for a given year begins June 1 and runs through end of May each year.

Implementation

	Required to graduate			
	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2024-25	80	55	25	10
2025-26	80	60	40	15
2026-27	80	60	40	20
2027-28	80 hrs total / 20 per year			

Transfer students – Use incoming grade/year or expected year of graduation on the chart to identify the *total* number of hours required to graduate.

424. GRADUATION

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)

HONOR GRADUATES

Students may qualify as an RCS Warrior Honor Graduate by achieving the following, in addition to the general graduation requirements:

- Earned 2.0 credits of foreign language
- Earned GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Earned 2.0 credits of honors classes with a C or higher
- Involved in a co-curricular club/activity or sports team for at least 4 semesters.
- Completed additional 15 Servant Leadership Hours

To be an Honor Graduate, a student must fulfill all the Honor Graduate Requirements as outlined under the Graduation Requirements policy. Honor Graduates will be classified as follows (GPAs will be unrounded):

- Academic distinction GPA 3.5 – 3.99
- Highest academic distinction GPA 4.0 or above

Only cords presented by RCS at the annual awards assembly – National Honor Society cords, Spanish National Honor Society cords, and Honor Graduate cords – may be worn with cap and gown at RCS Graduation. Other cord distinctions may be approved by the administrator (i.e., military service, Boys/Girls State, Eagle Scout).

HONOR GRADUATE CLASSES

The following courses are considered *honor graduate* classes for transcript and graduation purposes:

- Any college-credit course (concurrent or AP)
- Advanced science: Chemistry, Physics, Anatomy/Physiology
- Advanced math: Pre-calculus, Trigonometry, Calculus

GRADUATING EARLY

High School at RCS is defined as four academic years, grades 9-12. Our expectation is that all RCS students attend four years of high school. Deviation from this path requires extraordinary circumstances approved by the Administration in consultation with the Board, to whom is entrusted the bestowing of all the rights and privileges of a high school diploma.

SENIORS

An RCS senior intending to graduate must be enrolled as a full-time student of RCS both semesters of their senior year and must attend for at least five class periods per day. RCS seniors needing only five class periods to complete graduation requirements are only required to attend for the five. A student must have successfully completed all required coursework to participate in graduation ceremonies/exercises.

VALEDICTORIAN

The designation of valedictorian is intended to represent the highest ranked student(s) among the graduating seniors using the criteria contained herein. To be eligible for the designation of valedictorian, a student must:

- be enrolled at RCS full time
- attend RCS for his/her full junior and senior years (defined as enrolling prior to the end of the

second week of school)

- be in good standing
- have a GPA of 3.5 or higher
- meet the requirements of an RCS Honor Graduate

Valedictorian will be calculated using overall, cumulative GPA. In case of a tie, the following criteria will be used, in the given order, to determine valedictorian:

- GPA pursuant to the RCS Grading Scale.
- Number of credit hours in higher level courses, including trigonometry, advanced math (including pre-calculus, algebra III, and/or college algebra and excluding business math, consumer math, and quantitative literacy), chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and any AP courses RCS may offer in the future. Difference must be at least 1 full credit.
- Numeric Grade Average for each course taken the final 8 semesters (9th grade through 12 grade). Difference must be at least 1 full average point.

If the students are still tied after the above criteria, they will be declared co-valedictorians. In the case of co-valedictorians, the student(s) with the next highest rank will be salutatorian(s). The student and/or their parents will not be notified of this designation until all final grades are in.

SALUTATORIAN

The designation of salutatorian is intended to represent the second ranked student(s) among graduating seniors using the criteria contained herein. To be eligible for the designation of salutatorian, a student must:

- be enrolled at RCS full time
- attend RCS for his/her full junior and senior years (defined as enrolling prior to the end of the second week of school)
- be in good standing
- have a GPA of 3.5 or higher
- meet the requirements of an RCS Honor Graduate

Salutatorian will be calculated using overall, cumulative GPA. In case of a tie, the following criteria will be used, in the given order, to determine salutatorian:

- Grade Point Average according to the RCS Grading Scale.
- Number of credit hours in higher level courses, including trigonometry, advanced math (including pre-calculus, algebra III, and/or college algebra and excluding business math, consumer math, and quantitative literacy), chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and any AP courses RCS may offer in the future. Difference must be at least 1 full credit.
- Numeric Grade Average for each course taken the final 8 semesters (9th grade through 12 grade). Difference must be at least 1 full average point.

If the students are still tied after the above criteria, they will be declared co-salutatorians. The student and/or their parents will not be notified of this designation until all final grades are in

425. ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR COLLEGE

The Academic Advising office at RCS helps families navigate college admission. We desire to connect you

with the resources needed to make informed decisions in the college process and to help your students complete everything necessary for application and acceptance, as well as stay informed about deadlines and requirements.

The Academic Advisor will schedule individual appointments once a year with each freshman and sophomore to ensure each student is on track to achieve his/her college and career goals, including a review of the student's four-year plan, testing plan, and resume development.

The Academic Advisor will schedule individual appointments once a semester with each junior and once a quarter with each senior to talk specifically about necessary actions before graduation, including test preparation, needed coursework, college visits, resume building, college fund planning, and career planning.

In addition to these scheduled meetings, students and/or parents may schedule a meeting with the Academic Advisor to discuss changes in the student's plans or other questions or concerns. Students and parents should visit the office, call the office, or email the Academic Advisor to schedule an appointment at least one week in advance of desired meeting time.

426. COLLEGE VISITS

RCS offers juniors and seniors the opportunity to visit colleges firsthand and receive an administrator's excused absence. Seniors are allowed two days excused for college visits, and juniors are allowed three days excused for college visits.

College visits must be approved in advance by the administrator. Students must submit appropriate documentation from the admissions department of the institution visited for the absence to be excused as a college visit. Students will be required to inform their teachers to get any missed work.

500. Policies and Procedures

501. ATTENDANCE

Attendance is an educational issue and students are expected to be in class every day. Missed class time can never be fully made up. Students who are excessively absent or exhibit consistent non-engagement may lose credit in that class. School-sponsored activities (such as athletic/academic events or college visits) will not count against the student's attendance record. Students who miss more than 12 (twelve) days of class in one semester WILL be considered ineligible for credit in that class unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the administration.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students may miss up to 6 days per semester with a note from a parent or guardian. After six (6) parent notes, only the following will be excused: illness or medical appointment with a doctor's note, death in the family, required court appearance.

Up to 6 additional days may be excused each semester with a doctor/dentist note on the medical office notepad or stationery. If more than 6 doctor's excuses are needed, parents must petition the board for additional absences.

CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

Any student arriving late to school must first check-in at the school office. Prior arrangements must be made via email or phone call to the school office for students who are leaving during the school day. Unplanned check-outs should only be for emergencies as they disrupt classroom learning. Students will not be permitted to check out for lunch unless a parent comes to check them out. Administration may require a doctor's note upon re-entry.

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

LATE TO CLASS

A secondary student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom when the period start bell rings. The student is considered absent if he/she misses more than 10 (ten) minutes of a class. All absences are considered unexcused without acceptable documentation of a valid excuse. Consequences for tardies apply to all periods. See tardy policy below.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Because of the important of attendance and the detrimental effect of absenteeism on student learning and performance, a student who the number of allowed absences (excused or otherwise) during the school year will be required to petition the administration and board in order to receive class credit and continue to remain enrolled. 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. Exceptions to this may be made in the case of extreme circumstances beyond the family's control; e.g., a significant medical condition requiring hospitalization. Such circumstances require prior approval for excessive absences along with an approved plan for maintaining and completing schoolwork.

502. TARDY POLICY

Being tardy to class hinders achievement for the tardy student, 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.

A student will be considered tardy if he arrives in the classroom after the tardy bell has rung.

Penalties for tardiness each quarter:

- 3 tardies: detention period/notify parent
- 4 tardies: two detention periods/notify parent
- 5 tardies: ½ day ISS + 1 demerit

Multiple absences due to excessive tardiness may be dealt with as a disciplinary issue at the discretion of the administration. A tardy with extenuating circumstances (i.e., dr. appt., traffic accident) may be excused with administrative approval.

Students in grades 7-12 who miss more than ½ of a class period will be counted absent for that period.

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 while enrolled in RCS. When no longer enrolled, the student's email will be deleted, and all documents associated with their account will be deleted.
4. Students cannot use their personal cell phones as a hotspot to bypass the school network for security purposes unless approved by the 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 following usual procedures related to the 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 per 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 the 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 the 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).

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 during school hours from 7:55 am to 3:10 pm for personal or entertainment purposes. Devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smart watches, iPods, cameras, video equipment, or personal computers. When students have these devices in their possession, the devices must be turned off and not visible 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. Repeated violations of this policy fall under the Code of Conduct.

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. Audio recording, video recording, or making of photos without the expressed permission of faculty for educational purposes.
2. Using social media without the expressed permission of faculty.
3. Purchases via digital device while at school without written permission from parents.
4. Unethical usage of devices that utilize any forms of cheating or plagiarism (i.e., fill in blanks) at any time.
5. 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 PG-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. 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. SCHOOL EVENTS

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.

JUNIOR/SENIOR BANQUET AND PROM

RCS approves the Junior-Senior Banquet and Prom as official activities of the junior class for the purpose of honoring the members of the senior class. These activities are the sole responsibilities of the parents of the junior class. The students of the junior class are to give their input and ideas to their parents and class sponsor, then entrust the organization, budgeting, and planning of the event to the parents. The junior classroom mom is encouraged to meet with the previous year's junior classroom mom, and to enlist students on committees with a parent in charge of each committee. The junior class sponsor's role is to provide support and guidance to the parents by helping obtain students' ideas and input, organize students into committees, supervise students' behavior during meetings, give wisdom from previous years' experience, and provide their classroom for meetings.

All details in conjunction with the banquet and prom must be approved by the class sponsor and approved by

the administrator.

RCS, its Board of Directors, administrators, faculty, or staff will not be responsible for the organization, planning or the conducting of a Junior Senior Banquet or Prom. These activities will be the sole responsibility of parents of those students that wish to be involved in either one of these activities. Any absences or tardies to school or class related to either one of these activities will be considered unexcused. Prom is for 11-12th grade Ridgefield students and their guests (at least 10th grade through age 21).

RCS Homecoming Dance is the sole responsibility of students and parents of Sophomore Class. The dance is for 9-12th grade Ridgefield students and their guests (at least 9th grade through age 20).

Graduation Reception is the sole responsibility of students and parents of the Freshman Class.

Various clubs may sponsor dances with the approval of the administrator. 7th and 8th graders may not have dates for any dances they are allowed to attend.

9th-12th grade dates must be of the opposite gender.

Any dates from other schools must be approved before the dance. Forms will be provided in the office.

SENIOR TRIP

RCS, its Board of Directors, administrators, faculty, or staff will not be responsible for the organization, planning or the conducting of a Senior Trip. These activities will be the sole responsibility of parents of those students that wish to be involved in one of these activities. Any absences or tardies to school or class related to either one of these activities will be considered unexcused.

510. ORGANIZATIONS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Junior high and senior high students have the right to join an existing club or organization if they meet the guidelines and requirements of that club. All school rules are in effect for any extracurricular function sponsored by the school. The violation of any school rules at an extracurricular activity will have the same consequences and a violation during regular school hours. All students are urged to take advantage of opportunities to participate in student organizations and activities. Participation in these activities offers character, leadership, and other desirable social qualities.

- Students may hold an office in no more than two clubs and can only serve as president of no more than one club. Misconduct by officers will result in their being removed as an officer. This decision will be made by the sponsor and administration.
- Students must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA to hold an office in any club, class, or organization.
- Students with discipline referrals may be suspended from participation and attendance at all school activities for the school year. This may include field trips, dances, homecoming, etc.
- A student may not participate in related school activities if he/she is sent to the office with a discipline referral that same day. Subject to administrator discretion.
- Students must be present at least 1/2 day of school (four class periods) to participate in any school activity or event on that day or night unless permission is granted by an administrator in advance.

511. 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.

512. 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.

513. 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.

514. 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.

515. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Our parent organization is called PACE , which stands for Parents Advancing Christian Education. PACE parents provide countless volunteer hours, resources, leadership, service, skills, and resources, without which our school would not exist. All parents are strongly encouraged to participate in PACE. There are no membership fees or dues and parents can be members just by having students enrolled at RCS. Parents may sign up for volunteer positions, including school committees, room parent(s), 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 the school must check in to the office and obtain a visitor badge 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 shirts. Ridgefield shirts are any *school-issued shirt* with school branding or the official school logo, including t-shirts, polos, or button-downs.
- **Permitted colors** are 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 hemline 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. Joggers are defined as pants made of fleece or nylon-like material with an elasticized waist and elasticized ankle cuffs.
- 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

Rubber flip-flops, athletic slides, and house shoes are prohibited. Crocs and Birkenstock style of shoes are appropriate. Sandals are permitted except in cases where closed toes shoes should be worn for safety reasons.

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.

GAME DAYS

On game days, athletes on a team competing that day may wear only school-designated team warmup gear to school. "School-designated" means either what the athletic department has provided or coordinated for all players on the team or otherwise defined in written communication to student-athletes and parents.

Otherwise, student-athletes must wear clothing that meets the standard dress code.

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 day's theme, 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. Length of skirts and shorts 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 no more than 3" above the knee when standing (the short side of a 3x5 index card).
- 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. 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 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 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 aims to 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 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 that cause the loss of sensitivity to the spiritual needs of the world and loss of the Christian's physical, mental, or spiritual well-being.

The following standards serve to promote the spiritual welfare of the student. RCS 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.

While the specific restrictions mentioned above may appear arbitrary to some, Ridgefield Christian School, while respecting the beliefs of others who may see differently, believes these restrictions relate to behavior to our spiritual and social goals for student life. Students are expected to abide by these standards throughout their enrollment whether at home, school, or elsewhere.

The most important keys to a successful disciplinary process are the child's heart and attitude of the child and parental cooperation and support for the school. 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 still growing and maturing, students often have skewed accounts of incidents. They intentionally or unintentionally may shift blame to others to avoid consequences or shame. Therefore, every reasonable step will be taken to examine all sides of a situation to guide 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

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 1 – 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:
 - 1st offense: 4+ demerits, parent conference, automatic Behavioral Probation
 - 2nd offense: 2 demerits, OSS, possible expulsion
 - 3rd 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 into the state health department and be in process for RCS to verify within the 30-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.
- 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.
- 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.

808. SECURITY

Because of the increase in 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. The SchoolPass visitor management system is used to track the arrival and departure of people from campus as well as for screening visitors before building entry. All volunteers must check in with the office and state their purpose. Volunteers may not use a key card without the knowledge of the administration.

809. SCHOOLPASS SYSTEM

When entering the facility, visitors must sign in at the visitor kiosk in the front entryway. Non-registered visitors must present a Driver's License when signing in. Visitor IDs are checked against the National Sex Offender Registry and the School Visitor Restricted list. If the visitor is cleared, SchoolPass will print a time/date badge for the visitor to wear while on school grounds.

Any visitor who 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 the 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.

After hours, security is provided through 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 contact the office and request a meeting.

810. 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.

811. 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.

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 possesses 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/SCHOOL CLOSING

When it becomes necessary to dismiss school for inclement weather or other perils, an announcement will be made via email, text alert, and social media. When possible, notice will be sent to KAIT or other media outlets.

814. STUDENT DRIVERS

It is a privilege to be able to drive a car to school. The following policies should be strictly adhered to:

- All student drivers must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance on file with the office. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide this to the office.
- Cars will remain parked until students leave for the day.
- Cars will not be occupied during school hours, nor are students to sit in parked cars waiting for school to begin.
- Any type of reckless or careless driving in the parking lot will not be tolerated. Such action may warrant loss of driving privileges.

- Failure to adhere to these policies will necessitate cancellation of the privilege of driving a car to school.
- Students wishing to take their driving test are required to have a signed form from the school office stating they have a C average. Students are required to give the school office at least two days prior notice when this form will be needed in order to verify grades and prepare the form.

900. Athletics

901. ATHLETIC RESOLUTION

Whereas, RCS has the unique opportunity through participating in athletic events with public schools to bear witness to 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 way 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, and 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 PLAYER

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 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 & 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 may use the school van and bus to help transport students to and from events off campus. RCS is committed to the safety and security of their athletes; therefore, the following guidelines will be enforced.

Departure from RCS: When school transportation is used, athletes are expected to travel as a team on the school vehicles to away games. If more space is needed to transport students, parents will be asked to provide rides.

Returning to RCS/Jonesboro: When the game has finished, students are allowed to leave the game site with parents or a pre-approved adult. The parent will need to come to the coach to notify that they are taking their student. Adults who are not a child's parent will need to be on the child's pick-up list in FACTS and provide the coach with their license to prove their identity.

Approved Pick-up List: Parent-approved adults who will be transporting other students must first be approved through the office at least 3 days before the event. The office will need either an email or written note giving that person permission along with the person's 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 and school bus endorsement. Drivers must have a copy of their license on file in the office for insurance purposes.