

# River Forest Middle School Handbook 2025-2026



## WELCOME TO RIVER FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL

**August 2025**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to River Forest Middle School! It is an honor to serve as your principal, and I want to thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. The middle school years are a time of tremendous growth and development, and I firmly believe these years are among the most important in shaping a student's future success.

At RFMS, our staff is committed to supporting every student, every step of the way. For many sixth graders, this will be their first experience beyond the familiar walls of their elementary school. We understand the importance of this transition and will guide it with the care, compassion, and structure your child deserves. For our eighth-grade students, this year marks the final step before high school. We will work closely with you to ensure you are prepared—academically, socially, and emotionally—for the journey ahead.

River Forest Middle School embraces a team-based approach to education. This model helps students form strong relationships, develop collaboration skills, and build the habits needed to succeed in a fast-paced, 21st-century world. Our mission is to provide a high-quality, engaging education for all students in grades six through eight—laying the foundation for high school, college, and career readiness.

Thanks to the continued support of our Board of Trustees, Superintendent's Office, and the River Forest community, RFMS is proud to be a 1:1 technology school. Each student is equipped with a digital device that enhances classroom learning through modern, interactive e-learning practices. Our students also gain essential digital citizenship skills—learning how to use technology responsibly and effectively.

As we begin this school year together, I invite and encourage your involvement. A strong partnership between school and home is key to student success. Your feedback, engagement, and support are always welcomed and appreciated.

Please take a moment to review the student handbook with your child, as it contains important policies and procedures that will help ensure a safe and productive school year.

Thank you once again for your trust and support. I look forward to an exciting and successful year at River Forest Middle School!

Your Partners in Education,

**Mr. Randall Horka, Ed.S**

**Principal**

**Miss Hayley Morris**

**Assistant Principal**

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

River Forest Community School Corporation is committed to equal opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, handicapping conditions, or national origin including limited English proficiency, in any employment opportunity as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act (I.C. 22-9-2) I.C. 20-8.1-2, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Educational Amendments), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. No person is excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or otherwise subjected to unlawful discrimination on such basis under any educational program or student activity.

The non-discrimination policy applies to students' access to courses and programs, athletics and physical education, guidance and counseling, vocational programs, financial assistance, remuneration, and other matters related to personnel.

If you have experienced discrimination in such educational programs or activities, written inquiries about procedures that are available and for consideration of complaints alleging such discrimination should be directed to Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Ryan Pitcock, of the River Forest Community School Corporation, 3250 Michigan Avenue, Hobart, Indiana, 46342. Any other information concerning the above policies may be obtained by contacting RFCSC Central Office.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

River Forest Community School Corporation offers students' access to the Internet. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services which could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent/guardian would be liable. Ultimately, parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards their children should follow when using media and information sources. Toward that end, the River Forest Community School Corporation Acceptable Use Policy is available on the NPUSC web site or from any school office upon request for review by all parents/guardians and other members of the community. This policy requires yearly signed acceptance of the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy by the student and the parent/guardian before any student is allowed access. Students who misuse the Internet and computer services will be disciplined and may be expelled. Students whose access to the network is terminated because of policy violations will be charged a \$50.00 reconnect fee each time.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The River Forest Community School Corporation Board of Trustees recognizes that a written document cannot provide for all contingencies that could or might occur during the course of a school year any more than it can anticipate every eventuality that might arise in any of the areas covered in this handbook. Therefore, the River Forest Community School Corporation Board of Trustees authorizes the school administration to take the appropriate action when dealing with items, issues and situations, etc. not outlined in this handbook, and in doing so, apply any reasonable and appropriate disciplinary measures when needed.

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

All injuries must be reported to a teacher, other school employee or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parents. A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission from the teacher to go to the office. The office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

## **CIVILITY POLICY**

Civility does not deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but serves only to maintain, to the extent of possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for students and staff. River Forest Community School Corporation encourages positive communications, but will not tolerate volatile or hostile actions and/or abusive language by any student, parent, or guardian.

Any person who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school day or school related events; threatens the health and safety of anyone through harassment; willfully causes property damage; uses offensive language; acts in a rude or disrespectful manner; or who otherwise establishes a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, may be dealt with either according to the student disciplinary procedures, or if an adult, may be asked to cease such behavior or be directed to leave school property. If any person uses obscenities or speaks in an abusive manner, the administrator or employee to whom the remarks are directed will politely request that person to communicate in a courteous manner. If the person does not take corrective action, the employee may verbally notify him/her that the meeting, conference or telephone conversation is terminated and will refer the person to the building principal or designee. For students, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken according to the school handbook. For persons other than corporation students, the Superintendent or designee may inform the person that he/she will not be allowed on school property for an amount of time determined by the administration.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

River Forest Middle School prepares students for academic and social success where students accept responsibility, actively participate in their learning, and strive to become lifelong learners.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

River Forest Middle School is a safe, caring community that empowers each student to dream, explore, and achieve.

## **CODE OF SCHOOL SPIRIT**

River Forest Middle School students are noted for their spirit of friendliness, courtesy, and cooperation. This spirit might be outlined as follows:

- School loyalty: Take pride in the school and its endeavors; Support all school policies.
- Good sportsmanship: Display good sportsmanship in classrooms, activities, and athletics.
- Courtesy, thoughtfulness, and good conduct that will reflect favorably on the pupil and the school.
- Personal pride in the appearance of the school.
- Preparedness: All pupils should have the necessary materials for class work at all times; all lessons and assignments should be prepared.
- Respect for the property of others.
- Promptness at all times.



## **SCHOOL COLORS**

GOLD AND CARDINAL

## **RIVER FOREST SCHOOL SONG**

River Forest, mighty Ingots, we are backing you  
To the colors gold and cardinal, we are ever true,  
Dauntless we will never falter. We are proud and true.  
Go, Ingots, fight, and you will win this game.

## **INGOT ACTIVITIES**

Sponsors and teachers will provide safe, caring, positive, and enjoyable activities that students may participate in to enhance their middle school Ingot experience such as:

- Student Council
- National Junior Honor Society
- Lego Robotics Club
- Athletics
- Junior Achievement
- Academic Teams
- Rewards and incentives
- Field trips
- Character Counts Assemblies

# SCHOOL PROCEDURES

## SCHOOL DAY

Our school day is from **7:50 AM – 2:41 PM every day except Wednesday. “Late Start Wednesdays” are from 8:30 AM – 2:41 PM.** Students are allowed to go to their lockers beginning at 7:40 every day except Wednesday. Wednesdays, they are allowed to go to their lockers at 8:20. The day is made up of multiple classes. All students are to exit the building by **2:50 PM** unless supervised by a coach, sponsor or teacher. River Forest Middle School is a **CLOSED CAMPUS**; students are to remain on campus from the beginning to the end of the school day.

## SCHEDULE

RFMS will operate on a traditional schedule for the 2025-2026 school year. Detailed schedules for each grade level are below.

## SCHEDULES

| <b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade M, T, Th., F (Traditional)</b> |             | <b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Wednesday (Late Start)</b> |             | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade M, T, Th., F (Traditional)</b> |             | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Wednesday (Late Start)</b> |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Core +:                                                | 7:50-8:39   | Core +:                                            | 8:30-9:16   | Core +:                                                               | 7:50-8:39   | Core +:                                                           | 8:30-9:16   |
| Period 2:                                              | 8:43-9:28   | Period 2:                                          | 9:20-10:05  | Period 2:                                                             | 8:43-9:28   | Period 2:                                                         | 9:20-10:05  |
| SRT:                                                   | 9:32-10:02  | Period 3:                                          | 10:09-10:54 | SRT:                                                                  | 9:32-10:02  | Period 3:                                                         | 10:09-10:54 |
| Period 3:                                              | 10:06-10:51 | A Lunch:                                           | 10:54-11:24 | Period 3:                                                             | 10:06-10:51 | Period 4:                                                         | 10:58-11:43 |
| A Lunch:                                               | 10:51-11:21 | Period 4:                                          | 11:28-12:13 | Period 4:                                                             | 10:55-11:40 | Period 5:                                                         | 11:47-12:32 |
| Period 4:                                              | 11:25-12:10 | Period 5:                                          | 12:17-1:02  | Period 5:                                                             | 11:44-12:29 | C Lunch:                                                          | 12:32-1:02  |
| Period 5:                                              | 12:14-12:59 | Period 6:                                          | 1:06-1:51   | C Lunch:                                                              | 12:29-12:59 | Period 6:                                                         | 1:06-1:51   |
| Period 6:                                              | 1:03-1:48   | Period 7:                                          | 1:55-2:41   | Period 6:                                                             | 1:03-1:48   | Period 7:                                                         | 1:55-2:41   |
| Period 7:                                              | 1:52-2:41   | *NO SRT*                                           |             | Period 7:                                                             | 1:52-2:41   | *NO SRT*                                                          |             |

### *ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES*

#### IN SCHOOL STUDENTS

- On a (7) period day, students must be present (at least) by the end of first period. Any student sent home by the school nurse may not return to school for any extracurricular activity held that day.

#### VIRTUAL STUDENTS

- Students must be considered in good academic standing and on-pace in their courses in order to remain eligible to participate in extracurricular activities

**Note: The administration reserves the right to alter attendance requirements when extenuating circumstances occur.**

## STUDENT RESOURCE TIME (SRT)

SRT is a block of time intended for students to work on assignments, makeup tests, receive extra instruction for a particular subject, or read.

## E-LEARNING

### **RFCSC ELEARNING PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

During the 2024-2025 school year, the River Forest Community School Corporation (RFCSC) will not be utilizing planned eLearning days. RFCSC may use eLearning Days in the event of inclement weather, on a make-up day for inclement weather, or an emergency school closing (such as a water main break or power outage).

### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

#### E-LEARNING

E-learning, also referred to as online learning or electronic learning, is the acquisition of knowledge which takes place through electronic technologies and media. In simple language, e-learning is defined as “learning that is enabled electronically”. Typically, e-learning is conducted on the internet, where students can access their learning materials online (via Chromebooks) at any place and time. E-learning covers a wide array of activities from supported learning, to blended or hybrid learning (the combination between traditional and e-learning practices), to learning that occurs 100% online.

Two types of eLearning days exist; the default will be Teachers providing Directed Synchronous Instruction live and in real time to students for at least 50% of the given period and/or day. Teachers will review eLearning day procedures and classroom expectations with their students. Teachers will be available online during the entire eLearning day to answer questions or clarify assignments when not providing Directed Synchronous Instruction. Students that are not present will be expected to submit their work no later than one day after the eLearning day. In order to not be counted as unexcused and have a day to submit any work, parents must call/email the school that the child is (1) sick or (2) getting access to Wi-Fi is an impossibility for the day. Teachers will have their instruction available to the students via video to make up for missed learning.

Should an emergency closing occur not allowing the delivery of instruction to occur to a significant portion of our school community, the eLearning day will consist of posting an assignment and teachers maintaining office hours in order to be available for the students; during office hours, teachers should be actively communicating with students and parents. Parents and students are encouraged to email and/or communicate via Google Classroom (if possible). Students will be expected to submit their work no later than three days after the eLearning day. These days may need to be made up and added onto the school calendar.

Classwork will align with the lessons that will be taking place in the classrooms. Teachers will review and ensure that all students are able to access Google Classroom prior to the eLearning day.

### **TECHNICAL SUPPORT:**

Students requiring technical support are encouraged to send a support request to [www.thinkhelpdesk.com/rfcsc](http://www.thinkhelpdesk.com/rfcsc). This link is for technical support only. Questions regarding classwork, assignments, and eLearning days should be directed to your student’s teacher.

### **STUDENTS WITH IEPS**

Special Education staff will communicate and provide assistance as needed during office hours through their IEP Google Classroom.

Students with IEP's: Services will be administered as outlined in the student's Continuous Learning Plan located in the IEP.

## DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNING MATERIALS AND/OR CLASSROOM VIDEOS

In order to make distance learning successful, River Forest instructors may create videos for students to view. Videos are not to be distributed outside of River Forest's network. Moreover, videos are not to be changed or adapted prior to any sharing.

## APPEARANCE

As students mature and become adults; they will be required to meet definite dress standards for many occupational obligations and social functions. The careful regulation of student dress styles is the responsibility of the school. The student/staff health and safety, common decency, student schoolwork, and school and classroom order are all affected. This basic dress code does not infringe on students' rights of freedom of expression, but rather encourages students to "dress for success" and come to school appropriately prepared to participate in the professional, educational process. Students are expected to observe ordinary standards of good grooming, with attire appropriate and comfortable, but a professional and working school atmosphere.

In maintaining with the above philosophy, and in order to decrease misunderstanding, inappropriate school wear may include, but is not limited to:

- The preservation of common decency and classroom order necessitates sufficient coverage of the person. Any clothing, which exposes undergarments or the lack of undergarments, will be considered inappropriate for school. **This includes sagging pants if underwear is noticeable. Garments such as slippers, pajamas, short skirts and shorts, halter tops, those which reveal bare midriffs or backs, tube tops, see-through tops, tank tops, those which contain spaghetti straps, and garments with plunging or revealing necklines, tights with nothing over them, etc. are not allowed. Skirts and shorts and holes in pants must be below fingertips with the arms and hands fully extended. Shirts and tops must be long enough to tuck in. Students will not be permitted to wear clothing which promotes or advertises the use of drugs, alcohol, or other substances which, if used by a minor would be illegal. Furthermore, clothing will not be permitted which advertises, promotes, or vie innuendo or double meaning, suggests inappropriate ideas or behavior not conducive to a positive school environment or is deemed disruptive to the educational functioning of the school.**
- The maintenance of health and safety includes the wearing of shoes, sandals, or boots, and such additional items that may be required in special classes such as shop, laboratories and physical education. Cleanliness of person and apparel is required, pungent sprays, patchouli oils, and strong perfumes and like substances are not to be used or worn at school. These odors are disruptive to the educational process and may be a health risk to others.
- Attire that may cause property damage or personal injury may not be worn (i.e., chains, gloves, safety pins, shoes that may scuff or ruin the floor, etc.)
- Upon entering the building during the day all students are to remove their hats and other head coverings that alter appearance and place them in their locker. Students are not to visibly carry these during the day.
- A jacket or coat, which is normally worn outdoors, is to be placed in a locker during the school day. In addition, backpacks are to be stored in the students' locker during the school day to ensure safety for both students and staff alike.

## ASSEMBLIES

Periodic assemblies are held to broaden the cultural horizons of students. Students will conduct themselves in a manner that exhibits respect toward the performer and toward their peers. **Teachers will be responsible for escorting their class to the assigned area in the auditorium/gym and will remain with their class at all times.**

# ATTENDANCE/TARDIES/TRUANCY

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is necessary if a student is to succeed in school. Early identification of attendance problems is essential to assure that students will receive counseling and have every opportunity to solve the problem. It is the purpose of this regulation to stimulate both students and parents to assume the responsibility of maintaining good school attendance. Notification of a student's absence from school is the parent's responsibility. **If a student must be absent, it is the duty of the parent to call the attendance office by 8:30 a.m. the day of the absence and state the reason for the absence.** If prior contact is not possible, the parent or guardian must provide a written excuse on the day the student returns to school. If the absence of the student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will work with the parents to improve their child's attendance. The River Forest Middle School number is 962-7551. NOTE: A STUDENT WITH TEN (10) OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES IN AN ACADEMIC YEAR WILL BE REFERRED TO THE LAKE STATION TRUANCY COURT. CONTINUED TRUANCY WILL RESULT IN REFERRAL TO THE CROWN POINT JUVENILE COURT DIVISION FOR MORE STRINGENT CONSEQUENCES.

**20-33-2-14-17 Compulsory attendance exception; these are the only absences that will ever be considered excused and will not show up on the student's attendance record as an *unexcused absence*.**

### Sec. 18

- a. Service as a page for or as an honoree of the Indiana general assembly constitutes a lawful excuse for a pupil to be absent from school. For each day of page service or as an honoree of the Indiana general assembly, verified by the certificate of the secretary of the senate or the chief clerk of the house of representatives, a student excused from school attendance under this subsection shall not be recorded as being absent on any date for which the excuse is operative, nor shall the student be penalized by the school in any manner. The section applies to all pupils, whether they attend public, private, or parochial schools.
- b. The governing body of each school corporation and the chief administrative official of each private secondary school system shall authorize the absence and excuse of each secondary school student who serves on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party on the date of each general, city or town, special, and primary election at which the student works. Prior to the date of the election, the student must submit a document signed by one (1) of the student's parents or guardians giving permission to participate in the election as provided in this section, and the student must verify to school authorities the performance of services by submitting a document signed by the candidate, political party chairman, campaign manager, or precinct officer. The document must describe generally the duties of the student on the date of the election. A student excused from school attendance under this subsection shall not be recorded as being absent on any date for which the excuse is operative, nor shall the student be penalized by the school in any manner.
- c. The governing body of each school corporation or the chief administrative officer of each private school system shall authorize the absence and excuse of a student who is issued a subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding. A student excused under this subsection shall not be recorded as being absent on any date for which the excuse is operative, nor shall the student be penalized by the school in any manner. The appropriate school authority may require that the student submit the subpoena to the appropriate school authority for verification.
- d. The governing body of each school corporation or the chief administrative officer of each private school system shall authorize the absence and excuse of each secondary school student who is ordered to active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days in a school year. For verification, the student must submit to school authorities a copy of the orders to active duty and a copy of the orders releasing the student from active duty. A student excused from school attendance under this subsection shall not be recorded as being absent on any date for which the excuse is operative, nor shall the student be penalized by the school in any manner. (Formerly: Acts 1973, P.L.218, SEC.1.) As amended by Acts 1977, P.L. 243, SEC.1; P.L.211-1983, SEC.1; P.L.197-1985, SEC.4; P.L.200-1995, SEC.1; P.L.146-1999, SEC.3.

**20-33-2-20 Attendance records**

Sec. 23.

- a. An accurate daily record of the attendance of each child who is subject to compulsory school attendance under section 17 of this chapter shall be kept by every public and private school.
- b. In a public school, the record shall be open at all times for inspection by attendance officers, school officials, and agents of the department of labor. Every teacher shall answer fully all lawful inquiries made by an attendance officer, school official, or agent of the department of labor.

**20-33-2-27 Compulsory attendance; parent’s responsibility**

Sec. 33

- a. It is unlawful for a parent to fail to ensure that his child attends school as required under this chapter.

**20-33-2-44 Penalty**

Sec. 37. Penalty. A person who knowingly violates this chapter commits a Class B misdemeanor. *(Formerly: Acts 1973, P.L.218, SEC.1.) As amended by Acts 1978, P.L.2, SEC.2006.*

**Chapter 13. Verifying Student Absences**

**20-33-2-47 System for parental notification of nonattendance of students; development and implementation**

Sec. 1. A school corporation may develop and implement a system of notifying the parent or guardian of a student when:

- 1. the student fails to attend school; and
- 2. the student does not have an excused absence for that day.

*As added by P.L.12-1994, SEC.13.*

**20-33-2-47 Telephone notification to parents of student nonattendance**

Sec. 2. If a school corporation implements a notification system under this chapter, the attendance officer or the attendance officer’s designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact by telephone the parent or guardian of each student who has failed to attend school and does not have an excused absence for that day. *As added by P.L.12-1994, SEC.13.*

**20-33-2-47 Immunity from liability where reasonable efforts to notify are made**

Sec. 3. If an attendance officer or an attendance officer’s designee has made a reasonable effort to contact a parent or guardian under section 2 of this chapter, the school corporation is immune from liability for any damages suffered by the parent or guardian claimed because of failure to contact the parent or guardian. *As added by P.L.12-1994, SEC.13.*

**ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES CONTINUED**

Absence is defined as missing the entire day or any part (period) of it for any reason. An hourly and daily record is kept for each student on a semester basis. On a (7) period day, students must be present (at least) by the end of first period to participate in/attend any extracurricular activity.

**A student with five (5) or more unexcused absences in a semester may be referred to the Lake County Juvenile Court Division for Truancy from the school.**

## EXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

1. Participation in school-related activities.
2. Military examinations.
3. Student serves as a page in the Indiana General Assembly.
4. Students, who are registered Lake Station voters, who will serve on a Precinct Election Board, or a student who will act as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party. Prior notice and parent/guardian approval are required.
5. Deaths and funerals of household members or immediate family. Students who are absent for this reason must have a parent call the school or bring in a note from a parent explaining the absence.
6. Appointments requiring that the student is seen by a licensed physician. We encourage parents to make these appointments outside of school hours. Only appointment and travel time shall be excused. Absences may be waived for a doctor's appointment ONLY. The doctor's note should be received within 48 hours after the absence and must indicate the date and specific time frame of, and reason for the appointment. Please note that by IC 20-33-2-18 if a student is issued a Certificate of Incapacity they student and parent have 6 business days to return it to the school nurse or may be turned into Child Protective Services. Additionally, this note must be on the physician's letterhead or office form, must be signed by physician or his/her office personnel and be verifiable by the school. (Per Indiana Code 20-33-2-18)
7. Absences occurring because a student is issued a subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding, or is detained by authorities.
8. Students with continuous attendance issues may be referred to the Lake Station Attendance Court.
9. Religious holidays verified by parent.

## WHAT TO DO IF...

### *YOU ARE ABSENT...*

Your parent/guardian must call the school by 8:30a.m. on the day of your absence to report your absence. The River Forest Middle School number is 219-962-7551. If a parent calls in for the student, he/she will be considered excused for that day. If no phone call is received, the student's absence is considered unexcused for the day. Without a phone contact an absence can only be excused by bringing a signed note from a parent/guardian upon returning to school. If you have been absent five (5) or more consecutive days, you must bring a note from your doctor. The principal may also request a doctor's note if your absences are considered excessive. NOTE: A STUDENT WITH TEN (10) OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES IN AN ACADEMIC YEAR WILL BE REFERRED TO THE LAKE STATION TRUANCY COURT. CONTINUED TRUANCY WILL RESULT IN REFERRAL TO THE CROWN POINT JUVENILE COURT DIVISION FOR MORE STRINGENT CONSEQUENCES.

### *YOU ARE LATE TO SCHOOL...*

Report to the guidance office staff to obtain a pass to class BEFORE going to your locker.

### *YOU NEED AN EARLY DISMISSAL...*

1. Present a written request for early dismissal from your parent/guardian stating the reason for dismissal and the time dismissal is needed to the administrative assistant for approval.
2. If approval is given, an early dismissal form will be issued. Present this form to your teacher at the BEGINNING of the class period in which you are scheduled for dismissal.
3. Meet your parent/guardian in the main office to sign out at your appointed time. You may not leave until your PARENT/GUARDIAN has signed you out with the attendance secretary.

4. Students are encouraged not to make appointments which will conflict with their school day whenever possible so that valuable class time is not lost.
5. Students will only be dismissed to adults on their emergency contact information page.

#### *YOU NEED TO SIGN OUT...*

You must receive permission from the main office staff to leave the campus. Leaving the campus without permission is considered truancy. Parents must verify your need by phone or note in order for you to leave, including students 18 years of age and older.

Meet your parent/guardian in the main office and sign out with the attendance secretary.

Sign in with the attendance secretary if you return to school that day.

## **AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Students are advised that any administrator, any faculty, and any staff member has the authority to direct the actions of the students while school is in session or a school activity is in progress.

## **BULLETIN BOARDS, POSTERS, HALL DECORATIONS**

1. Get permission from administration or sponsor and sponsor must be present during all decorating
2. All approved items will have the Principal signature on them or they may be taken down
3. Safety must be your primary consideration, use only approved materials, and do not cover light fixtures.
4. Class officers and sponsors are responsible for removing posters and hall decorations within hours after the event. Class officers are responsible to the administration for failure to have decorations removed.
5. If clean-up is not completed, the class responsible will be charged for the labor needed to put things back in order. Class funds would be affected.

## **BUS RULES**

Riding the school bus is a privilege afforded by the school corporation. This privilege can be revoked whenever it is determined that the students' actions present a safety hazard to other riders, or when the bus driver determines that his/her attention must be diverted from the sole operation of the bus to control that student. These students will be referred to the administration with a bus ticket for a potential reprimand. Students are made fully aware that all school rules apply to all students from the moment they enter the bus until the moment they depart the bus. **This also involves the vocational, activity, and athletic buses.**

**All school children, while being transported on a school bus, shall be under the supervision, direction and control of the bus driver, and shall be subject to the discipline of the bus driver and the governing body of the school corporation (IC 20-9.1-5-19).**

#### **The following Bus Rules Apply:**

1. Each pupil shall be seated immediately to their assigned seat upon entering the bus.
2. The bus driver ensures the right to ask a student to move to any seat in order to maintain control and safety of the bus.
3. Pupils shall not enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the driver has opened the door.
4. No windows or doors will be opened or closed except by permission of the driver.

5. School buses are school property and must be respected as such. Therefore, writing on services, mutilation of seats or any attempt to commit vandalism shall be cause for denying the guilty party the privilege of transportation on the school corporations' buses.
6. Students are not allowed to smoke/vape while on the school bus.
7. Pupils should not throw rocks, snowballs, or any other material at the school buses before entering or after exiting the bus.
8. Pupils shall not throw caps, articles of clothing, books, or any other objects back and forth while on the buses.
9. Loud, boisterous, or profane language, or indecent conduct is prohibited.
10. Pupils shall not tease, wrestle, or shove each other.
11. Students should not have open food, gum, or drinks. Exceptions will be made for approved medical necessity.
12. No items shall be stacked higher than the windows, isles and exits must be clear in case of emergency.
13. Pupils should understand that the bus driver is required by law to maintain good discipline on the bus to ensure safety and equity for all. This can be accomplished by the cooperation of pupils, parents, and drivers.
14. Students should be waiting at the bus stop when the school bus arrives five (5) minutes prior to normal pick-up time. The driver is responsible for the maintenance of his/her schedule and cannot wait for tardy students.

## **CELLULAR PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES and LISTENING DEVICES**

Cellular phones, electronic devices and listening devices must be placed and stored in lockers before the start of school. Students are to only be on their Chromebooks when directed and when in use...not for games, videos, etc. Any violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action and may include confiscation of the equipment. Listening devices (earbuds / headphones) are to only be used when required in class and permitted by the classroom teacher. In the case the teacher permits listening devices for class use, students are to return and store them back in their locker upon the end of the class period. During passing periods, listening devices are to be put away and out of both ears completely. Students are advised that they bring these items to school at their own risk. The following rules will apply to students if they are caught using these items in class between 7:40AM - 2:41PM. Any student who refuses to give up their phone or take their battery out first will additionally be looked at as insubordinate.

\*All violations result in an office referral and may result in the following consequences listed below.

- 1st Offense  
ACP
- 2nd Offense  
OSS
- 3rd Offense  
OSS
- 4th Offense+  
Administrative Discretion

If a student has an emergency and must contact a parent during the school day, a pass from a teacher must be written to the Main Office/Nurse and the call can only be placed using the Main Office telephone. It is not encouraged for students to call their parents or guardians to come and pick them up without speaking with the nurse, secretary, principal, or designee first.

If students take the risk of keeping their cell phones or electronic devices on their person during the day, River Forest is not liable for any lost, damaged, or misplaced device. Please be advised that River Forest Staff will not

spend instructional time searching for cell phones for students that lose their phone or have their phone stolen. It is recommended by the administration that cell phones and electronics are either not brought to school or securely placed in student hallway lockers during the school day.

### *ELECTRONIC DEVICES CONT.*

Electronic devices such as cell phones, listening devices, camera phones, ECD's, PDA's, radios, iPods, iPads, Laptop Computers, Tablets, MP3 players, pagers, digital cameras, video cameras, and similar items, may be brought to school **at the student's own risk**. The school **will NOT be responsible for lost, broken and stolen items. The school may ask (one time) the family of the student who broke the device to pay restitution (we have no other recourse and cannot make them pay)**. These devices may be used before school, after school or for educational purposes under the supervision of a classroom teacher. If these devices are used or visible during class time or disrupt the educational process, the student will face disciplinary consequences. Violation of this policy can result in discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion, and potential notification of law enforcement authorities. These devices can be confiscated and held until the end of the school day or until a parent can pick up the device depending on the situation. The administration reserves the right to make an impartial and unbiased case by case determination. Students who fail to abide by the policy will have disciplinary actions which are listed in the discipline chart of consequences.

#### Cell Phone and Listening Device Use

- Before / after-school / lunch
- Possession of a phone in class is for educational purposes with teacher permission
- Prohibited in school offices
- The only exception of phone and /or listening device use is direct permission and supervision of a teacher / administrator

There is **no unauthorized videotaping or photographing** of any part of the building, grounds, students, and staff without the prior written consent of the River Forest Community School Corporation. This section is not intended to prevent parents or other interested parties from videotaping extra-curricular activities.

River Forest Middle School expects students to practice proper etiquette and common courtesy when using **cell phones during extra-curricular time**. During extra-curricular events and activities (such as a concert, dance, athletic event, or play etc.), cell phones may be used only at the conclusion of the activity or extra-curricular event under the direct supervision of the activity sponsor. During extra-curricular activities students may have silenced mobile devices on their person.

Electronic devices must be turned off and put away when entering the school. Students may use their electronic device once exiting the building at dismissal.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE**

Because communication between the school and the home is most frequently done by telephone and/or letter, it is imperative that the correct mailing address and telephone number be on record. Students who move and/or change their telephone numbers/home address have 10 business days to show proof of residency and should notify the office of such changes.

## **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

Any form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating exists when a student copies another student's work or a student allows another to copy his/her work. Plagiarism exists when information is copied from another source without so noting. Cheating or plagiarism on the first offense may result in loss of credit for the specific

examination or activity. Further incidents of cheating or plagiarism may result in an “F” for the course, and/or other disciplinary action as per administrative guidelines

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

A home school coordinator is available to counsel students who are referred by teachers, staff, parents, or other students. Additionally, a student may request to see a counselor. The counselor will make every attempt to see the student in a timely manner.

The counselor provides brief counseling services for students in the following areas: educational, vocational, social and emotional. Students may request to see the counselor. Students will need to get a pass from his/her teacher. Teachers or staff, parents, or other students may also refer students to the counselors. Typically, the counselor attempts to help the student define the problem and discuss possible solutions to resolving the problem. The counselor also attempts to help the student develop coping strategies to deal with stress the student is experiencing.

In a situation where the counselor determines that a student needs additional counseling because of suicidal comments, self-injurious behaviors, plans to hurt others in the school, etc., the counselor or the principal will contact the parent. The parent may be asked to pick up his/her child at school, or the counselor may suggest that the student be referred for mental health counseling. In these situations, we hope the parent will cooperate with the recommendations given. **We all need to take mental health issues seriously.**

## **DANCES**

Dances must be sponsored by a school-sponsored organization. Inappropriate behavior (horseplay, suggestive dancing, etc.) may result in exclusion from further dances for the remainder of the year and, if necessary, other disciplinary action.

- Only River Forest Middle School students may attend middle school dances.
- Students are not permitted to leave the dance and return, not even for a few minutes.
- No smoking or drinking is permitted for anyone attending the dance.
- Potentially dangerous and inappropriate dancing will not be permitted.
- For the safety of students, it is preferable that parents provide transportation from dances. If this is not possible, a permission slip must be signed prior to the dance allowing students to walk.
- Students are responsible for their own valuables at school dances. Items found during or after the dances are placed in the “Lost and Found” area.
- Students must have their rides here to pick them up promptly at the end of the dance. Students are expected to behave responsibly during school dances and to cooperate with chaperones.
- The River Forest Middle School dress code applies to all dances.
- Students must be in attendance from at least 4<sup>th</sup> period through 7<sup>th</sup> period to attend dances.

# DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Each year the Superintendent shall provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as “directory information”. The Board designates as student “directory information”; a student’s name, address, telephone number; photograph, date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; or listing on an honor roll and scholarships.

**If you DO NOT wish to have Directory Information released without your prior knowledge and/or consent, please complete this form and return it to your school principal.**

## DENIAL OF PERMISSION TO RELEASE DIRECTORY INFORMATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the authorized parent or guardian of  
(Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_, deny permission to release Directory  
(Please print)  
Information\* about my child without my prior, written consent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*Exception(s) to this Denial of Permission to Release Directory Information include:

- Honor Roll Recognition
- Scholarship Announcement
- Athletic/Academic Team Achievement
- Student Work and Photographs on School Corporation Web Pages  
(Any photo identification would include first name only per Corporation policy)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

Please check the appropriate box above IF you wish to grant the listed exception(s) to your Denial of Release.

## DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Any action that disrupts or interferes with educational activities or the school environment or has the potential for such disruption will not be tolerated. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to: chronic talking in the classroom or other school event wherein students have been directed to remain quiet; horseplay; chronic lack of supplies; arguing; engaging in sexual behavior on school property; blocking the entrance or exits of any school building, corridor or room with the intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from; preventing or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or educational function, or of any meeting or assembly on school property; continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere seriously with the ability of any teacher or any of the other school personnel to conduct the educational function under his/her supervision.

Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action, including detention, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## DRESS CODE

River Forest Middle School expects its student body to appear at school in a clean and neat manner. Courts have ruled that any appearance or clothing that **CREATES A DISTURBANCE**, causes amusement or laughter, promotes looks and stares, or is lewd and suggestive **shall not** be allowed in public schools.

Appropriate dress for school:

- Shorts, skirts and dresses must be fingertip length or longer when standing straight with arms at the side of the body; this fingertip rule also applies to jeans with openings and leggings as well.
- All shirts and blouses must **COMPLETELY COVER THE TORSO/MIDRIF**. No spaghetti straps. Garments **MUST NOT** advertise, gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, sex, or have suggestive statements printed on them; such items are inappropriate in a school setting.
- Undergarments must not be visible.
- Pants must be worn at the waist – No sagging. (i.e., while standing, walking and sitting, top attire must touch bottom attire all the way around.)
- Slippers, pajama pants, and blankets are not allowed
- Any gang related clothing, jewelry, etc., must not be worn. (See Gang Policy)
- Jewelry or clothing representing violence in any way (such as machine gun, weapon, etc.) is not permitted and can lead to suspension/expulsion.
- Book bags, backpacks, and purses must be stored in students' lockers during the entire school day.
- Hats, hoods, bandanas, sunglasses, or any other form of head covering that alter or disguise appearance may not be worn in the building at any time. These items may not be worn in classrooms, hallways, or cafeteria. At outside events, hats may be worn with bills pointed forward.
- Jackets are not to be worn during the school day.
- If a student has selected a manner of appearance that disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting. The principal or his/her designee is the final judge.
- The final determination regarding dress code issues/violations will be made and reinforced by the administration.

### DRESS CODE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

All rules will apply to attend special functions. They include but are not limited to the following types of events: field trips, award programs, dances, band performances, concerts, and banquets. All rules are in place and enforced during school events.

## **DRUG-FREE SCHOOL**

River Forest Middle School is committed to providing a drug-free school. Drug abuse is a threat to the health and safety of our students. For this reason, and in accordance with Federal law, River Forest Middle School prohibits the use, possession, concealment, manufacture, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by State statute or substance that could be considered a “look-a-like” controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process, up to and including expulsion from school and reference for prosecution.

## **DRUGS AND DRUG PARAPHERNALIA**

Students may not possess, use or be under the influence of/or provide to any other person, drug paraphernalia and/or any substance, which is or contains amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, a stimulant, a depressant, or a hallucinogen whether prescription or sold over the counter (without a prescription) or any substance that closely resembles or is represented to be any of the listed substances. Students may not provide to any other person drug paraphernalia and/or any substance as listed above nor any substance represented to be any of the above:

- on the way to or from school or school activity, or
- on school grounds at any time, or
- at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus or other school sponsored transportation.

Use of medication by a student prescribed by a medical doctor, a dentist, or other health care provider authorized by law to prescribe medication for that student, does not violate this rule. However, all medications (prescriptions or over-the-counter) must be approved by the nurse. This includes, but is not limited to, inhalers, over the counter medications, and cough drops. No student, under any circumstance is to provide medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to any other student.

Students may not possess/use/provide to any person anything used or designed to be used primarily for, but not limited to, the storage, processing, delivery or consumption of amphetamine, barbiturates, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants, or hallucinogens.

- on school premises at any time, or
- at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus, or
- at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus or other school sponsored transportation.

Failure to comply with these rules will result in expulsion.

## **ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS**

“**Sexting**” or using a cell phone or other personal communication device to send text or email messages or possessing text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexually suggestive while at school or at a school function is prohibited. In addition to taking disciplinary action, phones will be confiscated and students should be aware that any images suspected to violate criminal laws will be referred to law enforcement authorities. (IC 35-42-4-4).

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS**

In case of a fire drill, fire, tornado drill, tornado, or any other emergency situation, all rooms have posted directions as to the proper route to evacuate the school building. There should be no horseplay, talking, etc. No one can ever

be sure when a drill can become an actual event. Once outside the school, and away from the building, you are to remain with your class for the entire period of time. Teachers are to take a class roster with them during all room evacuations. The School Safety Plan will be followed.

## **ENERGY DRINKS**

River Forest does not allow students to bring “**ENERGY DRINKS**” into the school or on its property. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the drink being confiscated and possibly disciplinary action and affect your standing in an extra/co-curricular activity.

## **EXPECTATIONS of THE LEARNER**

- Assume responsibility for their own learning
- Take responsibility for and accept the consequences of their actions and decisions
- Develop the character qualities, social courtesies, and skills needed to function as a contributing member of society
- Work cooperatively with others while maintaining one’s own ideas, views, and standards.
- Take an objective approach to problems and use problem-solving skills and critical thinking skills effectively
- Assume responsibility as a citizen by developing an awareness of world events, a sensitivity to social problems, and responsibility for helping with their resolution
- Demonstrate sound communication skills using a variety of media
- Show growing enjoyment of the arts by developing artistic and literary tastes and standards
- Prepare to enter the world of work by responding effectively to changing technology
- Evaluate the requirements of various occupational opportunities in light of personal, physical and mental capacities, aptitudes and interest.
- Practice ensures retention and mental agility. Homework is an assigned practice.

## **EXPULSIONS**

Expulsion means disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from school attendance in excess of 10 days or for the balance of the current semester or school year.

**20-33-8-19 Expulsion procedure; appeals will be adhered to.**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR AND COCURRICULAR PARTICIPATION**

All students are encouraged to become involved in the organizations that the high school provides. In order to participate, the student must have a signed waiver on file. The privilege of participation shall require the maintaining of high standards of conduct and observance of the policies, rules, regulations and guidelines of the school.

## **FAN BUSES**

Fan buses are provided at a fee to some athletic contests. Students must purchase a ticket ahead of time from the athletic director/athletic department ahead of time at school. Any student who rides the bus **must ride it to and**

**from the event. Additionally, each student must obey** the bus sponsor and the bus rules. Violation of any rule may result in suspension from further fan bus rides or possible school suspension/expulsion. Students may also be subject to being suspended from attending extra-curricular events per the Athletic Councils' discretion.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All field trips are arranged through teachers with the administration's approval. All school rules are in effect during any field trip. Out of state field trips must be applied for at least one month in advance and must be approved by the RFSB of trustees.

## **FIGHTING/USE OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE**

Fighting, posturing, or using physical violence in the school building, on school grounds, en-route to and from school and to school sponsored activities is subject to school disciplinary action, including Saturday school, ACP, suspension and/or expulsion.

Students failing to comply with staff member's instructions to stop fighting or using physical violence will be subject to expulsion.

(Individuals who are spectators, promote, or instigate fights or any physical violence may be subject to the same corrective action(s) as the participants.)

In addition, the administration reserves the right to call the police department after any fight. If this should occur, students will face both a school consequence and a criminal consequence.

### **Prohibition of Recording Fights/Distributing Recordings of Fights**

#### *Overview*

To maintain a safe and respectful learning environment, River Forest Middle School strictly prohibits students from recording physical altercations or fights on school property, during school events, or on school transportation and/or distributing recordings of fights. This policy is in place to protect the safety and privacy of all students and staff and to prevent the spread of harmful or inappropriate content.

#### *Definition*

**Recording:** The use of any device (including but not limited to phones, tablets, smartwatches, or other electronic equipment) to capture audio, video, or images.

**Distributing recordings:** Sharing, sending, posting, uploading, or showing video/audio recordings of physical altercations to others

**Fights:** Any physical altercation between students or others on school grounds or at school events.

#### *Prohibited Conduct*

##### *Students shall not:*

- Use any device to record fights or physical altercations.
- Share or post recordings of fights on social media or with others, electronically or in person.
- Encourage others to record fights.

### *Rationale*

Recording fights may:

- Escalate conflicts or encourage violence.
- Violate student privacy rights.
- Interfere with school investigations.
- Promote harmful behavior for attention or social media exposure.

### *Disciplinary Action*

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action according to the discipline matrix. Disciplinary consequences apply regardless of whether the student was directly involved in the altercation or was a bystander recording the incident. Even if a student did not record the fight themselves, sharing or spreading the recording in any form is considered distribution and is a violation of this school policy and will result in disciplinary action outlined in the RFMS Discipline Matrix.

## **FREE / REDUCED PRICE LUNCHES**

Free breakfast and lunch are available for all RFMS students. Forms still need to be filled out for state reporting purposes. Forms can be obtained from the attendance secretary or on the website.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Any and all fundraising conducted for or by high school students must be approved by the high school principal and must be in compliance with the state board of accounts.

## **GANG INVOLVEMENT**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The School Corporation adopts this policy pursuant to State law in order to address the detrimental effects of criminal gangs and criminal gang activity on its students, demonstrate its commitment to preventing and reducing criminal gang membership and eliminating criminal gang activity, educate Corporation students, employees, and parents about criminal gangs and criminal gang activity, and comply with State and Federal laws and regulations.

The Corporation prohibits criminal gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on Corporation property, on buses owned by the Corporation or used to transport Corporation students, and at school-sponsored functions. The Corporation prohibits reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report criminal gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of criminal gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Criminal Gang means a group with at least three (3) members that specifically either promotes, sponsors, or assists in; or participates in; or requires as a condition of membership or continued membership; the commission of a felony or an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult or the offense of battery.

Gang Activity means a student who knowingly or intentionally actively participates in a criminal gang, or a student who knowingly or intentionally solicits, recruits, entices, or intimidates another individual to join a gang.

#### PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING SUSPECTED CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY

All Corporation employees shall report any incidence of suspected criminal gang activity to the principal and the school safety specialist. As well, students and parents, who choose to do so, may report an incident of criminal gang activity to the principal. The principal and the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services.

A Corporation employee who in good faith reports an incident of suspected criminal gang activity in compliance with the procedures of this policy is immune from any civil or criminal liability for damages arising from his/her actions.

Each school principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation of each report of suspected criminal gang activity and each report of reprisal or retaliation. The principal or designee shall initiate the investigation promptly but no later than 2 instructional days of the report of the alleged incident. The principal may appoint additional staff and the principal or designee may request the assistance of law enforcement to assist in the investigation for the safety of the administration, Corporation staff, or students. The investigation shall be completed and written findings prepared by the principal or designee as soon as possible but no later than 5 instructional days from the date of the report of the alleged incident.

The principal or designee shall submit the report to the Superintendent within 10 instructional days of completing the investigation. The Superintendent shall report the results of each investigation to the Board on a regular basis during its scheduled Board meetings.

The Board recognizes that some acts of criminal gang activity may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts while other acts may be so serious or involve individuals outside the school that they require a response by local law enforcement officials.

Appropriate consequences and remedial action will be imposed when students are found to have engaged in criminal gang activity, criminal gang intimidation, or criminal gang recruitment or when they are found to have engaged in retaliatory conduct towards a Corporation employee or student who reported an incident of criminal gang activity, according to the severity of the offense and considering both the developmental age of the student offender and the student's history of inappropriate behavior, per the code of student conduct. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student who engages in criminal gang activity may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Incidents that result in the expulsion of a student(s) or alternative school placement of a student(s) will be referred to the local law enforcement officials for further investigation. The principal shall proceed in accordance with the code of student conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. As appropriate, the principal may provide intervention and/or relevant support services. The principal shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents as provided below, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

The principal shall provide the parents of the students who are parties to any investigation with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations. This information includes the nature of the investigation, whether the Corporation found evidence of criminal gang activity, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the activity.

#### ANNUAL REPORTING OF INVESTIGATIONS TO THE STATE

Each school principal or designee shall record the number of investigations of criminal gang activity disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement (disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender) and report this information to the Superintendent before May 15 each year.

The Superintendent shall submit a written report to the Indiana Department of Education, on forms developed by the Department, before June 2 of each year outlining the activities undertaken as part of the Corporation's compliance with I.C. 20-26-18. This report shall include the number of investigations of criminal gang activity disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement for the entire Corporation in the past year, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In its efforts to address criminal gang activity, the Board encourages collaboration with stakeholders to provide gang prevention and intervention services and programs including but not limited to:

1. Provide training for staff and teachers on criminal gang prevention and intervention resources on a periodic basis.
2. Create collaborative plans between local school administration and community based prevention and intervention providers.
3. Coordinate resources and funding opportunities to support gang prevention and intervention strategies.
4. Consider integrating Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE TYPES OF SERVICES, INCLUDING FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES, FOR A STUDENT SUSPECTED OF PARTICIPATING IN CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY

Support services may include one or more of the following:

- gang awareness education for students, parents, faculty/personnel, law enforcement, and community stakeholders that, at a minimum, shows potential for effectiveness based on research, revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in gang and gang-like activity;
- culturally and/or linguistically appropriate services/supports for parents and families;
- counseling coupled with mentoring for students and their families;
- referral to community organizations and civic groups that offer related programs or counseling;
- viable, sustainable after-school programs developed in collaboration with other stakeholders;

## RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CRIMINAL GANG PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS THAT MAXIMIZE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND THE USE OF FEDERAL FUNDING

The Superintendent may seek Federal funding to implement criminal gang prevention and intervention services and programs, including the following:

- Dissemination of criminal gang awareness information to students and parents. The gang awareness information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in gang activity.
- Training for staff and teachers on criminal gang prevention and intervention resources.
- Creation of formal collaboration plans between Corporation administration and community-based prevention and intervention providers to address criminal gang prevention and intervention.
- Coordination of resources and funding opportunities to support gang prevention/intervention activities.
- Integration of available School Resource Officer Programs.
- Incorporation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program into the curriculum.

## PUBLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be annually disseminated to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within the Corporation. This may be done through distribution of student handbooks and all other Corporation publications that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards for schools within the Corporation.

I.C. 20-18-2-2.8

I.C. 20-19-3-12

I.C. 20-26-18-1 et seq.

I.C. 20-33-9-10.5

I.C. 20-33-9-14

I.C. 35-31.5-2-27.4

I.C. 35-31.5-2-74

I.C. 35-31.5-2-264.5

I.C. 35-45-9-1

I.C. 35-45-9-3

I.C. 35-45-9-4 I.C. 35-45-9-5

The following are prohibited:

- Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, or other such items identified and associated with gang membership or affiliation.
- Using hand signals, graffiti, drawing gang symbols, gestures or other written communications showing membership or a desire to affiliate, or affiliation with a gang.
- Using any speech or committing any act in the promotion of gang interests or activities including but not limited to: soliciting others for membership in any gang, threatening or intimidating others, inciting others to commit physical violence.

Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion.

## **HABITUAL OFFENDER**

Repeatedly violating rules that students are expected to follow will be grounds for disciplinary action including expulsion. In addition, suspensions totaling ten (10) days in one semester or a combined total of fifteen (15) days for the year may result in a request for expulsion for not following and adhering to school rules and regulations.

## **HALL PASSES**

There should be no student traffic in non-instructional areas in the building unless authorized by a staff member. Any student in the hallway during class must have a pass from his/her teacher or staff member. **Students, when not in the classroom, are expected to carry school approved passes signed and dated in their student planner, or an official pass from the office. Students must have passes when in the hallway except during passing periods and announced meetings or convocations**

## **HARASSMENT/THREATS/INTIMIDATION**

Physical/verbal/sexual/written and/or any similar harassment of other students and/or staff member and/or anyone else is not permitted as well as threat and intimidation in any form of another student and/or staff member and/or anyone for any reason. Examples include, but are not limited to: threatening to strike, attack, or harm a staff member, student or other person; coercing a staff member, student or other person; threatening notes, comments, innuendoes, or rumors; bullying and hazing. Examples of sexual harassment may include but is not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome touching, pressure for sexual activity, suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

Threats, harassment or intimidation transmitted electronically i.e. web pages, e-mail, text messages, etc. originating on school property or off school premises, when it directly affects other students or school personnel, is subject to school disciplinary action including detention, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion from school.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

**“Homework” shall refer to those assignments to be prepared outside of the school by the student or independently while in attendance at school.** The School Board acknowledges the educational validity of out-of-school assignments as adjuncts to and extensions of the instructional program of the schools in grades one through twelve. Homework should be a properly planned part of the curriculum to extend and reinforce the learning experience of school or to complete work not completed in class. Homework should help students learn by providing practice in the mastery of skills, experience in data gathering, and integration of knowledge, and an opportunity to remediate learning problems.

Homework should help develop the student’s sense of responsibility by providing an opportunity for the exercise of independent work and judgment. The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments should be based on the ability and needs of the student and take into account other activities which make a legitimate claim on the student’s time. As a valid educational tool, homework should be assigned with clear direction and its product carefully evaluated. The schools should recognize the role of parents by suggesting ways in which parents can assist the school in helping a student carry out assigned responsibilities. Homework should always serve a valid learning purpose; it should never be used as a punitive measure.

Excessive missing assignments will result in disciplinary action.

## **ILEARN**

Parents will receive a letter with passwords to access ILEARN scores online after they have been scored and returned to the school. IF a student does not pass the English or Math portion of the ILEARN, he/she will be expected to attend remediation programs offered by the school.

## **ILLEGAL ACTIONS**

Behavior not covered by other rules listed in this section but that is prohibited by Indiana State Law will be subject to school disciplinary action, including possible expulsion, and reported to the police.

# IMPROPER USE OF SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

The following constitutes improper use of technology: accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing anything deemed inappropriate including: pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material; transmitting obscene, abusive, or sexually explicit language; violating any local, state, or federal statute; vandalizing, damaging, or disabling the property of another individual or organization; accessing another individual's material, information, or files without permission; violating copyright or otherwise using intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission. Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action, including restriction of privilege, detention, ACP, suspension, and/or possible expulsion.

# INDIANA LAW REGARDING SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION

Indiana Code 20-33-8, as well as local school board policy provides all school personnel with the authority to carry out this duty. River Forest School Administration will handle any disciplinary problems that arise which are not specifically cited herein.

The following excerpts are quoted from Indiana Code 20-33-8.

## I.C. 20-33-8-9: DISCIPLINARY POWERS OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

### I.C. 20-33-8-8 SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

- (b) In all matters relating to the discipline and conduct of students, School Corporation personnel:
- (1) stand in the relation of parents to the students of the school corporation; and
  - (2) have the right to take any disciplinary action necessary to promote student conduct that conforms to an orderly and effective educational system...
- (c) Students must:
- (1) follow responsible directions of school personnel in all educational settings; and
  - (2) refrain from disruptive behavior that interferes with the education environment.

### 20-33-8-14 GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

- (a) The following are the ground for student suspension or expulsion, subject to the procedural requirements of this chapter and as stated by school corporation rules
- (1) Student misconduct
  - (2) Substantial disobedience
- (b) The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in subsection (a) apply when a student is:
- (1) On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
  - (2) Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
  - (3) Traveling to or from school or school activity, function, or event

### 20-33-8-15 UNLAWFUL CONDUCT

In addition to the grounds specified in IC 20-33-8-14, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

- (1) the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an education function; or
- (2) The student's removal is necessary to restore order to protect persons on school property; including unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

## 20-33-8-16 WEAPONS

(d) a student who is:

(1) identified as bringing a firearm or destructive device to school or on school property; or

(2) in possession of a firearm or destructive device on school property;

**must** be expelled for a period of at least one (1) calendar year, with the return of the student to be at the beginning of the first semester after the end of the one (1) year period.

## 20-33-18 DUE PROCESS

Students will be afforded the basic rights of due process. That is, in any suspension or expulsion proceeding, the charges against the student will be stated, a summary of the evidence against the student will be provided, and an opportunity for the student to explain his/her conduct will be granted.

## INSUBORDINATION

Failure to comply with directions of a teacher or other school personnel during any period of time when students are under their supervision is subject to school disciplinary action, including detention, Saturday school, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion. Examples of insubordination include, but are not limited to: refusal to work in class, sleeping in class, refusal to serve detention as directed, refusal to participate in in-school alternatives as directed, refusal to report to the office as directed, refusal or failure to identify oneself when requested by a staff member or adult in authority, disobedience to administration authority, refusal to follow the direction of a teacher, administrator, or other adult in a supervisory position.

## LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AND INTERPRETERS

The River Forest Schools and the Bilingual Education Program Staff regularly provide translation services for parents regarding school issues. If a parent needs an interpreter for Spanish, or any other language, please call 962-7551 for assistance.

Las escuelas de River Forest y el personal del programa de Educación Bilingüe normalmente prevén servicios de traducción a los padres de los estudiantes con respecto a cosas relacionadas con la escuela. Si usted necesita un intérprete en español e otro idiomas, favor de llamar 962-7551.

## LOCKERS/USAGE

Lockers are provided to all middle school students. Students will be held responsible for any damage to the locker from misuse or tampering with the lock. Students are not to give their lock combinations to other students nor make any attempt to open other lockers without office approval. **Students are not to share a locker.**

In order to implement the school corporation's policy concerning student lockers, the school board adopts the following rules and regulations per IC 20-33-8-32

Use of Lockers: Lockers are to be used to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. Lockers shall not be used to store items which cause, or can reasonably be foreseen to cause, an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or which are forbidden by state law or school rules. Students will be expected to keep their lockers in a clean and orderly manner. Students may not write in or on lockers even with erasable markers.

Authority to Inspect: Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these areas. The school corporation retains the right to inspect lockers to ensure they are being maintained in accordance with the conditions in "Use

**of Lockers**". The principal or his/her designee shall conduct all inspections of student lockers. All lockers are subject to search.

Liability: The school corporation assumes no liability for what students place in school lockers. Therefore, it is advised that students do not bring items of value to school and place them in lockers.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost articles may be claimed before and after school in the main office within one week. Found articles should be sent immediately to the main office. To facilitate return in case of loss, books and other property should contain identification.

## LUNCH/CAFETERIA

All lunches at River Forest Community School Corporation are closed. No students, regardless of age or grade, are permitted to leave the school to go out to lunch. Exceptions are only approved through the building principal. No food, drink, container, or eating utensil is to be removed from the cafeteria. Reminder: Soft Drinks/Soda Pop are not allowed in the cafeteria. Parents may not bring in fast food items for their students during the school day.

Note: Students will not order food from outside sources for delivery at the school without administrator approval.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

If your child has a food allergy requiring accommodation from the cafeteria, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Food Service Director at 219-962-7551 Ext. 3082 for instructions. You may also view the food allergy guidelines on the food service page of the corporation website at [www.rfcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.rfcsc.k12.in.us). Please also notify your building nurse/nurse assistant.

## MAKING UP WORK DURING OR FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

- Students will be granted one (1) day for each day of absence not to exceed three days to make up missed assignments. Students are responsible for obtaining this work. Students with absences that exceed three days should make arrangements with teachers for make-up work.
- It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments for **UNEXCUSED** absences and/or absences due to **SUSPENSIONS**. In the case of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), the student will be given the number of school days the suspension was assigned after return to make up work missed.

If a student knows in advance that they will be absent or away on a field trip, it is his/her responsibility to get the work and have it done on time. No extension will be given in these cases. This includes being in the building but not the classroom (including but not limited to being in the nurse's office or guidance office).

## PROFANITY/PORNOGRAPHY/OBSCENITY

The following is not allowed:

- Use of profanity, obscene gestures and/or possession of pornography or other inappropriate materials anywhere in school, on school grounds, at school sponsored activities or on school provided transportation.
- Making any sign or any writing that conveys an offensive, obscene, or sexually suggestive message.

- Having any written materials or pictures that convey an offensive, obscene, or sexually suggestive message.

Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action, including detention, Saturday School, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## **PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

Embracing or hugging, kissing, etc., is a violation of the discipline policy as it is considered disruptive to the educational atmosphere. Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action.

## **REMOTE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**

When students are learning in remote settings, either by choice or because of a pause of in-person school, they will be expected to:

- If applicable, follow their daily schedule and attend all classes as they would in a typical in-person environment. As such, students are to make themselves available each day from 7:50a.m. - 2:41p.m. (except Late Start Wednesdays, 8:30a.m. - 2:41p.m.).
- If applicable, log in to Google Classrooms at the beginning of each class for attendance purposes and remain online for the entire period of instruction. If enrolled in Edmentum courses, must log in and be active every day. This will serve as a basis for attendance as well. Note: Attendance continues to be mandatory and legal even during remote learning.
- If applicable, engage with their teachers and classmates, and follow teacher-provided due dates for assignments (unless alternative arrangements have been made with the teacher prior to the due date).
- Students are to be actively participating or advancing on Edmentum with success or students can be removed from remote learning (unless on virtual status as a result of extenuating circumstances – approved by administration).
- Communicate with teachers to ask questions, explain extenuating circumstances, or receive feedback whether in class or SRT. Keep up with your assignments (don't procrastinate) and check your grades via Harmony or Edmentum. Use their school issued device (Chromebook) for learning, not their cell phones.
- Comply with the technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) of RFCSC and electronic device rules in the student handbook. Note: Instructor videos are not to be distributed outside of River Forest's network and not to be changed or adapted prior to any sharing.
- Be prepared for instruction by setting up shop in a quiet and comfortable spot, ensuring that your Chromebook is charged and that you have a reliable connection to the internet.
- Dress appropriately for each class period (school Dress Code applies). At no time, should undergarments or pajamas be visible.
- Maintain the highest standards of academic integrity by completing his or her own work product. Violations will be pursuant to the RFMS handbook.
- Refrain from usage of cell phones, internet messaging, listening to or downloading music, or playing games on your Chromebook during Remote Learning.

During remote learning, students have access to all programming and extra-curricular opportunities at River Forest Middle/High School.

**If you are having issues with your Chromebook, please go to the River Forest website Menu and then scroll down to the Chromebook Technology Support Link and complete the form.**

# REPLACEMENT/REPAIR OF SCHOOL-ISSUED TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

Should it be determined by school administration that school-issued technology devices were intentionally damaged by a student, the student/guardian will incur a cost and be responsible for time and resources used for repair and/or replacement. Students will also be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the RFMS discipline matrix.

## RIVER FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADING SYSTEM

### COURSE CREDIT

Academic achievement is very important and promotion to the next grade level is not guaranteed. One point is assigned for each core course (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reading) a student passes with a D or higher. A 6<sup>th</sup> grade student can obtain a maximum of 20 points. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students can obtain a maximum of 16 points. Less than 15 points for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and less than 12 points for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may result in retention at the present grade level. Summer school and/or credit recovery (for a fee) will be offered to obtain missed points in order to prevent retention.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSES TAKEN FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

In 8th grade, students have the opportunity to begin earning high school credits. Preparing for College and Careers is a course that helps students explore future career options and build important life skills. This class counts as a high school credit. In addition, some 8th grade students may be placed in Algebra I based on their academic readiness. This course also counts for high school credit and will appear on the student’s high school transcript. These opportunities help students get a head start on their high school journey and prepare for success in the future.

### RFHS 4-Year Scheduling Plan

|                  | English | Science/Tech                                            | Fine Arts                                                                                   | Math                         | Social Studies/World Language                                      | PE & Health                                    | CTE                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Freshman</b>  | Eng 9   | Bio<br>Or<br>Earth/Space<br><br>And<br>Computer Science | 2D/Sculpture<br><br>Choir<br>and/or<br>Beginning Band<br><br>Or<br>Theater<br>Student Media | ALG I<br><br>Or<br>Geometry  | World History<br><br>Principles of Criminal Justice<br><br>Spanish | Freshman PE<br><br>Health                      | Princ of Teaching<br>or<br>Princ of Business Mgmt<br>Or<br>Accounting Fundamentals<br>Or<br>Princ of Culinary<br>Or<br>Princ of Exercise Science<br>Or<br>Princ of Criminal Justice |
| <b>Sophomore</b> | Eng 10  | Bio<br>Or<br>Earth/Space                                | Drawing/Painting<br><br>3D/Ceramics<br>Choir                                                | Geometry<br><br>Or<br>ALG II | World History<br><br>Principles of Criminal Justice                | Weightlifting<br><br>Princ of Exercise Science | Kinesiology<br><br>Nutrition                                                                                                                                                        |

|                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                | Or<br>ICP Or<br>Chem I<br>And<br>Computer Science                                                                              | Intermediate Band<br>Jazz Band<br>Theater<br>Student Media                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                             | Spanish                                                                         | Peer Tutoring                                                                                                                        | Accounting Fundamentals<br>Marketing Fundamentals<br>Management Fundamentals<br>Law Enforcement Fundamentals                              |
| <b>Junior</b>                                                                                                                                                             | Speech<br>AND<br>Literature<br>Or<br>AP Lit<br>Or<br>Creative Writing<br>Or<br>Film Literature | ICP Or<br>Chem I<br>Or<br>Chem II<br>Or<br>DC/Adv Science<br>or<br>AP Bio<br>Or<br>AP Environmental<br>And<br>Computer Science | 2D<br>3D<br><br>Choir and/or<br>Advanced Band<br><br>Theater<br><br>Student Media<br><br>AP Music Theory<br><br>Library/Media                                          | ALG II<br><br>OR<br><br>Pre-Cal AND<br>Trig<br><br>OR<br><br>AP Stats<br><br>OR<br><br>Finite Math                          | US History<br><br>Spanish                                                       | Weightlifting<br><br>Peer Tutoring<br><br>Study Hall (must enroll in Edmentum)<br><br>Assistant (must enroll in Edmentum)<br><br>JAG | Human Performance<br>Culinary Arts<br>Adv Accounting<br>Strategic Marketing<br>Hospitality Management<br>Social Issues in Law Enforcement |
| <b>Senior</b><br><br><b>(may choose only 5 classes for 2nd semester IF enrolled in WBL and have satisfactory attendance, discipline, and credits per handbook policy)</b> | Eng 12<br>Or<br>DC Eng<br>Or<br>Creative Writing<br>Or<br>Film Literature                      | Chem II<br><br>Or<br>DC/Adv Science<br><br>Or<br>AP Bio<br><br>Or<br>AP Environmental<br>And<br>Computer Science               | Volunteer Hours<br><br>Work Based Learning<br><br>AP 2D<br><br>Choir and/or<br>Advanced Band<br><br>Theater<br><br>Student Media<br><br>Library/Media<br><br>Jazz Band | ALG II<br><br>OR<br><br>Pre-Cal AND<br>Trig<br><br>OR<br><br>AP Stats<br><br>OR<br><br>AP Calc<br><br>OR<br><br>Finite Math | Personal Finance<br><br>Government<br><br>Economics (if offered)<br><br>Spanish | Weightlifting<br><br>Peer Tutoring<br><br>Study Hall (must enroll in Edmentum)<br><br>Assistant (must enroll in Edmentum)<br><br>JAG | Capstone Projects where required                                                                                                          |

## RETENTION

Administration reserves the right to retain a student if they have habitually failed classes, performed poorly on the ILEARN, or have not obtained their core class points.

## GRADE POINT AVERAGES

Grade point averages may be compiled each grading period. Grade point averages are used to determine honor roll.

Grade point averages are as follows:

A = 4.0 B = 3.0 C = 2.0 D = 1.0 F = 0.0

## GRADING SCALE

The following is the grading scale for all classes:

|    |               |   |               |    |               |
|----|---------------|---|---------------|----|---------------|
| A+ | 100% - 99.5%  | A | 99.4% - 91.5% | A- | 91.4% - 89.5% |
| B+ | 89.4% - 87.5% | B | 87.4% - 81.5% | B- | 81.4% - 79.5% |
| C+ | 79.4% - 77.5% | C | 77.4% - 71.5% | C- | 71.4% - 69.5% |
| D+ | 69.4% - 67.5% | D | 67.4% - 61.5% | D- | 61.4% - 59.5% |
| F  | 59.4% - 0.0%  |   |               |    |               |

## HONOR ROLL

The honor roll is based on the nine week's grades. A student must have a combination of grades equal to a "B" or 3.0 grade point average. Students receiving an "I" or incomplete will not be recognized until the grade has been changed. No student with a "D/F" will be included on the honor roll.

## METHODS OF KEEPING TRACK OF GRADES

We also encourage students and parents to keep track of homework and grades throughout the school year by using the following methods:

- Record Grades. We encourage students and parents to keep track of all grades for each class. When a teacher returns graded assignments and tests, the student can record his/her score in one column and the points possible in another column. To figure out his/her grade, the student can add up the points for his/her score, and add up the points possible. The student then divides his/her score by the points possible. This will give the student an approximate average.
- Weekly Progress Reports (Fridays Only) A student may pick up a weekly Progress Report in the main office. The student takes this report to all of his classes. The student requests that the teacher writes on the report an approximate grade and whether the student has completed all assignments for the week.
- Harmony Parent Portal. Parents can access students' grades and assignments through the school website and parent portal link. This can only be accessed with the use of student ID and Password.

These methods can be very effective if used consistently. If you would like more information about these strategies, please contact the office.

## REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are available every nine weeks and progress reports every four to five weeks. Report cards and progress reports may be issued directly to the students during homeroom, may be sent home in the mail, or may be accessed online through the Harmony Parent Portal. The purpose of the progress report is to alert parents of their student's progress prior to report card distribution. Parents are encouraged to call the school if they have not received progress reports, report cards, or if they have a concern about their student.

# RIVER FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND DISCIPLINE

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY

We believe an attitude of respect and personal responsibility must be the cornerstones for behavior in our school. Actions that are disrespectful or reflect an unwillingness to accept reasonable levels of responsibility, severely detract from the educational process, and will not be tolerated. In addition, it is the responsibility of school administration and staff to maintain an orderly environment wherein all students and staff feel safe. In light of these standards, there are times when it is necessary for school officials to make a decision concerning the acceptability of a student's behavior in school or at a school-sponsored activity. Their decision must be based on the welfare of the total school community as well as the individual student. Communication and cooperation between staff members, parents, and students is encouraged in all matters regarding student discipline.

## ALCOHOL POSSESSION AND/OR CONSUMPTION

Students may not possess/consume/be under the influence of/provide to any other person, any form of alcohol on the way to or from school or school activity, on school grounds at any time, or at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus or other school sponsored transportation.

Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion.

## BREAKING AND ENTERING SCHOOL PROPERTY

Breaking and entering school property will not be tolerated. Failure to comply with this rule will result in expulsion and may be reported to the police.

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

### STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Be Prompt - Be in the classroom when the bell rings. Be prepared to stay in the classroom the entire period in assigned seat or area.
- Be Prepared for class – Bring all materials required for each class. Students are to only be on their Chromebooks when directed and when in use...not for games, videos, etc.
- Be Positive - Be engaged in classroom topic, discussion, instruction, or lesson.
- Be Polite - Be courteous and respectful to teachers and fellow students.
- Be Productive - Participate in class. Complete all class work and homework.

## ALTERNATIVE CLASS PLACEMENT (ACP)

Students are referred to Alternative Class Placement (ACP) because of behavior issues. Students are removed from the traditional classroom and placed into a special suspension classroom under the direction of a teacher/supervisor. The student may be placed in ACP for one or multiple days depending on the infraction.

During his/her time in ACP, the student will work on homework or classroom assignments requested by ACP teacher/supervisor for...FULL CREDIT. While serving in ACP, the student will adhere to the following rules:

- surrender electronic devices upon entering the room
- arrive on time...7:50
- remain in assigned seat and complete work
- no outside food can be brought to the ACP room
- use restroom only at designated times

- follow all other directives established by the teacher/supervisor
- students are to only be on their Chromebooks when directed and when in use...not for games, videos etc.

## BULLYING

### INDIANA LAW CODE 20-33-8-13.5

Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying is defined as “overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted; physical act committed; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student.” All instances of bullying must be reported to school officials, and an investigation will be made. Punishment will be at the discretion of the administration. Parents and/or law enforcement may be contacted. **Effective July 1, 2013: Indiana House Bill 1423 requires that schools adopt guidelines that establish anti-bullying education and training programs for student and staff. Requires reporting of bullying incidents and requires information be included in the school improvement plan. This legislation greatly expands the scope of when the bullying might fall under school discipline rules. The legislation would now cover acts of bullying “wherever the bullying behaviors occur.” The second area of expansion occurs with the deletion of “a school corporation” language as it relates to the use of computer, system, or network.** Bullying committed by a student toward another student or students is strictly prohibited.

### WHAT IS BULLYING

Bullying can take many forms including slurs, rumors, name-calling, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, cartoon drawings, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, stalking, physical or other intimidation, hazing, other written or electronic text messages, social media posts, emails, and verbal or physical actions. For purposes of this rule, bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student’s person or property;
- has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student’s physical or mental health;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s academic performance;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

This rule applies regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when a student commits bullying behavior and the targeted student attends River Forest Schools and extends to bullying through computer, computer system, or a computer network.

### REPORTING BULLYING BEHAVIOR

Students are encouraged to report bullying conduct as soon as possible. Any student or parent who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this rule or any student who feels he/she has been bullied in violation of this rule should immediately report the conduct to the Principal. A student or parent may also report the conduct to a teacher or counselor with whom he/ she is comfortable. That teacher or counselor will then relay the report to the Principal. The report may be made anonymously, however the ability of the Principal to investigate and take corrective action may be limited if the person making the report cannot be further questioned. NOTE: All administrators, teachers and other staff members are to immediately report observed instances of bullying and/or information regarding bullying behavior to the Principal.

### INVESTIGATION OF REPORT

The Principal or an administrator designated by the Principal will immediately investigate all such reports of bullying which may include questioning students, staff and others. As information is obtained, the Principal will report to conduct to local law enforcement as appropriate. The parents of the bully and the targeted student(s) will be notified within the week of the receipt of the report of the alleged conduct and then on a periodic basis as to the progress and the findings of the investigation, and of any remedial action that has been taken.

#### *CONSEQUENCES*

Where bullying behavior is substantiated through the investigation, the Principal will take action appropriate to address the bullying conduct and to prevent further bullying, such as disciplinary action including suspension and/or request for expulsion, counseling and follow-up counseling or other support services and education for the students involved, and referral to law enforcement.

#### *FALSE REPORTING*

False reporting of bullying conduct by a student is a violation of this rule and will result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions. False reporting includes a situation when a student makes a report knowing or having reason to believe that the information is not true. It could also be a situation where the reporting student leaves important information out of the report or gives misleading information. A student who makes a report in good faith based on information the student does not know to be false, is not committing false reporting.

#### *PREVENTION AND CREATION OF ANTI-BULLYING ENVIRONMENT AT RIVER FOREST*

- Assess and Define Bullying
- Engage Parents & Students
- Create Programs and Policies
- Maintain a Safe Environment
- Educate Students & Staff/Awareness Programming/Group Meetings/Presentations & Assemblies
- Community Partnerships

## **RIVER FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE MATRIX**

Student discipline is administered in a progressive manner. However, some will be expedited to higher levels of discipline depending on the nature and severity of the misconduct.

In addition to administering school discipline, some offenses may result in a referral to Lake County Teen Court. Teen Court is a youth development project designed to involve young teens to serve as jurors, clerks, attorneys, etc. During their participation, these teens determine sentencing for juvenile offenders referred by school officials, police, etc. Sentences may include community service, restitution, or apologies. Teen Court is held at the Highland Police Department in partnership with the Crisis Center in Gary.

If a student receives an inordinate number of office referrals for hindering the learning process, they may be presented with a Habitual Offender Student Contract which places the student on probationary status. Any violation of the conditions in the contract may warrant withdrawal as an active member of the middle school student body, detention, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Students are referred to Alternative Class Placement (ACP) because of behavior issues. Students are removed from the traditional classroom and placed into a special suspension classroom under the direction of a teacher/supervisor. The student may be placed in ACP for one or multiple days depending on the infraction. During his/her time in ACP, the student will work on homework or classroom assignments requested by ACP teacher/supervisor for...FULL CREDIT. While serving in ACP, the student will adhere to the following rules:

- surrender electronic devices upon entering the room

- arrive on time...7:50
- remain in assigned seat and complete work
- no outside food can be brought to the ACP room
- use restroom only at designated times
- follow all other directives established by the teacher/supervisor

In addition, suspensions totaling ten (10) days in one semester, or a combined total of fifteen (15) days for the year, may result in a request for expulsion for not following and adhering to school rules and regulations.

Offenses that are criminal in nature will be reported to the police.

This chart serves as a guideline for the administration when issuing consequences for violations. The administration reserves the right to enforce a more or less severe consequence. This chart is not to be considered all-inclusive and may be adjusted as needed.

\*Administration reserves the right to suspend students from school social events/functions (i.e., assemblies, field days, concerts, dances, field trips, sports, etc.).

| <b>Class I Violations</b>                 | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>               | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>                                             | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>                                                                                                                 | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b>                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dress Code (includes hoodies/hats)</b> | Verbal warning<br><br>Change of clothing    | Change of clothing<br><br>ACP                                             | Change of clothing<br><br>ACP/<br>OSS<br><br>(Three violations of wearing a hood may result in banning for the remainder of the school year.) | OSS (1-3 days)                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Tardiness</b>                          | Verbal warning<br><br>Documented by teacher | Verbal warning<br><br>Teacher call to parent<br><br>Documented by teacher | Office Referral<br><br>Call to parent<br><br>Documented by Admin.                                                                             | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b> – Parent Meeting and ACP<br><br><b>5<sup>th</sup> Offense</b> – Parent Meeting and ACP<br><br><b>6<sup>th</sup> Offense</b> + |

|                                                                |                               |                                        |                                                    |                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                |                               |                                        |                                                    | Administrative discretion                            |
| <b>Food, Candy, Pop</b>                                        | Verbal Warning                | Detention                              | Detention                                          | ACP                                                  |
| <b>Horseplay</b>                                               | Verbal Warning                | ACP                                    | OSS (1 Day)                                        | OSS (2-10 days)/Social Suspension                    |
| <b>Public Displays of Affection</b>                            | Verbal warning                | Parent Phone Call                      | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)                                 | OSS (5-10 days), Rec. for Expulsion                  |
| <b>Lighter, Matches, Ignition Devices</b>                      | ACP                           | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)                     | ACP/OSS(3-5 days)                                  | OSS (5-10 days), Rec. for Expulsion                  |
| <b>Unauthorized Area</b>                                       | ACP                           | ACP x2                                 | OSS (3-5 days)                                     | OSS (5-10 days) Rec. for Expulsion Social Suspension |
| <b>Cell Phones, Listening Devices and other WCDs Violation</b> | ACP                           | OSS (1 day)                            | OSS (1-2 days)                                     | Administrative discretion                            |
| <b>Class II Violations</b>                                     | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>          | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>                      | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b>                        |
| <b>Cheating &amp; Plagiarism</b>                               | “F” on assignment             | Student may receive an “F” for 9 weeks | Student may receive An “F” for semester<br><br>ACP | OSS (5-10 days) Rec. for expulsion                   |

|                                                 |                                                                                            |                                                                                                            |                                                     |                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bus Safety Violation</b>                     | Verbal reprimand<br><br>Assigned or reassigned seat by bus driver<br><br>Parent Phone Call | Verbal reprimand<br><br>Assigned or reassigned seat by bus driver<br><br>Loss of bus riding privileges/OSS | Loss of bus riding privileges/OSS                   | OSS/ Rec. for expulsion                                    |
| <b>Classroom Disruption</b>                     | Parent Phone Call /Removal From Class                                                      | Parent Phone Call and Class Suspension                                                                     | ACP                                                 | ACP/OSS                                                    |
| <b>Disrespect/ Insubordination</b>              | ACP                                                                                        | ACP x2                                                                                                     | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)                                  | OSS (5-10 days)<br>Rec. for expulsion                      |
| <b>Profanity</b>                                | ACP                                                                                        | OSS (1 day)                                                                                                | OSS (2 days)                                        | OSS (5-10 days)<br>Social Suspension<br>Rec. for expulsion |
| <b>Forgery/False Attendance Call</b>            | ACP                                                                                        | ACP x2                                                                                                     | ACP/OSS (3-5 days)                                  | OSS (5-10 days)<br>Rec. for expulsion                      |
| <b>Teasing/Harassing (Non-threatening)</b>      | Detention                                                                                  | ACP                                                                                                        | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)                                  | OSS (5-10 days)                                            |
| <b>Unsportsmanlike behavior as a spectator</b>  | Refer to athletic director (athletic hand book/INGOT Code Violation                        |                                                                                                            |                                                     |                                                            |
| <b>Class III Violations</b>                     | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>                                                              | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>                                                                              | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>                       | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b>                              |
| <b>Computer Violations: Intentional Damages</b> | Parent Meeting                                                                             | Parent Meeting<br>Fee for repair and/or replacement                                                        | Parent Meeting<br>Fee for repair and/or replacement | Parent Meeting                                             |

|                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                              | Fee for repair and/or replacement                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | ACP                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Penalty Box<br><br>OSS (1 day)                                                                                                                                                                             | Fee for repair and/or replacement<br><br>Penalty Box<br><br>OSS (5-10 days)                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Computer Violations:<br/>Internet Misuse</b>                              | Penalty Box (2 weeks)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Penalty Box (1 month)<br><br>ACP                                                                                                                                                                             | Penalty Box (1 semester)<br><br>ACP                                                                                                                                                                        | Penalty Box (Indefinitely)<br><br>OSS                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Fighting*<br/>Consequence will vary depending on level of involvement</b> | OSS (2 days)<br>Possible police report<br>Referral to Teen Court                                                                                                                                                                                     | OSS (5-10 days)<br>Possible police report<br>Referral to Teen Court                                                                                                                                          | OSS (10 days)<br>Referral to Teen Court<br>Rec. for expulsion<br><br>Possible police report                                                                                                                | Expulsion                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Recording of Fights/<br/>Distributing Recordings of Fights</b>            | Parent/Guardian Contact<br><br>Device confiscation (returned only to parent/guardian)<br><br>1 day ACP<br><br>Restorative conversation with school counselor or administrator<br><br>Possible referral to law enforcement depending on circumstances | Parent/Guardian Meeting<br><br>2-3 Days OSS<br><br>Digital Citizenship assignment or reflection activity<br><br>Referral to Counselor<br><br>Possible referral to law enforcement depending on circumstances | Parent/Guardian Meeting<br><br>5 Days OSS<br><br>Digital Citizenship assignment or reflection activity<br><br>Referral to Counselor<br><br>Possible referral to law enforcement depending on circumstances | Parent/Guardian Meeting<br><br>5-10 Days OSS<br><br>Digital Citizenship assignment or reflection activity<br><br>Referral to Counselor<br><br>Possible referral to law enforcement depending on circumstances |
| <b>Sexual Harassment</b>                                                     | OSS (1-3 days)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | OSS (3-5 days)                                                                                                                                                                                               | OSS (5-10 days)                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                                                      |                                                                                      |                                                                                      |                                                                                     |                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                      | Possible police report                                                               | Parent conference<br><br>Possible police report                                      | Rec. for Expulsion<br><br>Possible police report                                    |                                                                                                     |
| <b>Theft*</b><br>All offenses include mandatory restitution          | OSS (1-3 days)<br><br>Possible police report                                         | OSS (3-5 days)<br><br>Police report<br><br>Parent conference                         | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Rec. for Expulsion                                           |                                                                                                     |
| <b>Threat – Verbal, Written or Gestures</b>                          | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)<br><br>Possible police report                                     | OSS (3-5 days)<br><br>Possible police report                                         | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Possible police report<br><br>Rec. for expulsion             |                                                                                                     |
| <b>Tobacco/Nicotine use or Possession</b>                            | OSS (3 days)<br><br>Referral to Teen Court<br><br>Citation issued by law enforcement | OSS (5 days)<br><br>Referral to Teen Court<br><br>Citation issued by law enforcement | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Rec. for Expulsion<br><br>Citation issued by law enforcement | Expulsion<br><br>Citation issued by law enforcement                                                 |
| <b>Vandalism*</b><br>All offenses also include mandatory restitution | OSS                                                                                  | OSS (1-3 days)<br><br>Possible police report                                         | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Police report                                                |                                                                                                     |
| <b>Truancy</b>                                                       | ACP                                                                                  | ACP                                                                                  | OSS (1 day)                                                                         | OSS (2-3 days)<br><br>Social Suspension<br><br><b>5<sup>th</sup> Offense + –</b><br>OSS (3-10 days) |

|                                                                         |                                                                                            |                                                                         |                                  | Possible Rec. for expulsion               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Class IV Violations</b>                                              | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>                                                              | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>                                           | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>    | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b>             |
| <b>Assault/Battery</b>                                                  | OSS (1-5 days)<br><br>Police Report<br><br>Rec. for expulsion                              | OSS (3-10 days)<br><br>Police Report<br><br>Rec. for expulsion          |                                  |                                           |
| <b>Bullying</b>                                                         | ACP (1-3 days)                                                                             | ACP/OSS (1-3 days)                                                      | OSS (3-5 days)                   | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Rec. for expulsion |
| <b>Drug/Alcohol Violation Possessing, dealing, using, paraphernalia</b> | OSS (10 days)<br><br>Referral to Teen Court<br><br>Police report<br><br>Rec. for expulsion |                                                                         |                                  |                                           |
| <b>Gang Activity</b>                                                    | OSS (1-3 days)<br><br>Rec. for expulsion                                                   | OSS (3-5 days)<br><br>Rec. for expulsion                                | OSS (5-10 days)<br><br>Expulsion |                                           |
| <b>Weapons Violation</b>                                                | OSS (10 days)<br><br>Police Report<br><br>Rec. for expulsion                               | Gun possession will follow mandatory 1 year expulsion, per Indiana Code |                                  |                                           |

## **SCHOOL MESSENGER AND SCHOOL CLOSING**

River Forest Schools have a subscription to School Messenger Automated Notification Service provided through School Messenger can deliver a wide variety of messages by phone and email to parents and our staff at a very high speed. It helps enhance overall communication within our school community and improve our emergency preparedness.

**To ensure correct delivery of all school messages to you, please make sure that your contact phone numbers and e-mail addresses are updated when your children register each school year. Whenever your contact phone numbers or e-mail addresses change, please let us know as well.**

All schools in the River Forest Community School Corporation will be open all regularly scheduled days unless closed by the Superintendent of schools because of an emergency. When schools are confronted with an emergency, such as extreme conditions of snow, ice, or mechanical failure which necessitates the closing of school, an announcement will be given by School Messenger and to the radio and television stations.

### **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL TO VERIFY CLOSINGS.**

Emergency closings or early dismissals during the day will be announced as soon as possible. The following stations will be notified:

\*WJOB AM 1230 HAMMOND

\*INDIANA 105 FM 105.5 VALPARAISO

## **STUDENTS WHO MOVE DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Students who have started the school year but move to another school district during the school year will need to withdraw from River Forest Middle School and enroll in their new school district.

## **TARDY POLICY**

- Students tardy to school shall report directly to the guidance office for a pass.
- Students are tardy if they are not in their assigned classrooms when the bell rings.
- Students arriving to class more than five (5) minutes after the bell without a pass will receive an office referral and will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. (1st period is different from all the other periods. 10 minutes or less is a tardy and 11 minutes or more is a truancy.)

### **TARDINESS PER 9 WEEK'S PER CLASS WILL BE HANDLED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER (Office Referral):**

- 1<sup>st</sup> tardy verbal warning / documented
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tardy verbal warning / call, email or text to parent / documented
- 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy office referral / call, email or text to parent / documented
- 4<sup>th</sup> tardy office referral / ACP / call, email or text to parent / documented
- 5<sup>th</sup> tardy office referral / ACP / call, email or text to parent / documented
- 6<sup>th</sup> tardy + office referral / Administrative discretion/ call, email or text to parent / documented

## **THEFT/VANDALISM**

Stealing or damaging the property of River Forest Middle School, the property of students or staff members, or the property of visitors to the school will not be tolerated. In addition, stealing or damaging property at any location that a River Forest student is attending that is part of a school sponsored function will not be tolerated and will be subject to school disciplinary action, including restitution, ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## **TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND SMOKING**

Students may not possess/use/provide to any other person, any tobacco products and/or associated paraphernalia including, but not limited to, electronic cigarettes (aka “vaping”) in the school building, at school extra-curricular activities or within a two-block radius of the school grounds during the school day. Failure to comply with these rules is subject to school disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion. If students are under the age of eighteen (18), these infractions will also be reported to the police.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Students who enter from another school system must present a transfer from the school they have attended. Students transferring away should apply for a transfer at least two (2) days before the intended withdrawal.

## **TRUANCY POLICY**

A student is considered truant in any of the following situations:

- Student is not in assigned area or assigned activity while on school property during the school day.
- Student leaves school without receiving prior approval from the office.
- Student is more than five (5) minutes tardy to class. (1st period is different from all the other periods. 10 minutes or less is a tardy and 11 minutes or more is a truancy.)

**TRUANCIES ARE CUMULATIVE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

**TRUANCY WILL BE HANDLED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER (Office Referral):**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Truancy**     **ACP**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Truancy**     **ACP**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Truancy**     **OSS**
- **4<sup>th</sup> Truancy**     **OSS**
- **5<sup>th</sup> Truancy**     **OSS / Possible rec. for expulsion**

## **USE OF THE TELEPHONE**

The school telephones are for the transaction of school business. Only in the case of an emergency will students be given permission to use the school telephones. Any such phone call should be made in the main office or a classroom phone with teacher permission. The use of cell phones during the school day is never allowed. Parents

should refrain from calling in or sending messages to their students during the school day. **Parents/guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.**

## **VIRTUAL LEARNING**

The purpose of Virtual Learning is to provide a self-paced curriculum, utilizing technology to remediate and accelerate when mastery is demonstrated. The learning environment is designed to ensure student growth, assisting students toward the mastery of academic standards, which will lead to graduation/progression to next grade. It allows students to obtain credits to maintain their status with their cohort. Students in virtual learning will miss out on many important components their peers learning within the traditional school setting will have the ability to utilize. Factors presented by the parent will be considered by the Principal to determine if Virtual Learning will be afforded as an opportunity. If allowed, the Principal may revoke Virtual Learning at any point for violations of the student handbook, performance, and pace of learning. The number of virtual students MAY NOT exceed the legal thresholds established in Indiana Code.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors are welcome to make an appointment to visit with staff members. All visitors must report to the main office upon entering the building, be approved by an administrator, and wear a visitor's pass at all times while in the building. **Visitors should not enter if they have signs of illness.**

## **WEAPONS/DANGEROUS ITEMS**

Students may not possess or provide to any other person: guns of any type (real or not), knives, razors/razor blades, box cutters, any martial arts related weapons, brass/metal knuckles, tools (such as saws, awls, hole punches, hammers, etc.) explosives devices or materials used in making such devices, and any other item that could reasonably be considered and used as a weapon will be grounds for ACP, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

To withdraw a student from school, the parent/guardian must do the following:

- Notify a building administrator/secretary of their intent to withdraw their child from school.
- Complete all required withdrawal forms in the main office.
- Return all books, locks and other items belonging to the school.
- Must pay any outstanding fees or fines owed to the school.
- Upon completing all these steps, the student will be officially withdrawn from school.

## **ADDITIONAL SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

**All students must adhere to guidelines issued by the administration regarding safety protocols and practices to prevent the spread of disease and illness including but not limited to wearing protective coverings, required spacing in school facilities, property and busses.** Students who violate such protocols are subject to discipline, up to and including recommendations for expulsion.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Health Services Team at River Forest Community School Corporation is dedicated to the care and well-being of our students. Our mission is to support student health and enable students to feel safe and cared for while at school. We believe that this supports excellence in the classroom and contributes to healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

### KEEPING SCHOOL INFORMED

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep the school informed regarding any health concern that may need special consideration in the student's activities or education. In addition, student information must be accurately completed and kept updated with the school; medical needs/concerns, allergies, phone numbers, addresses, emails, etc.

A student in need of special accommodations (i.e., the use of crutches due to injury, permission to leave class early due to injury) must submit a Doctor's note, indicating the accommodation and the length of time the accommodation will be needed.

### PREGNANCY

Any student that is pregnant must obtain an attending Doctor's note that states confirmation of pregnancy and clearance to attend school. This note should also include any restrictions or special instructions and signed by the attending Doctor. It is important that the school is notified of any medical problems with the pregnancy.

### ACCIDENT/INJURY

All injuries must be reported to a teacher, other school employee or the office. If indicated, the student will be referred to the building nurse/nurse assistant for appropriate treatment. In a case where the nurse/nurse assistant is not available, the student should report to the main office. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parents.

If the injury is serious, the parent/guardian will be notified by school personnel. If parent/guardian is unavailable, those listed as emergency contacts will be notified. School personnel will render first aid only. If school personnel deem it necessary, Emergency Medical Services (911) will be called.

NOTE: The school corporation is not responsible for expenses incurred as a result of an illness, accident or injury.

### EXPOSURE TO BODY FLUIDS

In the instance of an accident or illness that possibly includes exposure to body fluids—for example, a cut, bloody nose, vomiting where there is blood or a body fluid spill present, you should immediately get help from an adult in that area. As a student assisting someone, please try to refrain from coming in contact with the "fluid". If you come in contact with the body fluid, report to the office immediately so they may assist you.

## HEALTH REFERRALS/RELEASES

Students injured or sick at home before arriving at school should be treated by their parent(s)/guardian. If a student becomes ill or injured, the student must request permission from the teacher to go to the nurse's office. The teacher will provide a pass to the student. The student is not to come between classes unless it's an urgent matter. In the case where the school nurse/nurse assistant is not available, the student is to report to the main office, where the designated personnel will assist the student.

## ILLNESS

Students will be sent home if needed when they become sick at school. If a child becomes ill with a fever of one hundred (100) degrees or greater, vomiting, or diarrhea, or has a possible contagious condition, the parent or emergency contact must pick the child up from school. (These guidelines are subject to change, as directed by the State Department of Health.)

If there is a necessity to go home due to illness or injury, the nurse/nurse assistant or office designee will inform the parent/guardian. When the parent/guardian is not available, those listed as emergency contacts will be notified. Upon picking up the student, the parent/guardian/or emergency contact person will then sign the "Sign-Out-Sheet" in the main office before leaving the building. Students should not call home to arrange for a ride home when ill without permission from the nurse/nurse assistant or office designee. The student who fails to follow procedure and leaves without properly checking out will be given an unexcused absence for missed classes and may be subject to disciplinary action. Students who remain in restrooms claiming illness may be considered truant. Should a student become ill in the restroom, he/she should have someone notify the office for help

Students with signs of illness will be allowed to return to school according to the most recent guidelines from the Indiana State Department of Health.

Five or more consecutive days of absences may require a Doctor's release form for return to school/school activities. When your child is hospitalized, a discharge form from the hospital or a Doctor's release must be submitted to the office. See attendance section for further information.

## TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL

Please follow the most recent screening form if your child has signs of illness. This will be posted on the RFCSC website under Health Services.

## ILLNESS PREVENTION

According to the CDC, "An infection occurs when germs enter the body, increase in number, and cause a reaction of the body." Here are some tips from the CDC on keeping you from getting sick or spreading germs.

- \*Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- \*Stay home when you are sick. See guidelines above.
- \*Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the wastebasket. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- \*Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- \*Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- \*Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods!

See the CDC or RFCSC website for more specific instructions in the event of illness outbreaks.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must provide documentation that complies with the rules set forth by the Indiana State Board of Health that all immunizations required by law are current, including, but not limited to diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, rubella, poliomyelitis, mumps, varicella, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and meningitis, or have an authorized exemption from State immunization requirements.

From time-to-time, other communicable diseases may be designated by the State Board of Health as diseases that require immunizations.

For the safety of all students, the school principal may remove a student from school or establish a deadline for meeting State requirements if a student does not have the necessary immunizations or authorized exemption. Authorized exemptions include religious and medical exemptions. A parent who objects on religious grounds must complete and sign the proper documentation available from the nurse/nurse assistant. If a physician certifies that a particular immunization(s) is or may be detrimental to a student's health, a medical exemption form must be completed and signed by the physician. Religious and medical exemption paperwork must be completed and signed every year. In the event of a communicable disease epidemic regarding required immunizations, the Superintendent may temporarily deny admission to a student otherwise exempted from the designated disease lacking the information. Any questions about immunization or exemptions should be directed to the school nurse/nurse assistant. Exemption forms must be completed every year. Please contact your healthcare provider for further information.

## MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth. The disease can progress rapidly and within hours of the first symptoms, may result in death or permanent disability including loss of hearing, brain damage and limb amputations. Symptoms of meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, stiff neck, making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that causes meningococcal diseases are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. Fortunately, there is an immunization available and the U.S. Center

for Disease Control and Prevention recommends routine meningococcal immunizations for all students in grades 6-12. Information concerning meningococcal disease (meningitis) and its vaccine, shall be provided to students and parents at the beginning of the school year. This information can be obtained from the school website or you may request a copy from your school nurse.

## HPV INFECTION

The parent of each student entering grade 6, shall be provided with information prescribed by the State Department of Health concerning the link between cancer and the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection and that an immunization against the HPV infection is available. This information can be obtained from the school website or you may request a copy from your school nurse.

Keep your healthcare provider informed of any issues with your child's health or immunizations.

## MEDICATIONS

### *PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS*

In the circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.

The Authorization to Administer Prescription medication form must be completed and signed by the physician AND parent and then filed with the respective Health Office before the medication can be administered. This must be filed annually.

All medications must be registered with the office of the nurse. Prescription medication must be in its original container, labeled with the student's name and the exact dosage.

At no time is the school to administer a dosage other than that authorized by the physician's prescription unless the prescribed dosage exceeds the permissible dosage for such medication, in which case the parent will be contacted to come to school to administer a dosage greater than the maximum permissible dosage.

Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, back pack, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications. In this case, the school needs to be notified that the emergency medication was sent.

Students who may require administration of an emergency medication may have such medication stored in the nurse's office. However, if authorization for self-medication has been provided by the parent and physician the student may retain possession of the self-administered medications. A student who needs to use his/her emergency medication should (for example an asthma inhaler, Epi-Pen, etc.) report the use of the supervising adult immediately.

The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time.

### *SELF ADMINISTERED MEDICATION*

A student may possess and self-administer medication for chronic disease or medical conditions provided the student's parent files a written authorization with the nurse. The written authorization must be filed annually. A physician's written statement must be included with the parent's authorization that includes the following: .

An acute or chronic disease or medical condition exists for which the medication is prescribed.

The student has been given instruction as to how to self-administer the medication.

The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the medication.

### *NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS*

Prior written consent of the parent must be on file before any non-prescription medication or treatment can be administered.

All medications must be registered with the office of the nurse. Medication must be in its original container.

At no time is the school to administer a dosage other than what is listed on the bottle.

### *SUNSCREEN*

A student may possess and use a topical, non-aerosol sunscreen product without being required to:  
have a physician's note or prescription  
store the topical, non-aerosol sunscreen in a specific location

The product must be one that is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use for the purpose of limiting ultraviolet light-induced skin damage.

Corporation personnel may, but are not required to, assist a student in applying the product if the school has written permission from the student's parent or guardian.

### *RETURNING MEDICATION TO THE HOME*

For grades K-8, medication may be released only to the student's parent or to an individual who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and who has been designated, in writing by the student's parent, to receive the medication. For grades 9-12, medications may be sent home with the student if the student's parent provides written permission for the student to receive the medication.

Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by School personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of the School year.

ANY STUDENT WHO DISTRIBUTES A MEDICATION OF ANY KIND TO ANOTHER STUDENT OR IS FOUND TO POSSESS A MEDICATION OTHER THAN THE ONE AUTHORIZED IS IN VIOLATION OF THE SCHOOL'S CODE OF CONDUCT AND MAY BE DISCIPLINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DRUG USE PROVISIONS OF THE CODE

#### PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

#### PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

Head lice is a universal problem, present in the community at all times, and is particularly prevalent among elementary school-age children. Head lice are a nuisance, but do not spread disease. Control of lice infestation is best handled by adequate treatment of the infested person and their immediate household and other close personal contacts. Contracting head lice is not an indicator of uncleanliness or socioeconomic status. Head lice are spread most commonly by direct head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact. However, much less frequently they are spread by sharing clothing or belongings onto which lice have crawled or nits attached to shed hairs may have fallen.

Communication from the school to parents directly and through parent and classroom education to the students help increase the awareness for both parents and child.

Parents need to check their child's head on a regular basis for signs of head lice and treat adequately and appropriately as necessary. Control depends on prompt case finding and effective treatment.

The school nurse or their designee shall be the only ones authorized to conduct examinations of students for head lice.

The school nurse or designee shall notify the parent and ask the parent to pick the student up at the end of the school day and administer an FDA-approved lice treatment (e.g., pediculicide/ovicide, treatment by a qualified healthcare provider, or treatment at a clinic specializing in lice and nit removal. The student shall remain in the classroom for the remainder of the school day.

After treatment and upon returning to school, the student will be examined by the school nurse or designee, which may include the principal. The Corporation practices a policy of "no live lice" as the criterion for return to school.

#### CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or high-transient pest. The corporation will follow all State statutes and Health Department regulations and guidelines regarding length of any exclusion, immunizations and other means of controlling the spread of communicable disease. A communicable disease board policy is in effect and is obtainable on request from the central or school offices.

#### SCENTS

To protect those who are highly sensitive to smells, we discourage use of strong perfumes/ colognes/ body sprays and discourage you from applying it at school.

# **RIVER FOREST MS ATHLETIC HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**



**INGOT PRIDE**

***HANDBOOK REVISED JUNE 2022***

# RF ATHLETICS INTRODUCTION

## INGOT PRIDE –

River Forest Middle School is located in Hobart, Indiana and offers the following sports –

- Fall – coed cross country, softball, baseball, cheerleading, football, & volleyball
- Winter – boys basketball, girls basketball, & wrestling
- Spring – coed track, spring football, girls soccer, and boys soccer

River Forest is known for the student-athletes always showing “INGOT PRIDE” in all sports. As a school community, we define our “INGOT PRIDE” as –

- P – Personal
- R – Responsibility
- I – In
- D – Determining
- E – Excellence

Our student-athletes will continue to show our “INGOT PRIDE” and take personal responsibility in determining excellence. Our student-athletes will grow as individuals to enhance the betterment of the teams.

## What is an INGOT? –

According to Webster, an ingot is a mass of refined metal cast into some convenient shape for transportation. It is quite fitting that this symbol be used to display the philosophy that underlies the educational process at River Forest. An analysis of the meaning might show us why.

The first significant word in the definition is MASS. The word means principle part, or main part. When this part of the symbol (the INGOT) is used, it naturally refers to the young people at River Forest. It refers to you and your fellow students. You are the mass that the school has to shape.

The next significant word is REFINED. To be refined, one must be cultivated in taste, manners, appreciation, and thought. If you can live up to the challenge that being an Ingot gives you, you will graduate from your school as a polished individual. You will leave River Forest as a cultured person. You will have reached the stage of perfection that makes you a true Ingot. You will be refined.

METAL is also a very significant word in the definition. The very geographical location of River Forest tells you that an ingot is one form of steel. There are also gold ingots, silver ingots, and platinum ingots. Steel depicts strength, zeal, and courage. Properly refined or tempered steel, gold, silver, and platinum signify the spirit of River Forest. If you will strive to obtain the proper temperament while at River Forest, it will mean that you always put forth your best effort, you will always do the very best that you know how to do. A true Ingot will have the honor and dignity that comes from the courage and zeal to take on a job, do your very best, and stick to it until the job has been completed.

To CAST is to mold, or to form by molding, and is the next important step in the definition. River Forest does not want one mold, and therefore end up with one type of Ingot. You have a unique mold, and River Forest is an institution that will try to see that you fill that mold the way it was intended. Your mold has potentials and differences that distinguish it from all other molds.

The last word of the definition is TRANSPORTATION. Even though it is the last word in the definition, it is the beginnings of an Ingot. If you find that you can pass the test, the test that makes you a true Ingot, then River Forest will issue you a ticket. The ticket will be a diploma that sends you out into the real world.

Good luck to all the future Ingots of River Forest. May you be proud and uphold the moral standing of your school as those who passed through before you.

SCHOOL COLORS – Gold and Cardinal

JOE MAGARAC –

Some say he was born in the veins of an iron mine; some say he stepped full grown from a gondola car loaded with iron ore. Anyway, heat never hurt Joe Magarac, the strong man of Steel Valley. Night and day, he'd sit at the door of No. 7 furnace on the open hearth, stirring and tasting the melting steel. When it tasted right, he'd scoop it out by the handful and spill it into the ingot molds. The he'd squeeze the ingots until the prettiest rails you ever saw came rolling out between his fingers.

RIVER FOREST SCHOOL SONG –

*River Forest, mighty Ingots, we are backing you,  
To the colors gold and cardinal, we are ever true,  
Dauntless, we will never falter. We are proud and true.  
Go, Ingots, fight, and we will win this game.*

## **RF ATHLETICS STATEMENT**

River Forest Athletics has developed this athletic handbook to inform student-athletes and their parents/guardians of the rules, regulations, and information that helped develop the rich tradition of competition at River Forest. Participation in athletics is a privilege which carries with it varying degrees of honor, integrity, responsibility, and sacrifice. Since the participation in athletics is a privilege, and not a right, those who choose to participate in athletics will be expected to follow everything outlined in this handbook and the rules of the coaches of their sports. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to conduct themselves in a manner that will not dishonor themselves, their family, their team, their school, and their community.

## **RF ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**

The goal of RF Athletics is to provide the best athletic opportunities for our student-athletes to excel in sportsmanship, teamwork, self-discipline, honor, integrity, and moral character. The purpose of RF Athletics is to provide our student-athletes with experiences that will be positive in nature, create memories to last a lifetime, and to help him or her develop a commitment to a purpose, cause, and loyalty to any chosen endeavor. It is the goal of athletics to prepare our student-athletes for the challenges that they will likely see in the real world and give them the tools to be successful persons in their communities and chosen fields. Of course everyone wants to win, but much can be learned through losses as well. Sometimes defeats teach us more than wins. Therefore, win or lose, we will support our student-athletes, coaches, and teams fully knowing that they are learning lessons that go way beyond the fields, courts, courses, mats, and tracks.

## RF STUDENT-ATHLETE DEFINED

A River Forest student-athlete is defined as and includes all young men and women who represent a River Forest team that engages in interscholastic competition and further includes cheerleading squads. Student managers, statisticians, and anyone else involved with a team will be held to the same standards defined in this handbook.

## ELIGIBILITY & PARTICIPATION RULES

- **Enrollment** – Any student-athlete must be enrolled as a student at River Forest schools to participate in interscholastic athletics for River Forest. Virtual students need to be cleared by the administration.
- **Academic Eligibility** – Any student-athlete will be academically eligible and continue to be a member of the team by earning a passing grade (60% or above) for the grading period/semester in at least 5 courses as well as maintaining passing grades during the season. Bi-weekly checks will be conducted by the AD. Coaches will be notified if any student-athlete becomes ineligible based on grades. If the grades go up on the next bi-weekly check they can return to the team. Coaches are required to do a one hour study table each week.
- **Amateurism** – Any student-athlete shall not accept money or merchandise from anyone in any way for athletic participation, clinics, or camps without the written permission of the AD. Amateurism status will be voided with the signing of a professional contract as well.
- **Physical Examination Forms and Concussion Forms** – An official physical examination form can be found at the website [www.ihsaa.org](http://www.ihsaa.org) or on the school website [www.rfcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.rfcsc.k12.in.us). Once on the school site, you can link to the RF Athletics webpage and click on “FORMS”. From there, the physical exam form, concussion forms, and sudden cardiac arrest forms can be printed for use. Any student-athlete wishing to participate in athletics is required by River Forest must have a physical examination by a licensed physician before participating, as well as a signed form stating that the concussion and sudden cardiac arrest information has been read. These forms must be complete and on file with the school before beginning participation in any sport. This must be completed each year.
- **Concussion Information & Forms** – With the increase in head injuries and concussions in sports today, concussion information sheets can be found on the school website as stated above. An acknowledgement form must be signed by the student-athlete and parent/guardian and returned to the school to be on file for the school year. This must be completed each year.
- **Before your first practice, you must ...**
  - Meet the age, enrollment, and academic eligibility requirements
  - Have a completed physical examination form on file at the school
  - Have a signed concussion form.

## RF SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

Sportsmanship is the cornerstone of participation in interscholastic athletics in the Jr. GSSC. Therefore, it is also a major focal point for River Forest athletics. Sportsmanship is one of the keys to having a successful athletic program. Sportsmanship, for all teams at River Forest, will be at the forefront. Our student-athletes will conduct

themselves in a manner that promotes good sportsmanship. Our teams will show behaviors so that they can be role models for anyone who sees our teams play. In order to promote good sportsmanship, our teams will do the following:

- Show behaviors that everyone can be proud of
- Show positive emotions on the fields, floors, mats, etc.
- Show other schools/teams how to be good sports
- Be positive role models in the area of sportsmanship

Any student-athlete who receives a technical foul, an unsportsmanlike penalty, or an ejection will receive disciplinary actions. Our goal is to not have any student-athletes receive these penalties, but we must look for ways to improve our sportsmanship each year. If a student receives an ejection they will have to sit out one game, a second ejection will be 2 games, and the third one will be removal from the team.

## STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

- **Introduction** – The following RF Athletics rules follow this Constitution, which states: *“Contestants’ conduct, in and out of School, shall be such as (1) not to reflect discredit upon their School or the Association, or (2) not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral or educational environment in the School. NOTE: It is recognized that principals, by the administrative authority vested in them by their school corporation, may exclude such contestants from representing their School.”*
- **Rules & Enforcement** – The principal and athletic director shall enforce all the rules and regulations as described in the athletic handbook. Parents/guardians and student-athletes will be expected to sign an acknowledgement document stating that they have read the code of conduct. They will also agree that if their student-athlete violates the code of conduct, their student-athlete will be subject to disciplinary measures.
- **Code of Conduct Duration** – The student-athlete code of conduct is enforced twelve (12) months of the year and not just during the season. It is enforced in grades six through eight (6-8). Any alleged violation will be followed by an investigation by the coach, athletic director, or principal.
- **Standards & Expectations** –
  - All athletes will put sportsmanship and the good of the team first and foremost.
  - All athletes will devote themselves to being a true sportsman.
  - No athletes will ever employ illegal tactics to gain an unfair advantage.
  - All athletes will care for equipment and uniforms as if it were their own personal property. If equipment or uniforms are lost, stolen, or destroyed, it will be the responsibility of the athlete to replace or pay for the item(s).
  - All athletes will obey the specific training and practice policies for their specific team.
  - All athletes will refrain from negative behaviors – drinking alcohol, taking illegal drugs and substances, using tobacco products, using profanities, and discrediting the team, school, or community.
  - All athletes will strive to be a positive influence, set good examples, and do what is right and good.

## APPEALS/HEARING

A student-athlete and his or her parent/guardian have the right to a hearing on an exclusion from participation on an athletic team. The principal must be notified in writing within five (5) school days after the exclusion decision. The right to appeal is forfeited if the request is not made in writing and is not made within the five day limit. The purpose of the hearing is to allow the student-athlete and parent/guardian an opportunity to present evidence on the student-athlete’s behalf. The entire hearing will be recorded with copies available upon request. The decision of the

hearing will be made by the principal and athletic director within five (5) days after the completion of the hearing and given to the superintendent. The decision will either be upheld or reversed, depending on the outcome of the hearing.

## RF SCHOOL RULES FOR THE CODE OF CONDUCT

River Forest student-athletes in grades 6-8 will abide by the Code of Conduct not only during the school year, but also during breaks and summer. Thus the Code of Conduct is a 12 month policy. The disciplinary measures listed under the Code of Conduct serves as a guideline for the administration when issuing consequences for violations. The administration reserves the right to enforce a more or less severe consequence. The disciplinary measures are not to be considered all-inclusive and may be adjusted as needed.

### RULE 1

Student-athletes and all team members shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or drug intoxicant of any kind. Student-athletes shall not partake in any degree or be in possession of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products. This includes any forms of vapor or electronic cigarettes. Student-athletes shall not be convicted of a felony or misdemeanor. Student-athletes shall not attend any social events (parties, dances, etc.) where illegal use of drugs or underage drinking of alcohol is allowed by the host. Failure to leave implies guilt and violators will be subject to athletic suspension.

- **First offense** – suspension from participation for all team activities and contests for 10% to 33% of the contests in the season.
- **Second offense** – suspension from participation for all team activities and contests for 34% to 100% of the contest in the season, enrollment in a treatment program, and a clean drug test before the suspension is completed.
- **Third offense** – suspension from participation for all team activities and contests for up to 1 calendar year
- **Fourth offense** - suspension from participation for the remainder of the student-athlete's eligibility years.

### RULE 2

Student-athletes shall not violate existing school rules. Examples of these include truancy, suspension, classroom discipline, or any other punishable acts. Violations will be disciplined by the already-established school rules. This is outlined in the school handbook. The student-athlete may receive further disciplinary actions as to be determined by each individual coach as indicated in their team rules. If a student-athlete is suspended out-of-school for any reason, they will be ineligible for all team activities and contests during the suspension. Any student-athlete receiving in-school suspension will have participation in practices and contests be determined by each individual coach.

### RULE 3

Student-athletes will abide by all sport-specific rules as determined by each individual coach. These rules and the penalties for breaking the rules will be given to the student-athletes by each individual coach, either by a handout or verbally addressed, before the first contest. The team rules for each team will be on file with the Athletic Director.

## SELF-REPORT CLAUSE

It is the intent of River Forest to assist student-athletes with developing responsibility for their actions and to encourage honesty. Therefore, any student-athlete who voluntarily reports themselves as to a violation of the Code of Conduct before being reported by some other means will be permitted some leniency. The student-athlete will pay a lesser penalty for the infraction stated. The self-report clause can only be used for the first offense.

## CODE OF CONDUCT NOTES

- The athletic season is defined as starting with the first official date of practice and ending with the awards night for that sports season. Penalties and violations take effect immediately upon verification of the infraction.
- Any violation in which the removal for the team occurs, that student-athlete forfeits all awards and possible letters for that sport.
- If a suspension occurs at the end of a sports season and the student-athlete cannot complete their suspension, they will finish the remainder of the suspension in the next sport. For example, if a football player is serving a two (2) game suspension and only serves one (1) game, he will serve the other game suspension in the next sport.
- During a suspension, the student-athlete is expected to be present at all team practices and contests, even though they may not be participating. They are still a member of the team and are expected to fulfill this responsibility. If the student-athlete does not attend, they may be removed from the team.

## RF ATHLETICS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As an educational institution, River Forest supports and encourages the rights of individuals to free speech. However, our student-athletes should be concerned with any behavior that might embarrass themselves, their families, their teams, their school, or their community. This includes any activities conducted online through social media networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, You Tube, Snap Chat, Tik Tok, podcasting, blog sites, chat rooms, texting, etc.).

Participation in athletics at River Forest is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, as a student-athlete at River Forest, you are a representative of the school and community, and therefore are always in the public eye. This fact places certain additional demands upon how you must conduct yourselves. Keep the following guidelines in mind when you are using any and all social media outlets:

- Before using online community or social media outlet, understand that anything you post is available to anyone, everywhere. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is posted.
- You should not post your address, phone numbers, birth date, or any other personal information.
- Exercise caution when posting personal information, whereabouts, and plans. This will help keep stalkers and predators from gaining access to you and your information.
- Be aware of who you add as a friend to your page or site. Many people are looking to take advantage of student-athletes.
- You are not to post information, photos, or other items that could embarrass you, your family, your team, RF Athletics, or River Forest. This includes items that may be posted on your page by others.
- Coaches, the athletic director, and other administrators at River Forest can and will monitor these sites. Disparaging remarks about teammates, coaches, and other school officials can serve as grounds for disciplinary actions such as suspensions from school or contests, dismissal from the team, as well as possible legal ramifications.
- Student-athletes will face disciplinary measures for any violations of team policies, athletic department policies, and/or state and federal laws with regards to social media. Any violation of any of these policies or laws found on a student-athlete's website will subject him/her to disciplinary measures. A full investigation will occur before any disciplinary measures are taken.

Also, please be cognizant in the fact that many employees and colleges also monitor these sites. You should be aware that any information posted on these websites may prevent you from obtaining a job or prevent you from attending a college of your choice.

## **RF STUDENT-ATHLETE CONTRACT**

There are times when a student-athlete needs to have a contract drawn up for team or school infractions. If this needs to occur, the contract will be made including any and all specific rules to follow by the school, athletic department, or coach. Contracts will be signed by the student-athlete, parent/guardians, head coach, athletic director, and school principal. This contract will be kept on file with the athletic director for the duration of the student-athletes middle school years.

## **RF ATHLETIC AWARDS**

At the Awards Night, certificates will be awarded to all student-athletes for participation in a sport {Grades 6 - 8}. Also, Special Awards will be issued for the Team MVP, Cynthia Sawyer Mental Attitude Award, and the Most Improved Student-Athlete.

## **OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **INJURIES & ACCIDENTS**

All injuries and accidents, either occurring at home or away, are to be reported to the head coach immediately.

### **CONCUSSION PROTOCOL**

The following will be the protocol for a student-athlete removed from competition for a suspected concussion:

- Student-athlete displays signs and symptoms of a concussion
- Student-athlete is removed from play or competition
- Student-athlete must sit out at least 24 hours
- Student-athlete must be evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions
- Student-athlete must follow a return to play protocol listed below

### **RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL (after a concussion)**

- DAY 1 (RECOVERY) – No activity for the first 24 hours after a suspected concussion
- DAY 2 (INCREASE HEART RATE) – Light aerobic exercise (walking, swimming, stationary bike)
- DAY 3 (ADD MOVEMENT) – Sport-specific exercises without head impact activities
- DAY 4 (NON-CONTACT TRAINING DRILLS) – Progression to more complex training drills
- DAY 5 (FULL CONTACT PRACTICE) – Following medical clearance, participate in normal training activities
- DAY 6 (RETURN TO PLAY) – Normal game play

### **ATTENDANCE**

Daily attendance to school, practices, and games are expected. All student-athletes must be present (at least) by the end of first period to be eligible to participate in that day's contests. If the contest falls on a Saturday, the attendance for Friday will be used. Approved school activities and field trips are considered attending school. Any exceptions must be approved by the principal and/or athletic director.

## CHANGING A SPORT

If a student-athlete is cut from a team, he/she may join or tryout for another team during that sport season. If a student-athlete quits a team, he/she may not join or tryout for another team and cannot participate in any pre-season workouts until the sport that they quit is complete. Mutual agreement from both coaches must be made if a student-athlete is going to change sports after a season begins.

## DRESS & APPEARANCE

Remember that you are representing River Forest at home and especially at away contest or events. Coaches will have the team dress according to his/her team rules. Be sure that your dress and appearance are in accordance with the decisions of the coach.

## EQUIPMENT

All student-athletes will care for equipment and uniforms as if it were their own personal property. If equipment or uniforms are lost, stolen, or destroyed, it will be the responsibility of the athlete to replace or pay for the item(s). Remember that stealing or wearing stolen property is a violation of the Code of Conduct and punishable.

## PARTICIPATION IN 2 SPORTS DURING A SEASON

Student-athletes are permitted to participate in more than one sport in a season. Coaches involved with these student-athletes should meet to discuss the possibilities or conflicts. If practice schedules and contests can be worked out between the coaches involved, then the student-athlete can participate in two sports. If there will be too many conflicts, then the student-athlete may need to choose one of the sports. The student-athlete must also realize that extra practice time may be necessary. The importance of the competitions or contests may affect the decisions.

## PRACTICES

All team members are expected to attend all practices. Practice schedules during school breaks are set by the coaches and only the coach can excuse a team member from a practice. Practices during school closings (snow days) are often held and will be determined by the athletic director and administration.

## TEAM CUTTING POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Each coach of the MS sports at River Forest has his/her own policy on how his/her team is chosen. In some sports, cutting down to a manageable size is necessary. A student-athlete can be cut from a team at any time during a season.

## **CIVILITY POLICY FOR UNBECOMING CONDUCT**

The River Forest Athletics Department civility policy for unbecoming conduct will include harassment, bullying, and use of profane language. This policy requires the mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among RF students, parents, employees, and the public. Civility does not deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but serves only to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for students and staff.

In the interest of presenting adults as positive role models to the students of this school corporation, as well as the community, River Forest encourages positive communication and will not tolerate volatile or hostile actions and/or abusive language by any student, parent, guardian, employee, or patron (here after known as "person").

Any person who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school and/or office operations (either in person or by electronic means); threatens the health and safety of anyone through harassment or bullying (either in person or by electronic means); willfully causes property damage; uses offensive language; or who otherwise establishes a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be dealt with either according to the student

disciplinary procedures of the school, or if an adult, will be asked to cease such behavior or be directed to leave school property.

If any person uses obscenities or speaks in an abusive manner (in person or electronically), the administrator or employee to whom remarks were directed will politely request that person to communicate in a courteous manner.

If corrective measures are not taken by the person, then the employee will verbally notify that person that the meeting, conference, or conversation (either in person or over the telephone) will be terminated. The person will be referred to the building principal or designee. For students, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken according to the school handbook. For employees, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with negotiated agreements. For adults, the Superintendent or designee will inform the person that they will not be allowed on school property for an amount of time as to be determined by the violation of this policy.

Verbal harassment or disrespect targeting a student or employee (in person or electronically) on the basis of race, religion, or handicap will not be tolerated. Bullying of students, either verbal or physical, will not be tolerated.

Students, parents, guardians, and employees should be aware that this policy includes all forms of communication, including social media outlets.

# STUDENT-ATHLETE & PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Copies of this form are available in the Athletic Director's office. By signing this form, I hereby confirm that I have read the RF Athletic handbook. I also agree to the terms included in the handbook. I understand that failure to sign this form may delay the ability for my son/daughter to participate in their chosen sport(s). Student-athletes and their parent or guardian must have this form on file with the athletic director before the first contest.

**24-Hour Rule** – This is a rule that every parent/guardian will honor by signing this form. By signing this form, every parent/guardian agrees not to approach a coach to speak with them with concerns on the day of a contest, which includes before, during, or after a contest. The parent/guardian will call the school the next day to make an appointment with the coach.

Student-athlete (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Student-athlete (SIGNATURE) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian (SIGNATURE) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_