

St. Rita School for the Deaf
PARENT / STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2026 - 2027



DREAM. ACHIEVE. SOAR.

1720 Glendale-Milford Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215
(513) 771-7600
www.srsdeaf.org

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Welcome

Dear St. Rita School for the Deaf Families,

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we extend a warm welcome to you and your child to the St. Rita School for the Deaf community. Whether you are returning or joining us for the first time, we are delighted to have you as part of our family.

At St. Rita School for the Deaf, we are committed to providing an inclusive and nurturing environment where each student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our dedicated team of educators and staff work tirelessly to ensure that every student receives a quality education tailored to their individual needs and abilities.

As we embark on this journey together, we are pleased to present you with our Student Handbook. This handbook serves as a valuable resource outlining important policies, procedures, and expectations that govern student life at our school. It is designed to provide you with comprehensive information about our academic programs, extracurricular activities, behavioral guidelines, and support services available to students and families.

By familiarizing yourself with the contents of the handbook, you will gain insight into our school's mission, values, and commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and dynamic learning environment. It also serves as a reference guide to help you navigate various aspects of school life and ensure a smooth and successful experience for your child.

We encourage you to review the handbook together with your child and discuss any questions or concerns you may have. We believe that open communication and collaboration between home and school are essential to your child's academic success and overall well-being.

Once again, welcome to St. Rita School for the Deaf. We are honored to have you as part of our community and look forward to working together to support your child's growth and development.

Sincerely,

Angela Frith
President
St. Rita School for the Deaf

Natalie Marsh
Principal
St. Rita School for the Deaf

Our History

St. Rita School for the Deaf has a rich history dating back to 1914 when Fr. Henry Waldhaus answered Archbishop Moeller's call to provide education for the Deaf in Cincinnati. Initially started with eleven students and staffed by dedicated Sisters of

Charity, St. Rita quickly became Ohio's first accredited high school for the Deaf. Father Waldhaus' leadership saw significant growth, including the expansion of facilities and vocational training, laying a strong foundation for the school's mission.

Following Father Waldhaus' legacy, Father Paul Klenke served the school for twenty-seven years, fostering strong community relationships and modernizing facilities. Father John Bok continued this legacy, focusing on financial stability and outreach, while Greg Ernst expanded programs like the Language Opportunity for Tots (L.O.F.T.) Program, enriching the school's offerings. Each leader brought unique contributions, shaping St. Rita into the institution it is today.

Under the leadership of Angela Frith, appointed in 2018, St. Rita School for the Deaf continues its mission of providing quality education tailored to the diverse needs of its students. With a commitment to adaptability and inclusivity, the school embraces students with a range of communication needs, ensuring they receive the support necessary for success. As St. Rita looks toward the future, its dedication to serving students with language and communication needs remains unwavering.

Our Mission

St. Rita School for the Deaf is a Catholic school, educating students of all faiths in a Christ-centered, barrier-free communication environment through individualized instruction, personal attention, and direct communication.

Our Vision

St. Rita School for the Deaf will maximize our students' full potential by developing the whole child to be confident, contributing members of society so that they may carry the message of Christ's love to all they encounter.

Philosophy

The affirmation of the spiritual nature of a person is the foundation of Catholic education. Each person is unique and precious in the eyes of God. Each must mold his or her own unique destiny in this life and the next.

Education is the right of every individual. Catholic education should offer each individual all the advantages it can for the person to become all he or she can be.

The aim of the school is to mold good, Christian, self-supporting men and women who will be a credit to themselves, their families, and their communities. The education at St. Rita takes place in a comprehensive communication environment in which it is the right of each student to use all forms of communication: gestures, speech, American Sign Language, signed English, fingerspelling, speech reading, augmentative communication and writing. Each child is also provided every opportunity to learn how to use any residual hearing he or she may have by employing the best possible electronic equipment for amplifying sound.

As a special education facility, serving students whose primary handicapping condition is a hearing impairment or communication disability such as apraxia, St. Rita School is uncompromising in its academic standards and believes in the innate ability for each student to learn. The academic program is planned, designed, and equipped to offer an educational foundation in all areas of essential academic requirements. This enables the students to compete successfully with their hearing peers in postsecondary pursuits.

The after school program assists students in growing and developing physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

Our Beliefs

Collaborating and working together with agencies, people in the community, and parents of our students, we, as a school endeavor to prepare students to be productive members of society and self-supporting in today's world by teaching communication for life.

- We believe in addressing the needs of the whole child through academic and socialization programs.
- We believe each child is unique in the eyes of God.
- We believe the best way to educate children who are deaf or have a communication disorder is offering a child every available stimulus for human interaction, including ASL (American Sign Language), assistive listening devices, visual aids, and technology.
- We believe all students are capable of learning despite their special needs, and it is the responsibility of the teachers along with the parents to figure out how to meet the needs of each student.
- We believe every child deserves a well-balanced education that challenges and promotes the child's individuality and needs.
- We believe that a positive, small classroom environment that promotes communication helps to facilitate the child's self-expression and personal growth.

Our Core Values

Communication: Ensuring we allow all to communicate effectively in a respectful manner.

Catholic: Recognizing that each person is unique, created for a specific purpose and valuable in the eyes of God.

Family: Nurturing healthy relationships with those we love and those we have yet to know.

Education: Empowering each person to achieve his or her full potential through an individualized approach to learning.

Innovation: Willingness to explore and support new ideas and methods in learning.

About Our Program

St. Rita School for the Deaf is a day school established to provide an educational program with special methods, aids, and services for children from preschool through high school who are deaf or who have a communication disability. It is the primary aim of this school to provide a Judeo-Christian atmosphere in which young men and women are able to develop to their full potential. Programs are designed to challenge each child's academic ability to become self-supporting in today's world.

St. Rita School is a nonpublic school under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio and thus emphasizes the Judeo-Christian formation of its children. In keeping with this Judeo-Christian formation, the children are encouraged to assume a sense of responsibility for their personal actions and to make decisions in keeping with good moral principles.

Our children receive a well-balanced education combining a variety of scholastic programs to equip students with skills necessary to become productive persons. Social activities to develop the child's cooperation and social attitude are offered and encouraged.

The curriculum is similar to that of hearing schools, offering students core subject areas and electives. Communication skills are always stressed at St. Rita with: a combination of ASL, fingerspelling, sign language, voice, lip reading, and amplification, used by the students and teachers in and out of the classroom. Specific aids used in communication between students and teachers include: an FM device, hearing aids, cochlear implants, communication boards, networked computers, captioned films/DVDs, interactive whiteboards, video phones, and a variety of other visual aids.

St. Rita School is chartered by the Ohio Department of Education and accredited by the Ohio Catholic Schools Accreditation Association. It is also a member of the National Catholic Education Association.

Administration Contact Information

President: Angela Frith

Telephone: (513) 771-7600 ext. 7279

Email: afrith@srsdeaf.org

Principal: Natalie Marsh

Telephone: (513) 771-7600 ext. 7256

Video Phone: (513) 230-2795

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Director of Curriculum and Instruction:
Megan Havens

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Dean of Discipline: Jimmy Flanders

Office/VP: (513) 283-0138

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School Counselor: Bethany Hodges

Office/VP: (513) 283-0107
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Director of Finance & Operations:
Ken Raupach

Office: (513) 771-7600 ext. 7237
Email: kraupach@srsdeaf.org

School and Community Specialist:
Amanda Rogers

Office: (513) 771-7600 ext. 7277
Email: arogers@srsdeaf.org

Admission & Registration Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, or sex in the admission of students to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, or in its administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

In accordance with section 3321.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, no child may be admitted to kindergarten or the first grade unless he/she is five or six years of age (respectively) on or before September 30 of the year of admittance. Children who become five or six before October 1 are "of age" for kindergarten and first grade, respectively. Children who become candidates for kindergarten and first grade, and may be admitted on a trial basis at the discretion of administration. No children who turn six after January 1 will be admitted to first grade during the school year already in progress. No child shall be admitted to the first grade if he/she has not successfully completed kindergarten.

Students are referred to St. Rita School for the Deaf through their local public school district, early intervention service coordinator, physician, or their parent/guardian. Once the referral is made, the staff will contact the parent/guardian to set up a tour of St. Rita School for the Deaf and review the student's educational and medical records. Parents/Guardians are asked to complete an application for admission through our Final Forms system, and to provide a copy of the student's birth certificate, current multi-factored evaluation (called an Evaluation Team Report or ETR in Ohio), current Individualized Education Plan (IEP), recent IEP progress reports, and medical reports indicating all diagnoses (medical, hearing, and psychological). Outpatient therapy evaluations and progress notes are also requested when applicable.

After the initial tour, the parent/guardian will be asked to schedule a second visit with the student for a pre-admission evaluation to provide an analysis of baseline skills, as well as to identify priorities for special education & related services. This evaluation is usually completed either at 10:00 AM or 3:00 PM Monday-Friday for preschool students, by appointment. Students in grades K-12 are evaluated at various times by appointment during regular school hours (7:45 AM-2:45 PM), Monday-Friday.

INQUIRIES FOR ADMISSION SHOULD BE SENT TO:

St. Rita School for the Deaf
1720 Glendale-Milford Rd.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215-1258

TELEPHONE INQUIRIES OR APPOINTMENTS TO VISIT THE SCHOOL CAN BE MADE BY CALLING:

(513) 771-7600 V
(513) 283-0110 VP

Application Requirements

All applications and evaluations are reviewed by the Admissions Team at St. Rita School for the Deaf. The Admissions Team consists of the evaluating teacher(s), therapist(s), principal and other school administrators. The Admissions Team reviews the results of the student's pre-admission evaluation, current IEP and IEP progress reports, psychological and medical reports, and school-based evaluations (current multi-factored evaluation or ETR). Any additional reports from outpatient therapy providers are also reviewed.

Minimum criteria for admission include:

1.
 - a. A confirmed diagnosis of a sensorineural hearing loss or a permanent conductive hearing loss
OR
 - b. A diagnosis of Apraxia of Speech with educationally relevant communication difficulties
OR
 - c. A confirmed disability that affects communication and language development
AND
2. An established need for sign language to aid in receptive and/or expressive communication
3. A minimum level of independence within the classroom setting such that the student is able to learn and attend within a small group setting in which the student/adult ratio is 4:1 or higher
4. The ability to sustain visual attention with a signing adult during group classroom instruction
5. An intent to and interest in communicating with others in an educational setting

A decision on admission will be made, and parents/guardians notified, within three weeks of completion of the assessment process. If all spaces within the accepted applicant's grade level are filled, the student will be placed on a waiting list for the following school year. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the admission decision, and if/when a space in their child's grade becomes available.

Refusing to provide requested information to the school, or providing false, incomplete, or inaccurate information to the school, may result in the denial or revocation of admission and/or disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Registration

- Application for Enrollment and Registration – Along with an acceptance letter, parents/guardians will receive a document detailing how to sign their student up in our Final Forms system. It is through this system, forms for enrollment and registration will get filled out and submitted. Please upload your child's birth certificate into the Final Forms system.
- Tuition Assistance Forms – Those families seeking financial assistance must complete the FACTS form annually either online or via paper application.
- Tuition Agreement – This form must be completed and returned before the child is enrolled in the school.
- Free and Reduced Lunch: Students in K-12 are eligible for free and reduced lunch through the State of Ohio. Forms are located in Final Forms. Parents are encouraged to fill out the forms to confirm eligibility. Any questions should be directed to Neka Freeze, nfreeze@srsdeaf.org

Critical Student Records Information

Student records are private and accessible only to school administrators (including the principal), the teachers who are working with the student, school districts contracted with St. Rita, and students parents/guardians who make official requests. Parents/guardians are asked to make a request for records in writing 24 hours in advance. An appointment shall be made to view the records the school retains for the students.

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that no information is to be given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Final Forms

St. Rita School for the Deaf utilizes Final Forms for our student records. It is imperative that you fill out your child's information in Final Forms (via internet site) prior to the first day of school. If you have not filled out your required forms through Final Forms, your child will not be allowed to attend school until it is completed and their absence will be marked as unexcused. If you need assistance, please contact the school and we will assist you. Final Forms can be accessed at <https://strita-oh.finalforms.com/> or through our website, www.srsdeaf.org.

Change of Address or Phone

In order for school records to be kept current, and in the event it is necessary to contact parents for emergency purposes, the school office must be notified of any change in student address and phone number as soon as they occur. In addition, changes must be made in Final Forms to update the information. It is especially important that parents' work phone numbers and emergency phone numbers be kept up to date and current, as well.

Emergency Medical Authorization

Ohio State Law requires an Emergency Medical Authorization Form for each student. This enables parents to authorize emergency treatment for a student should they become ill or injured while under the school authority. This is very important when parents cannot be reached. It also alerts school personnel to medical problems that may require special treatment or consideration. Students will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities, field trips, and other such activities, unless this form is on file in Final Forms.

Reports to Parents

Students will receive a report card and IEP progress report at the end of each quarter. Parents may log into Progress Book to view weekly grades of your students. If you need assistance with logging into Progress Book, please contact Natalie Marsh at nmarsh@srsdeaf.org.

Confidentiality

Each student has a file in the school office containing emergency information forms, medical records, student grades, attendance records, special education paperwork, birth certificate and registration paperwork completed annually by families. All student records are confidential and accessible only to St. Rita administration and office staff, the school nurse, teachers and therapists who are working with the student, representatives from the child's public school district of residence for reporting purposes, and the student's parents/guardians who make official requests.

Requests for records to be released to a new school or an outside provider need to be in writing and signed by the parent. Official forms can be obtained from the school.

Child Custody

Parents are to inform the school anytime the custody of a child changes. School officials will need to see and copy court orders pertaining to a child's custody. Restraining orders must be on file in our office to activate non-release of students. Should the restraining order not be in effect, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the school.

A divorce or change in custody does not change the right of a natural parent to have access to their child's records. A non-custodial parent may request and receive a copy of the child's records.

Cooperation as Condition of Enrollment

If a student, or his/her parent/guardian, behaves in ways that hinders the school from pursuing its mission, objectives, or disciplinary norms, the administration may determine that St. Rita School for the Deaf is not the appropriate educational environment for that child and the child may be disenrolled. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lack of respect for the school's mission, programs, and activities.
- Lack of respect for school employees; hindering them from discharging their duties.
- Lack of respect for school property.

Parent and Staff Communication Policy

Communication between the school and parent is an essential component of working together. Parents and staff are required to communicate with one another in a respectful manner in order to provide support for student learning. Parents' failure to communicate with staff in a respectful manner indicates a break in trust and could result in your child being withdrawn from the program.

If a parent has a question related to instruction or the classroom in any way, the classroom teacher should be the first person to whom the parent contacts for more information and/or resolution. If the parent does not feel their concern has been resolved by the teacher, they may ask for a meeting with the school principal and the teacher. If the parent feels the meeting with the principal and teacher did not resolve the situation, the parent may contact the school President for further support.

At St. Rita School for the Deaf, we primarily communicate important updates, announcements, and school information with parents through email. To ensure you receive essential messages, we require a **parent email address** to be on file. In addition to email, we also use a text messaging system to send urgent notifications and reminders. To stay informed, parents should provide a **cell phone number** for text messages, along with a home phone number if available. Keeping your contact information current helps us maintain clear and timely communication with all families. Please notify the school immediately of any changes to your contact details.

The School Day, Attendance, & Withdrawal

Schedule

Our school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. The calendar for each school year is posted on our school website and can be accessed at any time.

All students have a thirty-minute lunch period, and students in K-6 have a scheduled daily recess. All students are expected to go outside for recess, weather permitting. Children should be dressed properly for outdoor recess.

Attendance

St. Rita believes that attendance is vital to students' learning experience. In many cases, absences/irregular attendance is the major reason for poor school work. Any absences will impact student's progress within the classroom and beyond. St. Rita School strongly discourages students missing school for family vacation or for other reasons other than those stated below. In addition, Ohio State law requires daily attendance for all students.

State law presently provides five reasons for which absences will be excused:

1. Personal illness of student and/or medical appointments
2. Illness in student's family
3. Death in the family
4. Court Appearances
5. College or transition program visits (juniors and seniors only)
6. Quarantine for contagious diseases or
7. Religious reasons

If student is to be absent or missing a part of school day, the parent/guardian has three options to notify the school:

- Call the front desk at 513-771-7600 Ext. 7231
- Text the front desk at 513-616-8545
- Email attendance@srsdeaf.org

You must notify the school either prior to the absence or on the day of the absence from the hours 7:15-8:15am. If the school does not hear from the parent by 8:30am, the school will contact the parent to discover why the student is not in school. If the

school does not make direct contact with a parent/guardian, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Permission to leave school early is granted to those students whose parents call the school as soon as possible on that day (513-771-7600). The person picking up the student MUST show ID and sign out the student leaving school.

If the student is absent for three consecutive days, a doctor's note is required upon his/her return to school. Failure to do so will result in unexcused absences beyond the first three.

Make up Work:

It is student's responsibility to collect the missed work from an excused absence to do make up work. Any classwork, tests and homework assignments, etc., that the student misses due to an excused absence will be reassigned and due within one week of the date of absence. Class participation/attendance points cannot be recovered (this includes group activities that cannot be made up at home). The teacher will attempt to reteach the information missed; however, if multiple absences are involved, the teacher may not be able to do so.

Students in grades 9-12: Students in high school earn credits towards graduation. A student's unexcused absence results in 0 points awarded for the day. Students with excused absences have the opportunity to make up work, but will miss out on classroom points. Excessive absenteeism will result in lowered grades and can cause your student to retake the failing class or repeat the entire grade level if credits are not earned.

Family Vacations:

We feel strongly that family vacations should be arranged around the school calendar. If you feel it necessary to take a family vacation during the school year that does not line up with our off-days, you must submit your request in writing to the school principal two weeks prior to the start of the vacation. If approved, you or your child will be asked to inform your child's teacher(s) and collect assignments prior to the start of the vacation. This absence will be counted as unexcused. If not approved, and your child misses school, they will not be allowed to make up missed work.

Truancy/Absenteeism House Bill 410:

Truancy is defined (by Ohio Revised Code, Section 3313.609) as "any absence that is not excused". Again, St. Rita believes in the importance of attendance for it supports the learning experience. St. Rita encourages regular attendance and will provide some measures to counteract truancy from the students.

State of Ohio defines habitual truancy as:

- a. Absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse
- b. Absent 42 or more hours in one school month without a legitimate excuse
- c. Absent 72 or more hours in one school year without a legitimate excuse

State of Ohio defines 'excessive absences' as:

- a. Absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse
- b. Absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse.

	Consecutive Hours	Hours per school month	Hours per school year
Habitual Truancy	30 without legitimate excuse	42 without legitimate excuse	72 without legitimate excuse
Excessive Absences		38 with or without legitimate excuse	65 with or without legitimate excuse
Chronic Absenteeism			10% with or without legitimate excuse

After 30 or more hours of unexcused absences: the school will send a formal notification letter to parent/student.

After 42 or more hours of unexcused absences or more within a month: the school will contact parents to set up truancy intervention group meeting. The truancy team will try to identify barriers to student's attendance and develop strategies to remove these obstacles, and develop a truancy intervention plan to improve the attendance.

Strategies may include behavior improvement plan, referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other services, and any other measures considered appropriate by the school. In addition, the school may report student absenteeism and truancy with your child's local school district representatives.

After developing a truancy intervention plan, the school may file a complaint in juvenile court no later than sixty-one (61) days after truancy intervention team implanted the plan and the student does not comply.

Only (8) eight absences per semester will be considered excused with a parent explanation. The ninth absence and beyond will be considered unexcused.

A student who is identified as having excessive absenteeism will not be allowed to attend school field trips. That time will be used to make up for lost instruction.

NOTE: Students with pre-existing medical conditions or chronic/terminal illness will have special modifications/exemptions to some parts of the attendance policy. Also, children who cannot attend school due to a chronic or terminal illness and receive home instruction instead would not be considered excessively absent or truant.

Tardiness to school:

The school encourages students to arrive on time. If a student arrives late to school, he/she must report to front office to receive a pass necessary for admittance to class. If the student has an excessively tardy, the school will take action as necessary. Students may suffer academic consequences for any unexcused tardy.

School responsibility:

One staff person will contact parent after 8:30am, and will update the attendance in Progress Book if student is tardy.

Attendance improvement/Truancy intervention team: Dean of Discipline, School Counselor, Principal, School and Community Specialist, and parent/guardian.

If the truancy student is a K-6 grade student then his/her classroom teacher will be involved.

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Chronic-Absenteeism>

House Bill 166: Medically Excused Absences and Tardies

House Bill 166, an addendum to House Bill 410 described above states students can be medically excused from overall hours absent if they fit the criteria below. Doctor and Dentist appointments would be considered medically excused tardies and would not get counted towards total hours missing from school. When reporting a medically excused absence to school, please indicate the illness of your child.

Common Illnesses and Guidelines for Decisions About School Attendance:

CHICKEN POX: A skin rash consisting of small blisters which leaves scabs. A slight fever may or may not be present. There may be blisters and scabs all present at the same time. Your child should remain home until all blisters have scabbed over, usually 5-7 days after appearance of the first crop of blisters.

COMMON COLD: Irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes, sneezing, chilliness, and general body discomfort. Your child should remain home if symptoms are serious enough to interfere with the child's ability to learn. Medical care should be obtained if symptoms persist beyond 7-10 days, fever develops, or discharge becomes yellow to green.

FEVER: If your child's temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater (1 or 2 degrees above the child's normal temperature) s/he should remain home until s/he has been without fever for a full 24 hours. Remember, fever is a symptom indicating the presence of illness.

FLU: Abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache and sore muscles. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and child is without fever for 24 hours.

HEAD LICE: Lice are small grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits firmly attach to the hair shafts, close to scalp. They are small white specks usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. After receiving treatment with a pediculicide shampoo and nits have been removed, your child must be seen by the school nurse before returning to school.

IMPETIGO: Blister-like lesions which later develop into crusted, pus-like sores. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 48 hours of antibiotic therapy and sores are no longer draining.

PAIN: If your child complains, or behavior indicates, that s/he is experiencing persistent pain, s/he should be evaluated by a physician before attending school.

PINKEYE: Redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching matter coming from one or both eyes, or crusts on the eyelids. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and discharge from the eyes has stopped. Spread of infection can be minimized by keeping the hands away from the face, good hand washing practices, using individual washcloths and towels, and not touching any part of the eyes with tip of the medication applicator while administering antibiotic ointment.

SKIN RASHES: Skin rashes of unknown origin should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school. When the doctor approves a return to school, please send physician's note with child to the clinic.

STREP THROAT/SCARLET FEVER: Strep throat begins with fever, sore and red throat, pus spots on the back of the throat, tender swollen glands of the neck. Scarlet fever shows the same symptoms as strep throat as well as a strawberry appearance to the tongue and skin rash. High fever, nausea, and vomiting may also occur. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic 1-2 days after a strep infection.

Antibiotics orders for strep infections are to be taken for 10 days or until all medication is gone. Only therapy and no fever or vomiting has occurred for 24 hours. Most physicians will advise rest at home for when these directions are followed correctly is the strep germ completely eliminated from the body, no matter how well the child feels after the first few days of receiving medication.

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA (INTESTINAL VIRAL INFECTIONS): Stomach ache, cramping, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. Your child should remain at home until vomiting, diarrhea, or fever had ceased for a full 24 hours. If your child has any of these symptoms during the night, s/he should not be sent to school the following day.

Withdrawals or Change of Residence

If you change your place of residence, you will need to update your Final Forms and report the change to the front desk receptionist by calling (513)771-7600. You will also need to call your district of residence and report the change.

If the need to withdraw or transfer a student occurs, parents or guardians must notify the principal in writing noting the last day that the student will be in attendance. Transcripts will not be issued until tuition is paid, all books returned, and all financial obligations have been met.

The administration reserves the right to disenroll any student from the school's enrollment at any time. This decision will be made if it is determined the school cannot meet the needs of the child or if the parents/guardians have not cooperated with the IEP team. The child may also be disenrolled based on chronically disrespectful, threatening, hostile, and/or disruptive conduct of the parent/guardian. In this event, the following procedure shall occur:

- A meeting (in-person, virtual, or by phone) will be held between school administration, the parent/guardian, and if appropriate, the student, prior to disenrollment.
- Written notice will be sent to the parent/guardian describing the reasons for the student's potential disenrollment.
- A summary report detailing the reasons for disenrollment will be sent to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- A parent/guardian who believes his/her child has been disenrolled for insufficient reason has the right to appeal, in writing sent through US mail, to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Arrival, Dismissal, Transportation, and After School Policies

Transportation

If prior transportation has not been arranged, the parent must provide transportation to and from the school. The parent may wish to contact their local school district for their transportation needs.

Parents MUST notify the school and bus company if their child will not ride the bus on any specific day. If you plan to pick up your child and do not wish to send your child home on the bus, you must notify the school (513-771-7600) and bus company by noon. Parents must also notify the school if there is a change in school district and/or transportation by calling the school (513-771-7600).

Arrival

Upon arrival to school, students will enter the school through the front lobby. K-12 students can be dropped off as early as 7:30 a.m. Immediately upon entering the school, all students in K-6 are to turn in their cell phones, tablets, and/or personal video games. Failure to do so may result in confiscation of property. If a student is planning to stay after school, the after school activity sheet must be signed.

If a student fails to inform the school that he/she plans to stay after school, St. Rita reserves the right to send the student home.

Elementary school students (K-6) will be assigned to the USA room until 7:45 a.m. Junior High and High School students (7-12) will be assigned to the cafeteria until 7:45 a.m. Students are not to congregate in the front office, lobby, or locker area. If a student arrives after 8:00 a.m., the student will be marked as tardy and will need to receive a pass from the front office.

Dismissal

School dismisses regularly at 2:45 p.m. After school care will be provided for those who need it until 4:00 p.m. After school care is a flat fee of \$300 for the school year. An additional fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged if your child remains under the supervision of staff after the allotted time period.

After School Activities

Students may stay after school for school-sponsored activities. Some of the activities include: sports, clubs and special activities sponsored by St. Rita School for the Deaf. All students who participate in after school activities must sign up before the day of activity.

All students staying after school must sign the list in the lobby in the morning of the day they are staying. They must state the reason for staying, estimated time of departure from school, and who will pick them up.

Once school finishes at 2:45 p.m., students staying after school must go to their lockers to retrieve necessary books and personal items and report to the appropriate activity location immediately. Students are not to congregate around the locker area.

Any student that is sick and misses the majority of the classes during the school day shall not participate in any scheduled extracurricular activity scheduled for that day.

If the school makes changes in planned activities, parents will be notified before the end of the day.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Each year students are encouraged to participate in community service projects either at school or in the community. Twenty (20) hours of community service are expected to graduate from high school. Students may start earning these hours in seventh grade.

After School Care

For children in grades K-12 who are enrolled in the after-school childcare program, the teachers will escort the students down to the USA on the first floor at 2:45 p.m., where they will be met by the after-school childcare staff. They will remain in the USA, the

gym or outside on the playground for the duration of the after-school program and can be picked up by parents entering through the front doors. The after-school program operates from 2:45 - 4:00 p.m., on all school days that St. Rita School is in session. A flat fee of \$300 is required to participate in the after school care program. A late fee of \$5 per day for students who remain in the program past 4:00 p.m., unless otherwise specified. A parent who is late to pick up their child 5 or more times in one quarter will lose the opportunity for their child to be enrolled in after-school care for the remainder of the school year.

Parents are responsible for providing diapers and wipes for all non-toilet trained children in this program. An afternoon snack is provided each day. Students can be enrolled in after-school childcare by contacting the school office (513-771-7600).

Students in grades K-12 who are not involved in school-sponsored activities, as stated above, must be picked up by 3:00 p.m. each day. All students in grades K-12 who are not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be moved to the after-school childcare program at a cost of \$5 for each 10-minute increment you are late.

School Closings Before the Start of the School Day

Should school be closed or delayed due to inclement and hazardous weather conditions, parents and students will be notified through an automated alert system (via telephone message, text message and/or email) and television announcements. It is vital the school has your correct contact information.

If St. Rita is open, but your child's home school district is closed and therefore transportation is not provided by your district, you may either transport your child to St. Rita on your own or keep your child home from school. If you keep your child home, this absence will count as excused and your child will be allowed to make up any missed work.

If St. Rita is open, but your child's home school district and transportation is delayed, you may transport your child at the normal time or send him/her on the delayed bus/van. This tardy will count as excused and your child will be allowed to make up any missed work.

Emergency Early Dismissal

Students attending St. Rita live in various school districts around the area. Occasionally, due to inclement weather, one or more school districts may decide to dismiss students before the end of the regular school day. When a school district decides on an early dismissal, the district automatically sends its buses to pick up St. Rita students from their district. Students living in districts that have an emergency early release and send transportation to pick them up will be sent home early from school and marked as excused.

When a school district decides to have an early dismissal because of inclement weather, that decision is broadcast on the news. On days when it appears that possible inclement weather may cause an early dismissal, parents must watch the television for information about the specific school district in which they reside.

If St. Rita would decide to dismiss students early due to inclement weather, parents will be contacted through an automated alert system (via telephone message, text message and/or email), and this information will also be broadcast on the television. Transportation from the various school districts we contract with will also be contacted to come to the school to pick students up early at the scheduled dismissal time.

Academic Information

St. Rita uses evidence-based curriculum to support our special populations, ensuring that all students receive high-quality, research-backed instruction. We follow the State's guidelines on the Science of Reading and implement approved literacy and intervention programs to meet the diverse learning needs of our students. Our approach aligns with best practices to promote academic growth and success for every learner.

Grades are based on points earned each quarter. This includes points for effort, which includes participation and attendance, classwork, homework, tests/quizzes, and projects. See the grading scale that follows.

Grading Scales

Grades K-2:

O-Outstanding achievement, 80-100%
S-Satisfactory achievement, 60-79%
N-Needs Improvement, 0-59%

Grades 3-12:

A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F 59 or below

7-12 Grading System

(HS teachers may make % adjustments. This is a guideline.)

Tests, quizzes, projects - 40%
Class participation, attendance, effort - 30%

Homework, class work - 30%

Mid-term exams are given, depending on the student's ability level, at the end of the first semester and are recorded on the report card as a separate grade. Grades from 1st and 2nd quarter are averaged together with this exam grade for the total first semester grade. Likewise, final exams are given, depending on the student's ability level, at the end of the school year and are recorded as a separate grade. Grades from 3rd and 4th quarter are averaged together along with the exam grade for the total second semester grade.

Honor Roll

Any high school student (grades 9-12) whose combined grade average for all classes in one quarter is 80% or higher, will be listed on the Honor Roll. A grade average of 90% or higher is designated as First Honors.

Students who have one or more F's in one quarter are exempt from the Honor Roll for that quarter. Students who have 5 or more unexcused absences, or a total combination of 7 or more excused or unexcused absences in any one quarter, will be exempt from the Honor Roll for that quarter.

Evaluation Team Report (ETR) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Every three years, all students in preschool -12th grade are required to receive an evaluation team report (ETR). This evaluation needs to be handled by the student's local school district, but St. Rita teachers and therapists do contribute to this evaluation for currently-enrolled students at the request of the school district.

Each student in K-12th grade must be registered with their local public school district and have a current Evaluation Team Report (ETR) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP). For newly enrolled students, St. Rita staff will implement the current IEP from the school district or request an ammendment. Once that IEP is ready for the annual review, then St. Rita staff will work together with school district staff to update the IEP. Parents or guardians are expected to attend the annual review of the IEP, either in person or by phone/video, and all students age 13 and up are expected to attend their IEP (unless parents or the student waive their attendance) for all or part of the meeting, with an interpreter provided by St. Rita School for the Deaf.

IEP and ETR meetings are set up through St. Rita School for the Deaf in coordination with the school district, and parents are contacted via email and phone to discuss and confirm attendance. Written invitations to the IEP and ETR meetings are also sent via email or hardcopy.

Homework

Grades K-6:

Teachers will assign homework at their discretion based on the student's ability. Students may be assigned homework in core classes (Language Arts and Math) following these guidelines:

K-2.....10-20 minutes per day
3-6.....20-40 minutes per day

Time may be adjusted at the teacher's discretion according to each student's ability. If you observe, over an extended period of time, that your child is routinely exceeding these times, please address this issue on an individual basis with your child's teacher. Likewise, if you would like your child to practice more skills at home, please contact your child's teacher.

Students may be allowed to make up work if their absence was excused. (See student absence policy).

If a student habitually fails to complete work, they will not be allowed to attend school field trips and will miss part of recess time, and Fun Friday activities to catch up on work.

Grades 7-12:

Teachers will assign homework at their discretion based on the student's ability. When homework is given, students are expected to write down assignments and due dates in their homework books or in their Google Calendar. Failure to complete homework will result in a deduction of points. Students who habitually fail to complete homework will not be allowed to attend school field trips or participate in after school activities. Students may be allowed to make up work if their absence was excused. (See student absence policy).

Students are not allowed to complete their homework during class time unless given permission by the teacher. Students do have the opportunity to complete homework during the intervention bell if they are not being seen for IEP services.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the learning experience, and students are expected to attend. A permission slip completed and signed by the parent or legal guardian is required before any child is permitted to take part in a field trip. The permission form must also include a completed and signed Medical Power of Attorney for each field trip, or the child may not attend. Emergency contact information is taken on the field trip for each child and adult attending. No child may be released from the field trip location to another parent or adult without written permission from the child's parent given to the teacher and principal in advance.

Students who consistently do not complete classwork or homework, are consistent discipline problems, showing disrespect to the teacher, and/or are considered to have

excessive absences will not be permitted to accompany their classes on field trips. Parents will be notified of this in advance.

Academic Probation

Any student failing two or more courses in a quarter will be placed on Academic Probation. Progress reports will indicate the student's mid-quarter grade and indicate if the student needs improvement in certain areas. At the end of each quarter, Report Cards will be sent home. If a student fails two or more courses, a meeting will be held to discuss the length and terms of probation for the student. If students are on academic probation then they will not be permitted to participate in after school activities, sports, or special after school events, unless given permission by the principal. Students may also be required to stay after school for study sessions and parents will be responsible for picking them up from these sessions.

If lack of sufficient improvement has not been achieved during the next quarter or terms of probation have not been met, then a meeting will be held to determine appropriate academic placement.

Promotion and Retention

Preschool – Grade 6:

Promotion of students in Preschool - grade 6 to the next grade level is based on the individual child's developmental ability, maturity level and degree of academic/skill progress during the previous year. A meeting including the principal, parent, teacher and any others deemed appropriate will occur to determine whether to promote or retain the student. Students will not be retained more than one year in the same grade.

Jr. High (Grades 7 & 8):

Students in grades 7 and 8 will be promoted if they have received passing grades of 60% or above in at least 4 of the 5 core subjects of: reading, math, English, social studies, science.

Students in grades 7 and 8 whose grades in two or more core subjects, averages 59% or less for the year, will be considered for retention. Members of the IEP team and any other individuals deemed appropriate will determine whether to promote or retain the student. Students will not be retained more than one year in the same grade.

High School:

Students in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 will be promoted according to the State of Ohio guidelines pertaining to credits required for graduation. In order to obtain a high school diploma, a student must earn a minimum of 20 credits, demonstrate competency, and demonstrate readiness through earning 2 seals.

The minimum credits are:

English	4 credits
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Health	1/2 credit
Math	4 credits
Science	3 credits
	A) Physical Science 1 credit
	B) Life Science 1 credit
	C) Advanced Science 1 credit
Social Studies	3 credits
	A) American History 1/2 credit
	B) American Government 1/2 credit
	C) World History and Civilizations 1/2 credit
Physical Education	1/2 credit
Electives	5 credits
	A) One credit or two half-credits must include: Business/Technology, or Foreign Language
Other Requirements	
	A) Fine Arts 2 credits
	B) Financial Literacy 1/2 credit

A student failing a required course must repeat the course.

Any student failing two or more courses in a quarter will be placed on academic probation. If lack of sufficient improvement has not been achieved during the next quarter, then a meeting will be held to determine appropriate academic placement.

Religious Education and Spiritual Wellness Plan

At St. Rita School for the Deaf, spiritual formation is an essential dimension of our mission and identity as a Catholic school. Our Spiritual Wellness Plan provides all students—from Kindergarten through 12th grade—with developmentally meaningful opportunities to grow in faith, participate in the sacramental life of the Church, and cultivate a daily relationship with God. This plan is rooted in our commitment to creating a community that nourishes the mind, body, and spirit of every learner. Religion classes are conducted for all students enrolled at St. Rita regardless of their faith. In addition, all students attend mass, prayer services, adoration (twice a year), and Catholic School's Week activities.

Reporting of Student Progress

A variety of methods are used to inform parents of their child's progress in school.

- Report Cards – Report cards will be distributed quarterly through Progress Book parent access for students in grades K-12 via email. If parents would like a hard copy sent in the mail, they need to put a request in with the K-6 or 7-12 administrative assistant.

- IEP Progress Reports - IEP progress reports will be distributed every 9 weeks through email unless requested otherwise by the parents to the K-6 or 7-12 administrative assistant.

Parents are invited to send comments to the teachers personally or by email.

Student Code of Conduct and Discipline

School Rules/Expectations

St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment through Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a school-wide approach that promotes positive behaviors, reinforces expectations, and helps students develop the social and emotional skills needed for success.

PBIS operates on three tiers:

- Tier 1 (Universal Support) – School-wide expectations are established and reinforced for all students through positive recognition and consistent routines.
- Tier 2 (Targeted Support) – Additional support is provided to students who need help meeting behavioral expectations.
- Tier 3 (Intensive Support) – Individualized interventions are developed for students who require more personalized strategies to succeed.

Our goal is to teach, recognize, and reinforce positive behaviors, ensuring that all students feel valued and supported. At St. Rita, this looks like:

 P A W S				
	POSITIVE ATTITUDE	ACT RESPONSIBILITY	WORK TOGETHER	SAFE ENVIRONMENT
HALLWAYS	- Walk Quietly - Smile to say hello - Stay with your class	- Follow directions - Keep hands off walls	- Walk in a straight line - Face forward - Keep halls neat	- Walk slowly - Keep your distance from others
RESTROOMS	- Wait patiently - Use restroom quietly and quickly	- Flush - Wash your hands with soap - Return to class when finished	- Respect the privacy of others - Keep restroom clean	- Walk carefully - Only take necessary materials into the restroom
CAFETERIA	- Raise your hand for help - Use good table manners	- Bring your lunchbox or card - Watch for directions	- Stand nicely in line - Clean up your area	- Walk in all areas - Eat your own food - Stay in your seat
GYM	- Be a good listener - Try your best - Be kind to others	- Be prepared - Wear proper shoes - Clean up equipment	- Cooperate and play by the rules - Be a team player - Show sportsmanship	- Care when in motion - Be aware of your surroundings
CLASSROOM	- Be nice to others - Do your best - Be honest	- Bring homework - Complete your work - Follow directions	- Pay attention - Cooperate with others - Be patient	- Walk in all areas - Use materials correctly
RECESS	- Get lots of exercise - Include others	- Follow directions - Report problems to the teacher	- Take turns - Share - Clean up equipment	- Stay in the playground area - Use equipment correctly

To encourage and reinforce positive behavior, students earn PBIS points for demonstrating the behavior above. Students are allowed to use their points earned to purchase items from our PAWS store, earn special privileges, purchase raffle tickets for an end of quarter prize, and/or receive special recognition by school administration.

Discipline Policy

The educational achievements of a school depend in part by the type of discipline that exists within that school.

Discipline produces an atmosphere where learning can take place; when not present, disrupts the learning environment. These measures are an additional help to the teachers and do not replace but supplement classroom policy.

The consequences of actions may result in loss of privileges, demerits, detentions, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, probation and expulsion.

Behavior Policies for Students in Grades K-6

Our elementary students are in the process of developing self-control, personal responsibility, learning social and school expectations, and understanding their actions have consequences. This developmental process requires daily instruction, modeling, and reinforcement in a variety of settings.

The elementary classrooms use a visual display to indicate levels of discipline. We use both positive rewards to reinforce appropriate behaviors and promote good habits, and consequences to help students understand when their actions are inappropriate. Various rewards and consequences are used with our behavior monitoring system in the classrooms, including: rewards, warnings, notification to parents, missed time at recess, visit to the Principal or Dean of Discipline. Specific classroom behavior plans are provided by the teachers. Some students may have unique needs that require special behavior interventions and an individualized behavior system may be implemented by the teacher.

Occasionally, it is necessary to assign negative consequences for significant misbehaviors, particularly acts of aggression. These consequences may include missing recess time, a short time-out in or out of the classroom, sitting at a separate table during lunch time, or cancelling participation in a special school activity. Depending on the severity of the misbehavior, students may be suspended out of school for a day. Parents will be notified when negative consequences have been assigned.

Students are expected to follow the behavior policies whenever they are involved in activities of the school or when they are off-campus representing the school. Any violations of the behavior policies will be reported to the parents and may result in consequences issued by the school administration.

Behavior Policies for Students in Grades 7-12

Teachers have at their disposal demerits, detention, and conferences with the parent.

The consequences of actions may result in demerits, detentions, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, probation and expulsion. Below are general guidelines; however, misbehavior will be dealt with in an individual manner.

CATEGORY 1 INFRACTIONS

An accumulation of 3 demerits can result in detention. Detention will be served as soon as possible after the infraction. Notification will be given to the parent, administration and extracurricular activities coordinator. The following demerits will not be included in Categories 2, 3, and 4 which can lead to expulsion.

The violations in Category 1 shall include but not be limited to the following:

- DRESS CODE VIOLATION
- DISRESPECTING A STUDENT OR STAFF
- INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
- TELLING LIES
- REPEATEDLY NOT FOLLOWING THE RULES
- HARRASSMENT/BULLYING
- CYBER HARRASSMENT/BULLYING
- UNAUTHORIZED INTERNET ACTIVITY

CATEGORY 2 INFRACTIONS

Any incident in category 2 will result in immediate detention with 3 demerits per incident. Detention will be served as soon as possible after the infraction. Notification will be given to the parent and administration. Detention will be served as directed by the Dean of Discipline or another administrator. Three detentions in this category will equal in-school suspension.

The violations in Category 2 shall include but not be limited to the following:

- INAPPROPRIATE AND OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE
- INAPPROPRIATE AND OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR
- HITTING, KICKING, PUSHING ANOTHER STUDENT or STAFF
- STEALING FROM ANOTHER PERSON
- CUTTING A CLASS
- LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS WITHOUT PERMISSION
- REPEATED UNAUTHORIZED INTERNET ACTIVITY
- THEFT

CATEGORY 3 INFRACTIONS

Category 3 infractions result in immediate detention with the possibility of suspension.

The violations in Category 3 shall include but not be limited to the following:

- BREAKING INTO OFFICE, CLASSROOM
- SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
- FALSE FIRE ALARMS
- DESTROYING OR BREAKING FIRE ALARM SYSTEM
- DAMAGING SCHOOL PROPERTY
- MAKING THREATS
- CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL AT SCHOOL
- USE OF TOBACCO AT SCHOOL
- REPEATED HARRASSMENT/BULLYING
- REPEATED CYBER HARRASSMENT/BULLYING
- REPEATED THEFT

CATEGORY 4 INFRACTIONS

Category 4 infractions may result in suspension with a possibility of expulsion. The violations in Category 4 shall include but not be limited to the following:

- ASSAULTING A STAFF PERSON
- BRINGING A WEAPON ON CAMPUS
- BRINGING ILLEGAL DRUGS TO SCHOOL
- USING ILLEGAL DRUGS AT SCHOOL OR SCHOOL FUNCTIONS
- BUYING OR SELLING DRUGS AT SCHOOL
- USING A WEAPON TO HURT PEOPLE
- SEXUAL ASSAULT
- CONSISTENT HARRASSMENT/BULLYING
- CONSISTENT CYBER HARRASSMENT/BULLYING

Suspension may be served in-house or off campus depending on the individual circumstances. Length of suspension may be from one (1) to ten (10) days and upon

returning to school, the student will be classified as on **disciplinary probation**. Before returning to school, a meeting with the administration will be held to discuss the terms of the probation and interventions for the successful completion of the school year. Probation may last anywhere from one (1) quarter to four (4) quarters.

During probation, an individual may participate fully in the activities of the school **only** with permission from the Administration Team. Any major violation of Category 3 or 4 during probation, may result in immediate expulsion.

Students are expected to follow the behavior policies whenever they are involved in activities of the school or when they are off-campus representing the school. Any violations of the behavior policies will be reported to the parents and may result in consequences issued by the school administration.

St. Rita School for the Deaf reserves the right to require a student to participate in counseling/therapy as an ongoing means of remedying behavioral issues, or as a condition of returning to school at all. By signing this Handbook, all students and parents/guardians agree that they will provide whatever authorization is necessary for St. Rita School for the Deaf to speak with the counselor, therapist, or other mental health professional in such instances to ensure the students' behavioral issues have been or are being fully addressed. As with the method and extent of any disciplinary measures, St. Rita School for the Deaf reserves final judgement in these matters.

The code of conduct and rules stated in this handbook are not exhaustive. There may be inappropriate incidents that occur which are not stated here. In all disciplinary matters, administration and faculty reserve the right to apply disciplinary measures based on their professional and educational discretion.

Cell Phones/Tablets/Electronic Devices

Students in grades K-12 may not use cell phones, personal video players, cameras, tablets, and/or iPods or headphones during the classroom hours unless permitted by the teacher or administration. These hours are 7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Cell phones, tablets, and other devices (unless specifically used and approved for educational or emergency purposes) must be turned into the front lobby immediately upon entering school. The school will retain possession until after school hours. They will remain in a secure area in the front office. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

CONSEQUENCES OF GENERAL USAGE

If students refuse to comply with the above guidelines, the following consequences will apply. Student infractions will be documented as a referral for each offense. The consequences for these infractions are outlined below:

- 1st Offense = Personal wireless communication device will be confiscated until the end of the school day, when the student may retrieve it.
- 2nd Offense = Personal wireless communication device will be confiscated until the end of the day, when the student's parent must retrieve it.

- 3rd Offense = Loss of personal wireless communication device privileges for the remainder of the year.

** Personal wireless communication devices confiscated will be placed in the Dean of Discipline's office. If the Dean of Discipline is not available to reissue the personal technology device to the student, the student must wait until the next day.

St. Rita School for the Deaf is not responsible for students' loaned, lost, broken, or stolen mobile phones and electronic devices.

Inspection of Student Property

St. Rita School for the Deaf reserves the right to search and inspect school property used by students at any time. Furthermore, St. Rita reserves the right to search and inspect personal property when the administration suspects items prohibited by the school are in a student's possession or suspects a student may be engaged in conduct in violation of the school's policies and procedures. Such items may be confiscated and appropriate action, including disciplinary action, may be taken.

Finality of Decisions

The president and/or principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive or impose a disciplinary action at his/her discretion.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy

It is the policy of St. Rita School for the Deaf (the "School") that any form of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is expressly forbidden. The Parish and School's internet and computer system and equipment may not be used to engage in harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The "Student Responsible Use of Technology" form must be signed by each student and on file with the School. The School reserves the right to impose discipline for harassing, intimidating, bullying, and other inappropriate behavior that takes place off School grounds and outside School hours.

Definition of Terms

"Electronic act" means an act committed through the use of a cellular or other telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means either of the following:

- Any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
 - Causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and
 - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- Violence within a dating relationship.

- “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” also means electronically transmitted acts i.e., by Internet, social media/network, blog, cell phone, personal digital assistance (PDA), wireless hand-held device, or other electronic communication device, that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
 - Causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and
 - Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes harassment, intimidation, or bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen and the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the offender interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred. What may constitute harassment, intimidation, or bullying in one circumstance might not constitute such in another. As in all disciplinary matters, the School will make this determination utilizing its professional and educational discretion and judgment.

Types of Conduct

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying can include many different behaviors including, but not limited to, overt intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student.

Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include:

- Engaging in unsolicited and offensive or insulting behavior;
- Physical violence and/or attacks;
- Threats, taunts, and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
- Extortion, damage, or stealing of money and/or possessions;
- Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors; and
- Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies, computers, cell phones, other electronic devices, the Internet, online websites, blogs, or social media/networks (also known as “cyber-bullying”). Examples of cyber-bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Posting slurs on the Internet, websites, blogs, or social media/networks;
 - Sending abusive or threatening instant messages, text messages, emails, or other communications through the Internet, websites, blogs, or social media/networks;
 - Taking embarrassing photographs of students and posting them online or otherwise distributing them; and
 - Using the Internet, websites, blogs, social media/networks, or electronic communication devices to impersonate another individual or circulate gossip or rumors to other students.

Complaints Regarding Harassment

Formal Complaints:

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific including persons involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and the names of any potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any School staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the principal or his/her designee.

Informal Complaints:

Students and/or their parents/guardians may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, School administrator, or other School personnel. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including persons involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior, and the names of any potential witnesses. A School staff member or administrator who receives an informal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the School staff member and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the principal or his/her designee.

Anonymous Complaints:

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the School staff member or administrator who receives the complaint. The anonymous complaints shall be reviewed, and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the concept of fairness to the student alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Criminal Misconduct

Allegations of criminal misconduct will be reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse will be reported to law enforcement and/or Child Protective Services, consistent with the Archdiocese Decree on Child Protection and Ohio law. All School personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

Conduct Disclaimer

No discipline issued pursuant to any handbook shall bind the School to issue the same, or even comparable, discipline to other students in the future. Nor will any form or extent of discipline be construed as a precedent for how discipline will be imposed moving forward. Rather, the School reserves sole judgment and discretion in disciplining students based on the circumstances of each incident, including but not limited to the respective age(s) of the student(s) involved, the student(s)' perceived maturity level, the conduct at issue, the student(s)' attitude and degree of cooperation, the student(s)' disciplinary history, and any other aggravating or mitigating circumstances the School deems relevant. Nothing in this Handbook limits or otherwise

constrains the School's authority, discretion, judgment, or responsibility in any student disciplinary matters.

School Personnel Responsibilities

Teachers and Other School Staff

Teachers and other School staff who witness acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the principal or his/her designee of the event observed, and shall promptly document the events witnessed. Teachers and other School staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall promptly notify the principal or his/her designee of such reports. If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly to the principal or his/her designee. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other staff member, he or she shall document the informal complaint and promptly forward it to the principal or his/her designee.

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, School personnel are encouraged to address the issue of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in other interactions with students. School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, intimidation, or bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating, or intimidating another student or individual, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, intimidation, or bullying set forth above.

Administrator Responsibilities

Investigation

The principal or his/her designee shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Under the direction of the principal or his/her designee, all such complaints shall be investigated promptly. The principal or his/her designee shall document the investigation, including any conversations with the alleged offender, victim, students, or other witnesses. Written statements may also be obtained from these individuals.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged offender), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

Response

Verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall result in an intervention by the principal or his/her designee. The intention of such intervention is to ensure that the prohibition against harassment, intimidation, and bullying is enforced, with the goal that any such prohibited behavior will end.

When acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in seriousness and impact on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response or discipline to verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The forms of discipline listed in this Handbook are guidelines, and the School may use other disciplinary measures as the situation warrants. The decision whether to impose discipline and, if so, to what extent, is left to the professional and educational discretion of the principal or his/her designee.

Once harassment, intimidation, or bullying has been verified, the principal or his/her designee should monitor the situation to determine whether there have been additional incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or retaliation from the offender or other parties. Additionally, the principal or his/her designee may inform School personnel of the incident and instruct them to monitor the victim and the offender for indications of harassing, intimidating, bullying, or retaliatory behavior. School personnel are to intervene when prohibited behaviors are witnessed.

Reporting

Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Offender

If after investigation, an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying by a specific student is verified, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the Offender's parent/guardian of that finding. The parent/guardian shall also be notified of any disciplinary consequences imposed against that student.

Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Victim

If after investigation, an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a specific student is verified, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the victim's parent/guardian of such finding.

Police and Child Protective Services

Allegations of criminal misconduct will be reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse will be reported to Child Protective Services, consistent with the Archdiocese Decree on Child Protection and Ohio law. All School personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

Miscellaneous

No discipline issued pursuant to any Handbook shall bind the School to issue the same, or even comparable, discipline to other students in the future. Nor will any form or extent of discipline be construed as a precedent for how discipline will be imposed moving forward. Rather, the School reserves sole judgment and discretion in disciplining students based on the particular circumstances of each incident, including but not limited to the respective age(s) of the student(s) involved, the student(s)' perceived maturity level, the conduct at issue, the student(s)' attitude and degree of cooperation, the student(s)' disciplinary history, the communication and language level of the student(s) and any other aggravating or mitigating circumstances the School deems present. Nothing in this section, or anywhere else in this Handbook, limits or otherwise constrains the School's authority, discretion, judgment, or responsibility in any student disciplinary matters.

Disciplinary Probation

Students who have been suspended for violating the disciplinary policy may be placed on Disciplinary Probation before returning to school. Before returning to class, a meeting with the administration will be held to discuss the terms of the probation and intervention strategies for the successful completion of the school year. Probation may last anywhere from one (1) quarter to four (4) quarters. Any major violation of Category 3 or 4 during probation may result in immediate expulsion.

During probation an individual may participate fully in the activities of the school only with the permission from the teacher or the principal. If lack of sufficient improvement has not been achieved during the next quarter or terms of probation have not been met, then a staffing will be held to determine appropriate placement.

St. Rita reserves the right to dismiss a student from our program based on safety risk to themselves or others and the inability to effectively provide intervention.

Uniform Dress Code

Students in grades K-12 are expected to wear a uniform to school daily that meets the following requirements. The students' must reflect a positive image of the school and contribute to a distraction free environment.

Pants	Navy blue or tan/khaki
Shorts	Navy blue or tan Shorts can be no more than 2 inches above the knee. <i>Shorts are permitted August – Fall Break; after Spring Break – the end of the school year</i>

Skirts	Girls are allowed to wear tan or navy blue skirts. Skirts can be no more than 2 inches above the knee.
Shirt/Blouse with collar	White or light blue *Boys may also wear a tie (this is optional).
Polo shirt	Solid Light blue, navy blue, dark green, light grey, black, white or yellow
Sweater/Sweatshirt/ St. Rita Hoodie	Navy blue, dark green, yellow, light grey, black, or white <i>All sweaters, sweatshirts, and hoodies must be worn with a shirt, golf shirt or turtleneck underneath. They must either be plain or have the St. Rita Logo only. Students are not permitted to cover their head with their hoodie during school hours.</i>
Turtleneck	White, dark green, yellow or navy blue <i>Turtlenecks may be worn under shirts or polos as well.</i>
Shoes	Gym shoes or school shoes (no sandals, flip flops, crocs or shoes with heels; socks must be worn at all times).
Jewelry	Boys and girls are permitted to wear jewelry as long as it is not distracting. If a teacher finds it distracting, they can ask the student to remove the jewelry.

Additional Uniform Rules

- Only white t-shirts may be worn underneath shirts. Print or colored t-shirts are not allowed. Thermal shirts or polo shirts may not be worn under other school shirts.
- All shirts, other than those with the St. Rita logo on them, should not have any words, pictures or print on them.
- Clothing should fit the child. Oversized clothing or clothing that is too small is not permitted.
- Pants and shorts may not be worn below the waistline.
- Buttoned or zippered jackets of any kind are not be permitted in the classroom. Students should bring a sweater, sweatshirt or hoodie when it is cool in the building.
- Hair must be appropriately groomed, neat, and clean at all times. Hair color may not distract from or interfere with the learning and school environment.

- Light makeup is permitted for girls in 7th grade – 12th grade.

The school administration will make the final decision on the appropriateness of any fad, apparel, jewelry or hair.

Consequences for Dress Code Violations

Consequences for violating the dress code policy will follow the discipline policies of the school and will be enforced by teachers, administration and staff. At the discretion of the administration, students who are out of uniform may be required to call home for proper clothing.

Out of Uniform Days and Spirit Days

Certain days are scheduled throughout the school year when students may be out of uniform, including Spirit Days, some field trips or special events. On Spirit Days, students may wear nice jeans (no holes or tears) with a yellow, green or St. Rita logo shirt.

Health and Safety

Health and Medical Care

When a child does become ill or has an accident at school, the child is sent to the school nurse. In case of minor illness or injury, the child's parents are contacted, informed of the situation, and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible if warranted. Parents must transport or make arrangements for transporting a child who is sick or injured as soon as possible.

Because of unexpected illness and accidents, emergency phone numbers, emergency medical authorization and a copy of parent's insurance card or Medicaid card must be on file at school. This is done by completing and returning the emergency forms sent home at the beginning of each school year. These forms are important as they provide for the student if he/she would require emergency care and/or emergency hospitalization. Please remember to update this information with the school if anything changes, including the contact number. In the event we can't reach a parent or the parent is unable to come for the student, there must be a backup person who can come for the ill or injured student.

In the event of an emergency, all efforts will be made to contact a parent or an alternate emergency number prior to transporting a student to the Emergency Room of a local hospital for necessary treatment. If contact is unable to be established, 911 will be called to the scene and the licensed medical professionals will evaluate the situation and determine the best course of action for the ill or injured student. Parents are responsible for any medical costs incurred, including, but not limited to, transportation, medication and tests.

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, please do not send him or her to school. Your child must be symptom free (including vomiting, fever, and diarrhea) for 24 hours before returning to school. This also means that if your child is sent home from school with symptoms, they need to wait 24 hours from the time of exclusion before returning to school.

On returning to school after an illness caused by a communicable disease, a child must present a release card from the doctor.

Medication

The school nurse, or designated school personnel, who has completed a drug administration training program, conducted by a licensed professional, may administer medication (prescription and over the counter) upon proper completion of a signed medical authorization form. This must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and prescribing physician. A note from the student's parent/guardian or verbal permission is not considered acceptable for school personnel to administer medication.

Whenever it is necessary that medication be given to the student during the school day, the following will apply:

1. Any medication (prescription or over the counter) to be administered during the school day will be dispensed by a licensed nurse or designee of the nurse.
2. Medication must be in original containers and have an affixed label including the student's name, name of medication, dosage, and frequency/time of administration.
3. Written request **MUST** be obtained from the physician before any medication may be administered by school personnel. The request must include instructions as to the name of the medication, dosage, time and duration of the medication, and the possible side effects.
4. Medication must be brought to the school by the parent or guardian. Students are **not** permitted to transport or bring medications of **any** kind to school. This includes over the counter as well as prescription medication.
5. No medicine (prescription or over the counter) may be kept by the student in the desk, backpack, lunch box, etc. or on his/her person. Exceptions may apply such as treatment for food allergies, asthma, or diabetes.
6. Signed permission forms for the administration of medication must be completed by the parent or guardian and turned in to the school nurse at the beginning of the school year. These forms need to be updated throughout the year if medical information changes. No medication will be given to a student without parent permission.
7. If a situation arises where a student needs to keep a medication on their person such as an inhaler or Epi Pen, a School Medication Permission Form must be filled out by the prescribing doctor and returned to the school nurse.
8. Medications will not be stored over the summer. Parents will need to notify the nurse in advance in regards to the transfer of medication and come to school to pick up the medication.

Diabetic Care Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf complies with Section 3313.7112 of the Ohio Revised Code regarding diabetes care.

St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to ensuring students who have diabetes receive appropriate and needed diabetes care in accordance with an order signed by the students' treating physician. Such care must include the following:

1. Checking and recording blood glucose levels and ketone levels or assisting the student with checking and recording these levels;
2. Responding to blood glucose levels that are outside of the student's target range;
3. In the case of severe hypoglycemia, administering glucagon and other emergency treatments as prescribed;
4. Administering insulin or assisting the student in self-administering insulin through the insulin delivery system the student uses;
5. Providing oral diabetes medications;
6. Understanding recommended schedules and food intake for meals and snacks in order to calculate medication dosages pursuant to the order of the student's treating physician;
7. Following the treating physician's instructions regarding meals, snacks, and physical activity; and
8. Administering diabetes medication, as long as the administration is performed by a school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, a school employee who is trained in diabetes care under Section 3313.7112(E) of the Ohio Revised Code.

Within 14 days of receiving an order signed by the treating physician of a student with diabetes, the school shall inform the student's parent, legal guardian, and/or other person having care or charge of the student that the student may be entitled to a school accommodation plan regarding the student's diabetes.

School Administration of Diabetes Medication

Diabetes medication may be administered by a school nurse, or, in the absence of a school nurse, a school employee who is trained in diabetes care under Section 3313.7112(E) of the Ohio Revised Code and so long as all of the following are satisfied:

- 1.) The school receives a written request, signed by the student's parent, legal guardian, and/or other person having care or charge of the student, that the drug be administered to the student.
- 2.) The school receives a statement, signed by the prescriber, that includes all of the following information:
 - a) the name and address of the student;
 - b) the school and class in which the student is enrolled;
 - c) the name of the drug and the dosage to be administered;
 - d) the times or intervals at which each dosage of the drug is to be administered;
 - e) the date the administration of the drug is to begin;
 - f) the date the administration of the drug is to cease;

- g) any severe adverse reactions that should be reported to the prescriber and one or more phone numbers at which the prescriber can be reached in an emergency; and
 - h) any special instructions for administration of the drug, including sterile conditions and storage.
- 3.) The parent, legal guardian, or other person having care or charge of the student agrees to submit a revised statement signed by the prescriber to the school if any of the information provided by the prescriber pursuant to section (2) above changes.
- 4.) The person authorized by the school to administer the drug receives a copy of the statements referenced in section (2) and (3) above.
- 5.) The drug is received by the person authorized to administer the drug to the student for whom the drug is prescribed in the container in which it was dispensed by the prescriber or a licensed pharmacist.
- 6.) Any and all other procedures required by the school are followed.

If a drug is administered to a student, the school shall acquire and retain copies of the written requests required by section (1) above and the statements required by sections (2) and (3) above. Additionally, the school shall ensure that by the next school day following the receipt of any statement required by sections (2) and (3) above, a copy is given to the person authorized to administer drugs to the student for whom the statement has been received. Diabetes medication that is to be administered at school shall be kept in an easily accessible location.

Parents, legal guardians, and/or other persons having care or charge of the student with diabetes are responsible for providing the needed medication and supplies (including but not limited to foods for treating low blood glucose) for the student.

Student Administration of Diabetes Medication

On written request of the parent, legal guardian, and/or other person having care or charge of a student and authorization by the student's treating physician, a student with diabetes shall be permitted during regular school hours and school-sponsored activities to attend to the care and management of his/her diabetes in accordance with the order issued by the student's treating physician so long as that physician determines that the student is capable of performing diabetes care tasks. The student shall be permitted to perform diabetes care tasks in a classroom, in any area of the school or school grounds, and at any school-related activity, and to possess on his/herself at all times all necessary supplies and equipment to perform these tasks. If the student or the parent, legal guardian, and/or other person having care or charge of the student so requests, the student shall have access to a private area for performing diabetes care tasks.

If the student performs any diabetes care tasks or uses medical equipment for purposes other than his/her own care, the school may revoke the student's permission to attend to the care and management of the student's diabetes.

Non-Restriction Disclaimer

The school shall not restrict a student who has diabetes from attending the school on the basis that the student has diabetes, that the school does not have a full-time school nurse, or that the school does not have an employee trained in diabetes care. The school shall not require or pressure a parent, legal guardian, and/or other person having care or charge of a student to provide diabetes care for the student with diabetes at school or school-related activities.

Immunization Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf complies with the minimum immunization requirements set forth by R.C. 3313.67 and 3313.671. Although St. Rita School for the Deaf complies with those minimum immunization requirements, it also retains discretion to enforce stricter requirements at any time, for instance, by requiring vaccination even over a guardian's conscience or religious conviction objection or by revoking a previous exception.

Drug Abuse Policy Including Student Use of Marijuana

St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to providing the most optimal educational environment for all of its students. Drug abuse is a significant problem throughout our society, and it can have devastating consequences, particularly on young people. St. Rita maintains a policy of zero tolerance for students' use of marijuana, in particular due to its continued criminalization under federal law. Therefore, any student who uses, possesses, sells, distributes, purchases, or is under the influence of marijuana may be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. For purposes of clarity, this policy applies in all respects and with equal force regardless of whether a student holds a prescription or recommendation from a health care provider and regardless of a student's status as a medical marijuana cardholder under Chapter 3796 of the Ohio Revised Code. A positive drug test for marijuana will be treated the same as a positive test for any other illegal or controlled substance.

Mental Health Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to supporting the social, emotional, and mental well-being of all students. We recognize that mental health plays a vital role in a child's ability to learn, communicate, and thrive. Our multi-tiered mental-health framework ensures students have timely access to appropriate services in a safe, confidential, and supportive environment.

- School-based Counseling Services
 - Short-term, solution-focused counseling
 - Emotional-regulation and coping-skills development
 - Support with school adjustment, peer relationships, and academic stress
 - Crisis intervention and safety planning, as needed
- Social-Emotional Learning Instruction
 - Self-awareness and emotional recognition

- Relationship skills, communication, and conflict resolution
- Responsible decision-making
- Social awareness, empathy, and respect for others
- Developing resilience and problem-solving skills
- Referral for intensive or long-term services (with parent consent)
 - Individual therapy
 - Trauma-informed counseling
 - Behavioral and emotional support
 - Coordination with medical or psychiatric providers (as appropriate)

Wellness Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf believes that children need access to healthful foods and opportunities for physical activity in order to grow, learn, and thrive. St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects its students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and encouraging regular physical activity.

Wellness Policy Leadership

The President or Food Service Supervisor is responsible for ensuring compliance with this wellness policy and overseeing implementation, monitoring, and review of the policy.

Community Involvement

St. Rita School for the Deaf will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, and community members in the development, implementation, review, and update of this wellness policy. Stakeholders may participate through meetings, surveys, or other feedback opportunities.

Nutrition Promotion

St. Rita School for the Deaf will promote healthy eating by:

- Encouraging students to consume fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.
- Promoting participation in the school breakfast and lunch programs.
- Providing signage, posters, and educational materials that encourage healthy choices in the cafeteria and throughout the school.
- Making drinking water available to students throughout the school day.
- Encouraging staff to model healthy eating behaviors

Nutrition Education

The school will provide nutrition education designed to promote lifelong healthy eating habits.

A) Information on diet, nutrition, and physical exercise will be included in the curriculum at developmentally appropriate levels.

B) Nutrition education will be integrated across subjects when possible and taught using culturally appropriate materials that reflect the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students.

C) Nutrition guidelines, USDA food charts, suggestions for healthy food choices, and other messages relating to health, nutrition, and exercise will be displayed in classrooms, hallways, and the cafeteria as part of the educational environment.

Physical Activity

St. Rita School for the Deaf supports regular physical activity for all students.

A) All students in grades K–6 and preschool will have at least 15 minutes of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity is encouraged.

B) All students in grades K–12 will participate in regular physical education activities designed to promote physical fitness, motor skills, and lifelong wellness.

C) Students in grades 5–12 will be encouraged to participate in extracurricular physical activities, including sports, recreation programs, and other movement-based activities.

D) Classroom teachers are encouraged to incorporate short physical activity breaks during the school day when appropriate.

Other School-Based Activities that Promote Wellness

St. Rita School for the Deaf will support additional activities that promote student wellness, including:

- Creating a safe and supportive environment that promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Encouraging staff wellness initiatives and healthy role modeling.
- Providing family education opportunities related to nutrition, physical activity, and wellness when possible.
- Supporting school events and activities that promote healthy eating and active lifestyles.

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Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods on Campus

School Meals

A) All meals will meet the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Program meal pattern requirements and follow the nutrition recommendations of the U.S.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

B) The school will participate in available federal child nutrition programs when feasible.

C) All school meals (breakfast and lunch) will be available at a charge to students, staff, parents, volunteers, and appropriate visitors participating in official school activities and functions.

D) Meal planning will consider the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body.

E) Students will be provided a safe, clean, and pleasant eating environment and adequate time to eat.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

A) All foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

- B) The sale of candy, high-sugar snacks, and beverages that do not meet Smart Snack standards will not be permitted during the school day.
- C) Vending machines may provide healthy beverage options such as water and 100% fruit beverages and will follow Smart Snack guidelines.
- D) Vending machines may not be accessed by students during the school day. They may be accessed after school by students participating in after-school activities.

Classroom Celebrations and Snacks

- A) Classroom celebrations involving food or drinks during the school day should be limited to one celebration per month.
- B) Families and staff are encouraged to provide healthier food options for celebrations.
- C) Snacks served during the school day or in after-school programs will consider the timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, age, and dietary guidelines.

Monitoring and Policy Review

The President and Food Service Supervisor will ensure compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policy.

The school will:

- Periodically review the wellness policy to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements.
- Assess the implementation of the policy.
- Update the policy as needed to reflect changes in regulations or school practices.

Review and Revised 3/12/2026 by School President, COO/CFO, and Food Service Supervisor

COVID-19 Acknowledgement of Risks

We, the undersigned parent(s) and student, acknowledge and agree that, as a student at St. Rita School for the Deaf and as parent(s) of that student, entering in the school or being on the premises, having personal contact with teachers, classmates, and other St. Rita School for the Deaf staff, involves a certain degree of risk, namely of parent(s) and/or student acquiring a communicable disease, including COVID-19, and then potentially passing it on to others, including family members. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, the characteristics of the virus, and the close proximity of students, teachers, and staff at St. Rita School for the Deaf, there is an elevated risk of student contracting the disease simply by being in the building, on the premises, or at any St. Rita School for the Deaf function. The same is true for parent(s) of a student at St. Rita School for the Deaf.

By signing this Handbook, we acknowledge and agree that after carefully considering the risks involved, and having the opportunity to discuss these risks with any healthcare professional(s) of our choosing, we voluntarily and willingly accept those risks and acknowledge that returning to in-person classes and other in-person St. Rita School for the Deaf functions is the choice of each family, including ours. If student or parent(s) who visit St. Rita School for the Deaf have underlying health concerns which may place

them at greater risk of contracting any communicable disease, including COVID-19, we acknowledge and agree that we will consult with a health care professional before student or parent(s) return to St. Rita School for the Deaf, attend any St. Rita School for the Deaf function, or visit St. Rita School for the Deaf. Moreover, we acknowledge that while adherence to safety and precautionary measures (e.g., social distancing guidelines, facemasks, handwashing, etc.) may reduce possible exposure to the risk of contracting a communicable disease, the possibility of serious illness and death remains. We do hereby accept and assume sole responsibility for any illness acquired by student or parent(s) while at St. Rita School for the Deaf or any St. Rita School for the Deaf function, including possible infection with COVID-19.

We further acknowledge, understand, and agree that we have obligations to the school and parish, its employees/staff members, students, and others to take certain precautions and make certain disclosures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as outlined by the State of Ohio and the applicable local public health department.

School Safety Plan

St. Rita School for the Deaf files a complete safety plan with the state of Ohio annually. This plan contains policies and procedures for school staff and students to follow in the event of a variety of natural and man-made crisis situations. St. Rita School for the Deaf also follows the requirements for necessary fire, evacuation, and tornado drills and files a semi-annual report to the state. Drills will be held at regular intervals, as required by law. These are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given everyone follow directions promptly. Directions will be given in each room at the beginning of the year and posted in a visible place. We ask that all adults who are in the building at the time of a drill follow the safety rules.

If conditions warrant a lock down that would possibly effect dismissal time, the automated phone/email/text messaging system will be activated and parents will be notified. Do not attempt to remove your child from school during this time.

Child Protection Policy

1. **Introduction.** It is the policy of St. Rita School for the Deaf that the protection and safety of St. Rita students, as well as other children, shall be of paramount importance. Accordingly, any doubts concerning whether there exists sufficient evidence of child abuse, child neglect or other incident involving serious injury/harm or risk of serious injury/harm to any child should be resolved in favor of reporting such information in accordance with the procedures provided herein and applicable Federal or State law.

2. **Child Abuse/Neglect.** The following examples of child abuse and child neglect are not all inclusive. Any fact or circumstance that reasonably indicates child abuse or neglect should be reported in accordance with Paragraph 3, below.

A. **Abuse.** For purposes of this Policy, an abused child includes any child who:

- Is the victim of sexual conduct or sexual conduct with an adult or is otherwise the victim of criminal sexual activity; exhibits evidence of physical or mental injury which is not the result of an accident or is not consistent with the explanation of the cause or circumstances, with the possible explanation of a minor injury arising from an altercation between students (see Paragraph 5, below); or otherwise suffers physical or mental injury caused by child's parent(s), guardian, custodian.

B. Neglect. For purposes of this Policy, a neglected child includes any child:

- Who is abandoned by the child's parent(s), guardian or custodian; who lacks adequate care or supervision due to the faults or habits of the child's parent(s), guardian, or custodian; whose parent(s), guardian or custodian fails to provide proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care or other care necessary for the child's health, morals or well being, including any special care made necessary by the child's mental condition; or who, because of any omission of the child's parent(s), guardian or custodian, suffers physical or mental injury.

3. **Employee Responsibilities.** All employees of St. Rita School for the Deaf are required to get a background check which includes fingerprinting and receiving training through Safe Parish, a national program, on child protection. Online monthly trainings are required in order for the employee to continue working at the school.

All employees of St. Rita School for the Deaf who know or suspect that a child under the age of eighteen years of age or a disabled child under the age of twenty-one years has suffered or is suffering any type of abuse or neglect are required to take the following actions:

A. **Take immediate action to protect the child** from any immediate threat of abuse or neglect. To this end, the child may be asked about the identity of the abuser, if unknown. However, the child should not be pressured to provide such information.

B. **Immediately report such information** to the public children's services agency or local law enforcement official for the municipality or county in which the child resides or in which the abuse is believed to have occurred. This requirement is met by calling **855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453)**.

C. **Report** such information **to the Principal** or his/her designee as soon as practicable, and in any event within twenty-four hours of learning of such information. If the Director or his designee cannot be contacted within twenty-four hours, the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, or Counsel for St. Rita School or the Archdiocese shall be contacted. The number for the Chancellor is **421-3131**.

For purposes of this Policy, every student of St. Rita School for the Deaf, irrespective of age, shall be considered a child.

The **duty to report** information concerning confirmed or suspected child abuse to the public children's services agency or local law enforcement official **rests with each and every individual employee**, and is not met simply by reporting such information to another staff member or administrator. Accordingly, each employee who believes that a child has been or is being abused must either personally report, with their supervisor or the child's principal, such information, or confirm that such information has been reported by another staff member to the appropriate public official.

4. **Principal Responsibilities.** Upon receiving any report or other information that reasonably indicates child abuse/neglect, the Director or his designee shall:

- A. Ensure that such information has been reported to the public children's services agency or local law enforcement official, as appropriate.
- B. Provide a verbal report of the incident followed by a written report to the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools, and Counsel for St. Rita and/or the Archdiocese.
- C. As soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than six hours after learning of the incident, contact the parent(s), guardian(s) or custodian(s) of the child(ren) involved, unless this would worsen the child's situation.

If feasible, Counsel for St. Rita and/or the Archdiocese should first be contacted for guidance concerning what information can be provided to the parent(s), guardian or custodian. However, **Counsel must be contacted prior to providing any information to a person who is suspected of abusing or neglecting the child.**

If unable to first contact Counsel, no information concerning the identities of any other student(s) involved in the incident shall be divulged.

- D. Maintain a written log of persons to whom the incident has been reported, including the name of each person, his/her position and organization, the date/time(s) of such report(s) and a description of the information provided.
- E. Following consultation with Counsel, prepare a written report of the incident. However, upon receipt of notification that the incident is being actively investigated by a public agency, the Director shall not continue any active investigation (for example, conduct interviews of witnesses) of the incident without first consulting with Counsel.

1. **Incidents between Students.** Incidents involving non-criminal (consensual) sexual activity between students, or minor injuries (e.g. a scratch or scrape) arising from an altercation between students may first be reported to the principal or his/her

designee, who shall determine which of the actions contained in Paragraphs 3 and 4, above, shall be implemented.

Smoke-Free Building Policy

St. Rita School for the Deaf is a tobacco-free school and campus. We strive to create an environment for all students, staff and visitors that provides a safe and healthy campus for all. Smoking and the use of any tobacco product including but not limited to oral tobacco products as well as e-cigarettes are prohibited throughout the school and campus. Students smoking or using tobacco products on the campus of St. Rita School for the Deaf will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

Pregnancy

The decision to admit or retain a student in the school who has become pregnant, or caused another student to become pregnant, will be made by the President and/or Principal after all involved parties have been consulted. In each case, the decision will be made with the welfare of the student(s) involved, and the common good and welfare of all students considered.

General Information Policies

Visitors

St. Rita School for the Deaf is committed to providing a safe, value-oriented environment which facilitates the educational, social, and spiritual development of each student. The school welcomes visitors into the building on a daily basis. For the safety of staff and students and to minimize disruptions in the classroom we ask that all visitors including parents receive prior approval before visiting during the school day.

If you would like to observe in a class, visit or speak with a teacher in person, please contact the teacher at least three days before the visit by email, phone, or videophone. All requests must be approved by a school administrator. A visitor form will be filled out by the teacher or administrator and placed at the front desk.

All visitors prior to entering the classrooms must sign in at the front desk with the receptionist. If a prior approval or visitor form has not been filled out, an administrator will need to approve the visit at that time.

At any point in time, the administration reserves the right to reschedule or terminate an observation or visit in the event of a building emergency or a disruption that impacts the daily school day routine.

Classrooms

Each teacher will set rules for their classroom. Students are to follow the rules established in their classrooms. Not following expected behaviors and rules will result

in disciplinary consequences.

Students should not leave personal items in the classrooms between and after classes. Students are not permitted to be in a classroom without a teacher present.

Cars on Campus

Students wanting to have their cars on campus must have a permission form signed by their parents. These forms must be on file in the school office before cars can be brought on campus. Student drivers must give a copy of his/her valid license and car insurance coverage to the school administration.

Students may not take other students in their cars without written permission from parents of all students involved. These forms must be in the school files.

Any student(s) may lose permission to keep a car on campus by showing poor judgment or irresponsible behavior.

Student cars may be inspected at any time by the administration or other authorized staff member.

The school is not responsible for any damage to vehicles or for improper use of automobiles by student drivers.

Lockers

Lockers will be available, and locks are provided to students by the school. The school reserves the right to search lockers at any time. Opened containers of food and drinks/liquids are not permitted in lockers. Pictures or other decorations are not permitted on the outside of lockers.

Student Work Permit Eligibility

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code, St. Rita School for the Deaf recognizes the importance of balancing academic success with work-based learning opportunities. St. Rita School for the Deaf can issue minor work permits. The following policy outlines the school's procedure for issuing Ohio Minor Work Permits to eligible students.

Students requesting a work permit must meet all of the following:

- Academic Performance
 - The student must maintain a minimum overall average of 70% in all current coursework.
- School Attendance
 - HB410 establishes thresholds for excessive absences and habitual truancy. To be issued a minor work permit, the student must not be approaching or exceeding these attendance limits.
- Parental/Guardian Consent

- A parent or guardian must submit a signed letter of support for the student's application for a work permit.
- Ongoing Eligibility
 - Students who receive a work permit must continue to meet the academic performance requirement and show improvement or stability in attendance. Failure to do so may result in revocation of the permit.

Request of Personal Information

Home phone numbers or addresses of students and staff will not be given out to anyone requesting them. Please call the front desk if you wish to be contacted by your child's teacher via phone or e-mail (513-771-7600).

Parent Relations

The Catholic Church and St. Rita School for the Deaf recognize parents as the primary educators of their children. The education of students at our school is a partnership between parents and the school. If, in the opinion of the administration, the partnership is irretrievably broken, the school reserves the right to require the parent to withdraw his or her child. This is a very serious decision that is not made lightly.

Parent Volunteers

The administration and staff encourage all parents and legal guardians to become actively involved at St. Rita School for the Deaf by serving as a parent volunteer. Your time, talent and enthusiasm are an integral part of the day-to-day functioning of the school and the overall academic and social success of your child.

All volunteers are required to fill out an application, get a background check through the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and attend a training session through Safe Parish. Once the steps are completed then the volunteer may actively participate in activities with the students. A quarterly training through Safe Parish online is required to continue to volunteer at St. Rita School for the Deaf.

Getting involved at St. Rita School for the Deaf can be very rewarding. Whether you choose to empower and encourage the students directly or volunteer your time in other areas, you are making a positive difference.

One of the impactful ways to give back to the school is by volunteering for fundraising events throughout the year. Whether it is selling tickets, working concessions, chairing a booth, or serving on a committee, the fundraising events are vital to St. Rita School for the Deaf's success.

Other volunteer opportunities include chaperoning a field trip or working in a classroom. While working in a classroom can be very rewarding, we do not allow you to volunteer in your child's classroom. Parents volunteering in their child's class can sometimes lead to disruption in learning. There are many other classrooms that the parent can make a

difference in.

All volunteers who work directly with students and in classrooms need to be able to communicate through sign language. Classes are offered 3 times a year at St. Rita School for the Deaf and there are several colleges and agencies in the area that offer classes as well.

Gender Identity

According to the Catholic Faith, a person's sexual identity is rooted in one's biological identity as male or female. A person's biological identity and gender identity are considered to be one and the same.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati has specified the following policy regarding gender identity:

In Catholic schools, all curricular and extra-curricular activity is rooted in and consistent with, the principles of Catholic doctrine. Catholic schools:

- Support students with gender dysphoria by treating them with sensitivity, respect, mercy and compassion.
- Require that participation on school teams be according to biological sex.
- Require that names and pronouns be in accordance with the person's biological sex.
- Designate Catholic sex education, uniforms and gender appropriate dress, bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, and sleeping accommodations on trips according to biological sex.
- Maintain names in school records according to the student's biological sex.
- Provide reasonable accommodation to a private bathroom for use by any student who desires increased privacy.

In case of a special request, consider in a compassionate way, on a case-by-case basis, the physical and psychological needs of a student based on the following questions:

- i. What is the specific request of the student and/or parents?
- ii. Is the request in keeping with the teaching of the Catholic Church?
- iii. Is the school reasonably able to accommodate the request?

Responsible Use of Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

INTRODUCTION

- Vital to the evangelizing and educational mission of the Catholic Church, we are Christ-centered communities dedicated to the faith formation, academic excellence, and individual growth of our students, all rooted in the Gospel message of Jesus.

Catholic School's Mission Statement

- The Church views emerging technologies as gifts of the Spirit to this age and challenges "God's faithful people to make creative use of new discoveries and technologies for the benefit of humanity and the fulfillment of God's plan for the world.."

Aetatis Novae, #2, #3; Rose, 1992

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR USERS OF TECHNOLOGY

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati are using the Internet and technological equipment/resources (i.e. computers, laptops, iPads, tablets, scanners, printers, cameras, email, software, and all other electronic devices and programs) (the Internet and all technological equipment/resources are referred to collectively in this Policy as "Technological Resources") to enhance student learning and to provide a quality educational experience for all students. Use of a school's Technological Resources is strictly limited to educational purposes.

In keeping with the mission of the Catholic schools, school personnel will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the school's Technological Resources, during school hours and while on school grounds, are used appropriately by the student or adult user. Parents/guardians and students are solely responsible for use of the school's Technological Resources at home, off school property, and/or outside of school hours.

FILTERING AND MONITORING

On St. Rita School for the Deaf's campus, filtering software is used to block inappropriate websites and content. Off campus, students might not have access to filtering software and therefore must take responsibility for his or her use of the internet and avoid objectionable sites. If a student inadvertently lands on a website that they, their teachers, or their parents determine to be inappropriate, it must be reported to the school principal immediately.

USER AGREEMENT/PARENT PERMISSION FORM

In order to ensure the proper use of the school's Technological Resources, it is necessary that each student user, his/her parent/guardian, and each adult user annually sign the attached User Agreement/Parent Permission Form. The signed form must be on file at the school before any Technological Resources are provided to or accessed by the student or adult user. Signing the form means that the student user, his/her parent/guardian, and the adult user will abide by the terms and conditions set forth in this Policy.

Each school must have on file a signed Responsible Use of Technology Policy – User Agreement Form for any Student and/or adult (administrators, faculty and staff members, parents, volunteers, and other school-affiliated adults) using a school's technology resources, school's Internet account, school-sponsored account, or personal account to access the Internet. All Internet access and use of other electronic

communication technology is strictly limited to educational purposes. Students (including those 18 and over) are not allowed to access personal accounts from school. School personnel (administrators, faculty and staff members) are allowed to access personal accounts at school but are subject to responsible use provisions herein. Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati adhere to the Children's Internet Protection Act. Individual schools may be further governed by the policies of the Instructional Technology Centers or other Internet Service Providers. The school has the right to access to any electronic devices on school property. All information received or sent from school property remains the property of the school and is not considered confidential. The school reserves the right to investigate the download history of all school computers. There shall be no reasonable expectation of privacy.

*The term student applies to any individual enrolled in the school regardless of age.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY

The school shall provide access to technological resources, including Internet, for educational purposes only. The school shall also provide training for students and teachers in the appropriate use of online behavior, interaction online on social networking sites, cyber-bullying awareness and reporting of misuse of technology. The school shall take reasonable measures to guard against student access, during school hours and while on school grounds, to objectionable material through the school's Technological Resources. Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding minors is forbidden.

USER RESPONSIBILITY

The user shall access and use the school's Technological Resources for educational purposes only. Each user is responsible for information that is sent and received under his/her personal and/or school account. Passwords are to be guarded and not displayed or shared with others. The user must strictly adhere to copyright laws. In addition, unethical and/or illegal uses of the school's Technological Resources are prohibited. Unauthorized access, including hacking or use of another person's credentials or account, is strictly forbidden. The user agrees not to bypass or attempt to bypass the school's firewall or filters, nor to harm or alter school property, including any of the school's Technological Resources. The user agrees not to change any computer settings, hardware, software, parts, or cabling. The user agrees not to pirate, nor to submit, publish, display, distribute, send, or view any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, bullying, racially offensive, or illegal material at any time, on or off school property; nor shall the user encourage the use, sale, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances. Any use in violation of law is prohibited. Any commercial use of the school's Technological Resources is strictly forbidden. Unless authorized by the school, the user agrees not to access chat rooms, newsgroups, listserves, instant messaging, or a personal webpage. The user agrees not to download anything without permission. The user agrees he/she will not damage the school's Technological Resources, including computers, computer systems, and computer networks. Personal technology equipment brought to school is subject to the

procedures outlined in this Policy. If the student user, his/her parent/guardian, or the adult user becomes aware of inappropriate, illegal, or non-educational material being used, accessed, sent, received, or displayed through the school's Technological Resources, he/she agrees to immediately report the matter to the principal or supervisor. Student users and their parents/guardians agree that they are solely responsible for monitoring the student's use of the school's Technological Resources at home, off school grounds, and outside of school hours.

The user must acknowledge the following:

- Computer use is not private. All electronic data that passes through the St. Rita computer or over St. Rita's network is subject to monitoring and seizure and may be handed over to law enforcement officers.
- The user in whose name a technology device is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. If the technology gets damaged while in the student's care, there will be a replacement fee of \$100.00.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The school may take disciplinary action against any user who violates the Responsible Use of Technology and AI Policy, or other school or Archdiocesan policies, through use of the school's Technological Resources. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, revocation of access to Technological Resources, suspension or expulsion from school, termination of employment, and/or possible legal action.

The responsible use of technology user agreement can be located in Final Forms. It must be signed annually by the parent and the child if in grades 7-12.

Note: *St. Rita School for the Deaf reserves the right to modify this policy as needed.*

INTERNET and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) – TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE

1) Acceptable Use – The purpose of the backbone network making up the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of St. Rita School for the Deaf.

Use of other organization's networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any national or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

A. Responsible Uses of AI for Students

With their educator's permission, students may be permitted to utilize AI for the following purposes:

- **Aiding Creativity:** Students can harness generative AI to spark creativity across diverse subjects, including writing, visual arts, and music composition. Students should not use AI to replace their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Collaboration:** Generative AI tools can assist students in group projects by contributing concepts, supplying research support, and identifying relationships between varied information.
- **Content Creation and Enhancement:** AI can help generate personalized study materials, summaries, quizzes, and visual aids, and it can assist students with organizing their thoughts and content.
- **Tutoring:** AI-powered virtual teaching assistants may provide support, answer questions, help with homework, and supplement classroom instruction.

Students and their parents/guardians should recognize the risks and limitations associated with newly developed technologies like AI. For example, information contained in AI tools may be unreliable or inaccurate. Additionally, students should not enter personally identifiable, private, confidential, or proprietary information into AI models or tools.

B. Prohibited Uses of AI for Students

- **Inappropriate Use:** Using AI tools to engage in bullying, harassing, intimidating, or other inappropriate behavior is strictly prohibited. Students are expected to use AI solely for educational purposes, upholding values of respect, inclusivity, and academic integrity at all times.
- **Plagiarism and Cheating:** Students are prohibited from copying any source, including generative AI, without prior approval and adequate documentation. Students are prohibited from submitting AI-generated work as their original work. Any AI generated content used in assignments must be appropriately cited. AI tools may be used for brainstorming or preliminary research, but using AI to generate answers or complete assignments without proper citation or passing off AI-generated content as one's own is considered plagiarism. School policies will continue to be enforced.
- **Unauthorized Use:** Educators will clarify if, when, and how AI tools may be used in their classrooms. Students may not use AI without advance approval from their educator. Students are expected to review AI-generated content before using it.
- **Noncompliance with Other Policies:** The use of AI technologies must comply with all Archdiocese and school policies including, but not limited to, academic integrity policies and student codes of conduct. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for familiarizing themselves with these policies and ensuring compliance.

2) Privileges - The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate sue and their decision is final. Also, the system administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of St. Rita School for the Deaf may request that the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

3) Network Etiquette – You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

The following are not permitted:

- a) Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- b) Using obscene language
- c) Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- d) Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- e) Violating copyright laws
- f) Transmit materials, information or software in violation of any local, state or federal law
- g) Using others' passwords
- h) Going into others' folders, work or files
- i) Employing the network for commercial purposes
- j.) Conducting inappropriate online searches

Remember the following:

- a) Be polite. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or hallway.
- b) Use appropriate language. Do not swear; use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- c) Do not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers of students or colleagues.
- d) Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- e) Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Users should not expect that files stored on school servers would always be private.
- f) All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property but open to administrative scrutiny.

4) St. Rita School for the Deaf makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. St. Rita School for the Deaf will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes the loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. St. Rita School for the Deaf specifically denies any responsibility for accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

5) Security – Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the network or Internet, you must notify the system administrator at support@srsdeaf.org. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the Internet as a

system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to network computers and/or the Internet.

6) Vandalism _ Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or other networks that are connected to any of the Internet backbones. This includes, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

7) Student Discipline – Vandalism will result in disciplinary actions:

- a. First offense: A student will lose computer privileges/network service access until a parent conference is held. Second offense: A student may lose computer privileges/network service access for one (1) month.
- b. Third offense: A student has exhibited a pattern of abuse of flagrant violations. Any student who, after the first and second offenses, continues to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior by violating this policy may lose all computer privileges/network service access for the remainder of the school year.
- c. Students may be suspended or expelled from school if he/she engages in conduct on the computer network service that could be considered criminal, as defined by federal and/or state law. Students committing criminal acts may be prosecuted. Expulsion may be considered for flagrant violations of this policy.
- d. Each student is responsible for any damage he/she may cause to St. Rita School for the Deaf's computers or to the computer network service. The student may pay all costs incurred in restoring the computer or the network service to its previous working order.
- e. If a class requires the use of a computer and/or the computer network service, a student who has lost computer privileges under this policy will be allowed to participate under direct teacher supervision and system administrator approval.

Principal's Right to Amend

This handbook is not a binding contract on St. Rita School for the Deaf. Rather, it is a unilateral set of policies which students and families are expected to, and must, follow. The president, principal, or his/her appointee, with the support of the Archdiocese, retains the right to amend this handbook at any time and for any reason. Parents, guardians, and students will be given notification if changes are made.

