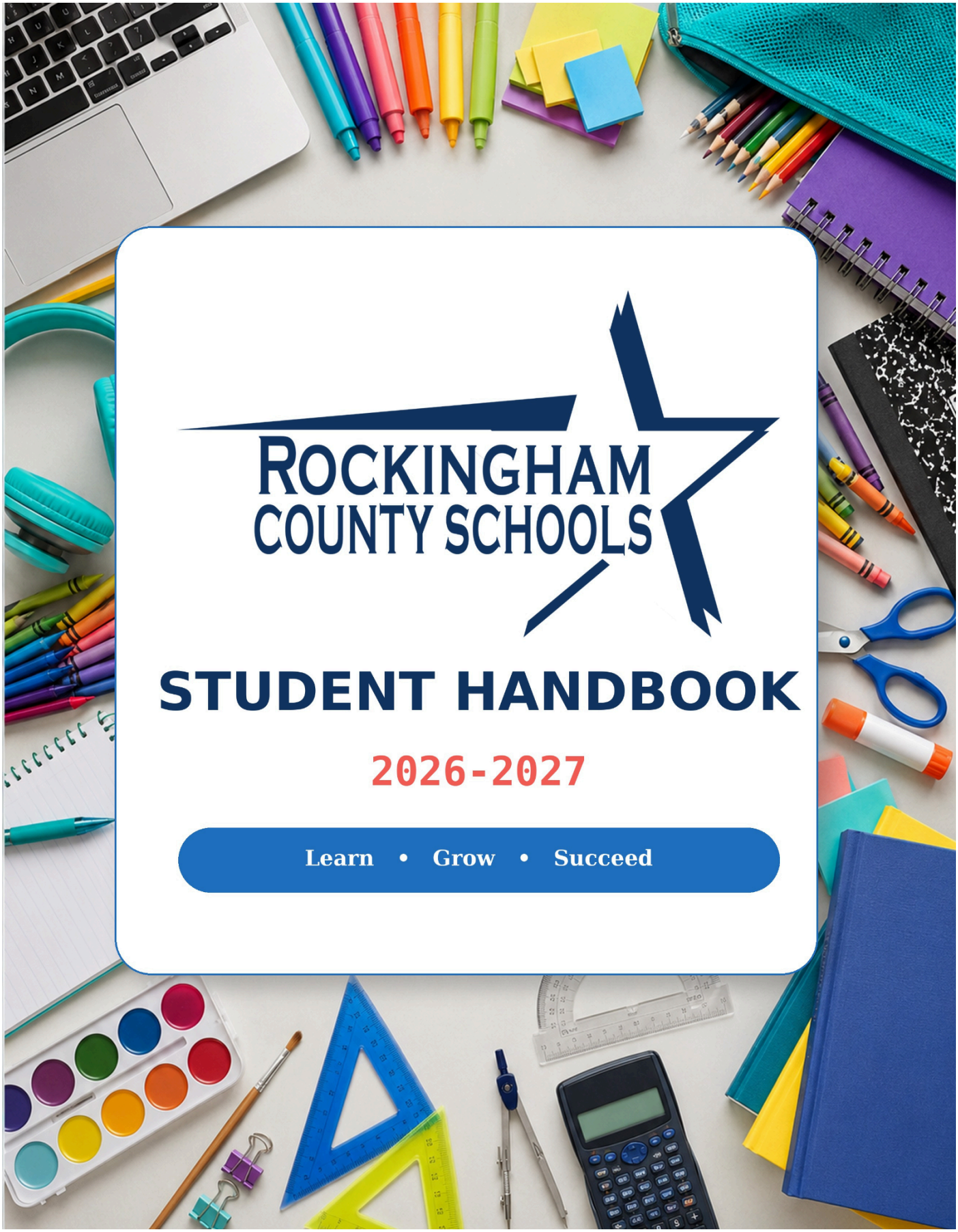

ROCKINGHAM
COUNTY SCHOOLS
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026-2027
Learn • Grow • Succeed

Rockingham County Schools
2026–2027 Student Handbook

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SECTION 1: RCS INFORMATION

1.1 – Mission

Through effective relationships with the family and community partners, Rockingham County Schools will provide a safe, dynamic, nurturing, and innovative learning environment in which each child has the opportunity to reach his or her highest potential.

1.2 – Vision

Rockingham County Schools will empower each child to be a life-long learner, equipped to contribute in a changing, complex society.

1.3 – School Calendars

RCS School Calendars may be obtained on the school district's website at:
https://www.rock.k12.nc.us/o/rcs/page/calendar.

SECTION 2: ATHLETICS

Rockingham County Schools Athletics Program is designed to provide a wide range of wholesome athletic opportunities that support the development of student-athletes. Participation in athletics encourages students to become responsible citizens while promoting the values of sportsmanship, fair play, and teamwork. Students and parents with questions regarding athletics are encouraged to contact their school's athletic director for additional information.

2.1 – Eligibility

To be eligible for tryouts, practice, or participation in athletic contests, a player must meet all North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) and Rockingham County Schools (RCS) eligibility requirements and policies:

Age:

- Must not be 19 years of age on or before August 31st of the current school year.

Attendance:

- Students must have been in attendance for at least 85% of the previous semester.
    - Only unexcused absences will be counted when determining eligibility. This reflects an NCHSAA rule change for the 2026–2027 school year.
- Effective with the 2026-27 year, students must participate in the high school feeder pattern of the middle school they attended in 8th grade

Academics:

- Must meet local promotion standards and pass 70% of courses taken in previous semester.

Enrollment:

- Must be a properly enrolled student at the assigned high school. Home school students:
- Documentation from the Division of Non-Public Education must be presented upon initial dual enrollment attendance, immunization, transcript, school number, etc.
- Home school students must communicate athletic intent at a member school in which they

are domiciled and follow the enrollment and assignment procedures/policies established by the local board of education.
- Notice to the principal must take place within ten days prior to the first practice date of each sports season.

Athletic Participation Fee:

- Effective with the 2025-26 school year all students participating on a middle or high school athletic team will be assessed a $40 fee (paid one time per year).
- Waivers can be requested to the school principal and athletic director.

Medical Examination:

- Must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant.

Other Requirements:

- Must not participate at the high school level for a period lasting longer than eight consecutive semesters beginning with the student's first entry into the 9th grade or participation on a high school team.
- Must not participate at the high school level for more than four seasons in that sport.
- May not play, sit on the bench, or practice if ineligible. Ineligible players are not allowed to participate in out-of- season workouts.
- Must not accept money or awards having value of more than $20 per sports season in order to maintain amateur status.
- Must not participate in an all-star or bowl game unless it is sanctioned by the NCHSAA, and unless the athlete has completed high school eligibility in that sport.
- May not participate in, practice or play, if assigned to In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension.
- Must not be convicted of a crime classified as a felony under North Carolina or federal law, or is adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult.

2.2 – Standards for High School

- Effective 2025-2026 school year, must pass 70% of courses taken the previous semester (cannot count lab assistant or office assistant)
- Must be in attendance 85% of a previous semester
- Must be Promoted from Grade 8 to Grade 9 (No specific grades or attendance)

2.3 – Attendance & Residency

A student is eligible to participate at the school to which he/she is assigned by the Rockingham County Board of Education. "Residence" as used for athletic eligibility purposes is defined as the equivalent of the term "domicile" as applied by the courts of North Carolina. Under no circumstance can a student have more than one residence for eligibility purposes. It is the obligation of the school to know the residence status of each athlete and to require compliance with these requirements. After initial entry into the 9th grade, and absent a bona fide move, a student transferring from one county school to another county school must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. A student transferring from a school outside of the county to a county school must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. Transfers within RCS schools will not be eligible for the remainder of the academic year, (excluding employee transfers). Special cases

will require Superintendent approval for immediate eligibility.

The residence of any student shall be deemed to be that of his/her parents or the sole surviving parent unless otherwise provided:

- In the event shall be that of the parent to whom custody has been awarded by a court of competent jurisdiction. If no custody order has been entered, the residence shall be deemed to be that of the parent who had actual custody immediately upon the separation.
- Any change in residence must be bona fide. Determination of what constitutes a bona fide change of residence depends upon the facts of each case. If you have questions, contact your school's athletic director.

No non-parental guardianship will be recognized where a student has a living parent unless one of the following requirements is met: 1) There has been a determination of abandonment of the student by such parent(s) or a determination that the student is a dependent juvenile as defined in G.S. 7A-5 17 (13) or comparable statute by a court of competent jurisdiction; 2) The student has been judicially declared a ward of the state or has been identified as an orphan or placed in a foster home by the Division of Social Services (or a comparable agency if out of state) and custody (not guardianship) has been determined by the court or social service agency. A student whose custody has been established by court order or social services agency decision is eligible for participation at the school to which he/she is assigned by the Rockingham County Board of Education.

In no case will any exception be made to the following rules:

- No student may participate at a second school in the same sport during the same sports season except in the event of a bona fide change in residence of the parent(s) or legal custodian; change in schools must be contemporaneous with change in residence.
- Documents purporting to establish guardianship or custody issued by a notary public, an attorney, a clerk of court, or any entity other than a court of record with competent jurisdiction will not be accepted.

RECHS and CTEIHS Students may participate in athletics provided the following criteria are met:

- Must play for the high school where the parent/student resides.
- Must have the approval of their respective schools' principal.
- Must meet all other athletic eligibility requirements.

Homeschool Students:

- Must have been enrolled in the registered home school for 365 days prior to being eligible in a member school.
- Once deemed eligible at a member school, the student must maintain continuous dual enrollment. Unenrollment would render the student ineligible for 365 days.
- Home school students must be on grade level according to a nationally standardized achievement test indicating grade level.
- Home school students must pass all courses in which he/she is enrolled in (public school).
- Home school students must be enrolled in 2 courses (one must be on campus).

SECTION 3: TRANSPORTATION

Bus safety is very important. Parents have the responsibility to encourage their students to obey all safety rules of the bus and to respect the authority of the bus driver. Students are to wait at their designated stop and display responsible behaviors at their stop. While on the bus, students shall follow all bus rules. Students must realize that disregarding a safety practice might cause an accident. Rockingham County Schools uses video recordings to monitor activity on buses.

Riding a bus is a privilege that may be revoked if bus rules are not followed. Each school will provide students with a copy of bus rules. The principal or designee has the responsibility of disciplining students for misconduct on the bus. This disciplinary action can include the suspension of bus riding privileges or suspension from school. Parents will be notified of misconduct on the bus. Parents, guardians, or others who are not assigned passengers or have not been approved by the principal or designee are not allowed to board the bus for any reason. (Legal Reference: G.S. 115C-399)

Students are responsible for being at their bus stop on time. Buses can travel only on state and city- maintained roads. Bus stops are determined by the transportation department and do not stop at every house. Unless safety problems are determined by the district, bus stops must be 2/10 of a mile apart.

Parents must notify the school that your child attends in order to have your child assigned to a bus. If a child doesn't ride for 10 or more consecutive days the student is taken off the bus roster. To receive funding from the state, students must be assigned to a bus. In an effort to manage buses as efficiently as possible, we strive to run buses with all seats filled. Seats cannot be held for students on a “might” ride basis.

If a student needs to start riding the bus again, the parent must contact the school administrator to be reassigned to the bus. If a student shows up at a bus stop and they are not assigned to that bus, they can be refused transportation due to the lack of seating. State Board of Education Policy requires the capacity of the bus cannot be exceeded. Also, if the bus is involved in an accident, all students must be assigned and a seating chart in place so that all may be accounted for in the report.

3.1 – Bus Routes

Unless road or other conditions make it inadvisable, public-school buses shall be routed on state-maintained highways, municipal streets or other streets with publicly dedicated right-of-way. G.S. 115C- 246(b) also states that, with regard to school buses routed on state-maintained highways, municipal streets and other streets with publicly dedicated right-of- way, “the local board of education shall not be responsible for damage to the roadway. Each public-school bus shall be routed so that the bus passes within ONE mile of the residence of each pupil assigned to that bus.”

Guidelines for Bus Stop Placement: School bus stop placements are governed by NC State Board of Education Policy as stated in TITLE 16, NORTH CAROLINA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, SUBCHAPTER 6B – STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, which states in part: “.0004 A route may not deviate from a general path of direction for a distance of less than one half mile and then return to the original path except for groups of 10 or more pupils, unescorted

pupils in grades K-3 or special education pupils." ".0004 (c) Unless safety factors require otherwise, superintendents may not plan bus stops closer together than 0.2 miles. Each student must be at the designated stop at the time of the bus's arrival."

Special Request for Multiple Stops: Requests for multiple stop placements, depending upon the day of the week or other considerations, cannot be accommodated. Students are allowed one stop in the morning and one in the afternoon. The stop cannot change daily.

Processing Time: Except for the beginning of the school year, the Transportation Department will process your transportation request within five days of receipt.

Athletic Equipment & Instruments: Athletic equipment is not allowed on the school bus. Band instruments are not allowed unless they can be held in the student's lap. Parents who have concerns or questions about transportation should contact the school principal. Rockingham County Schools is committed to maintaining safe and orderly schools in order to enhance educational opportunities for all students and to maintain schools as a safe haven. RCS is also committed to providing fair and equitable programs, sanctions and actions to all students.

SECTION 4: CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1 – Discipline Regulation Reference Guide

Rockingham County Schools desires all students to acquire the knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes to achieve their learning potential. Students have a much greater opportunity of reaching this goal while attending safe schools which are free from distractions. Just as we ask our teachers to set clear classroom expectations for student learning, the district sets clear standards for student behavior. Rockingham County Schools is committed to maintaining safe and orderly schools in order to enhance educational opportunities for all students. In order to maintain a safe school environment, we rely on our student's sense of citizenship and responsibility.

Our Board of Education has adopted a guidance document aligned with policies on student behavior. Students and parents should review Board Policy 4300 and 4300R Discipline Regulation Reference Guide/ Code of Student Conduct to understand the student behavior standards, as well as, to have a clear understanding of the system-wide behavioral expectations. Individual schools have developed school- wide Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS) teams to set expectations for behavior so that students are aware of permissible behaviors. For complete information on behavior standard students and parents should consult four resources: Student Handbook; Board policy; Code of Conduct; and related administrative regulations which can be located on our website. The Code of Conduct provides specific behavior infractions and recommended consequence(s) for each infraction. Administrators have discretion relating to consequences based on the totality of the circumstances in order to maintain a safe learning environment. In addition, students with documented special needs may have different behavior consequences based on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/ or based on special education or disability law.

4.2 – Weapons

Students are prohibited from possessing, handling, using, transporting or transmitting, whether

concealed or open, any weapon or any instrument that reasonably looks like a weapon or could be used as a weapon at any time while a student is at school, in any school building and on any school premises, attending school- sponsored activities, on or about any school-owned or operated vehicle, off school property at any school- sponsored or school-approved activity or function or during any period of time when students are subject to the authority of school personnel, and at any time when the student's behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline and protecting safety and welfare of students and staff. Weapons include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- Loaded and unloaded firearms, including guns, pistols, and rifles
- Bullets, ammunition, magazine clips, silencer, or gunpowder
- Destructive devices, including explosives, such as dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades, and mines
- Nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons of mass destruction as defined in G.S. 14-288.21(c)
- Knives, including pocket knives, bowie knives, switchblades, dirks, box cutters, and daggers
- Slingshots and slungshots
- Leaded canes
- Blackjacks or brass/metal knuckles
- BB, Airsoft or Paintball guns
- Any material shaped or formed to resemble a firearm of any kind
- Starter pistol
- Stun guns, tasers, and other electric shock weapons
- Martial arts weapons
- Icepicks
- Razors
    - Fireworks or anything containing black powder
    - Any sharp pointed or edged instruments except unaltered nail files and clips and tools used
    - Solely for preparation of food, instruction, and maintenance
    - Chemical agents including but not limited to mace, pepper spray, OC spray and deer spray

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to possess, handle, transport, transmit or use any of the weapons or weapon-like items listed above. A student who finds a weapon or weapon-like item, who witnesses another student or other person with such an item or who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to possess, handle or use such an item must immediately notify a teacher, administrator or SRO.

4.3 – Bomb Threats

Students are prohibited from making bomb threats, regardless of whether the student intends to or has the means to carry out the threat; perpetrating a bomb hoax against school system property by making a report, knowing or having reason to know the report is false, that a bomb or other device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting, or burning is located on school system property or at a school system event; perpetrating a bomb hoax by concealing, placing, or displaying any device on school system property or at a school system

event, so as to cause any person reasonably to believe the same to be a bomb or similar device intended to cause injury to persons or property; and knowingly or willfully causing, encouraging or aiding another student to make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a bomb, make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax must immediately notify a teacher, administrator or SRO.

4.4 – Threats or Hoax of Mass Violence

Students are prohibited from making a threat of mass violence or perpetrating a threat of mass violence hoax by threatening to commit an act of mass violence on school property or at a school-sponsored event, regardless of whether the student intends to or has the means to carry out the threat; making a report, knowing or having reason to know the report is false, that an act of mass violence is going to occur on school property or at a school system event; making a report, knowing or having reason to know the report is false, that a device, substance, or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening injury to another person is located on school system property or at a school system event; or concealing, placing, disseminating or displaying on school system property or at a school-sponsored event any device, substance or material, so as to cause a reasonable person to believe the same to be a weapon of mass destruction or to be intended to cause harmful or life-threatening illness or injury to another person.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening illness or injury to another person, make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax must immediately notify a teacher, administrator or SRO.

4.5 – Clear Threats to Student and/or Employee Safety

Students are prohibited from engaging in behavior that constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or staff. Behavior constituting a clear threat to the safety of others includes, but is not limited to: theft or attempted theft by a student from another person by using or threatening to use a weapon; the intentional and malicious burning of any structure or personal property, including any vehicle; an attack or threatened attack by a student against another person wherein the student uses a weapon or displays a weapon in a manner found threatening to that person; an attack by a student on any employee, adult volunteer, or other student that does not result in serious injury but that is intended to cause or reasonably could cause serious injury; an attack by a student on another person whereby the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury, such as broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injuries, laceration requiring stitches, loss of consciousness, or significant bruising or pain; or whereby the victim requires hospitalization or treatment in a hospital emergency room as a result of the attack; any intentional, highly reckless, or negligent act that results in the death of another person; confining, restraining, or removing another person from one place to another, without the victim's consent or the consent of the victim's parent, for the purpose of committing a felony or for the purpose of holding the victim as a hostage, for ransom, or for use as a shield; the possession of a weapon on any school property, including in a vehicle, with the intent to use or transmit for another's use or possession in a reckless manner so that harm is reasonably foreseeable; taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of another person or persons, by force, threat of force, or violence, or by putting the victim in fear; any unauthorized

and unwanted intentional touching, or attempt to touch, by one person of the sex organ of another, including the breasts of the female and the genital areas of the male and female; the possession, manufacture, sale, or delivery, or any attempted sale or delivery, of a controlled substance in violation of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes; any behavior resulting in a felony conviction on a weapons, drug, assault or other charge that implicates the safety of other persons; and any other behavior that demonstrates a clear threat to the safety of others in the school environment.

4.6 – Consequences

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy. **As required by law, a student who brings or possesses a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school- sponsored event must be suspended for 365 days**, unless the superintendent modifies, in writing, the required 365-day suspension for an individual student on a case-by-case basis.

The superintendent shall not impose a 365-day suspension if the superintendent determines that the student (1) took or received the firearm or destructive device from another person at school or found the firearm or destructive device at school, (2) delivered or reported the firearm or destructive device as soon as practicable to law enforcement officer or school personnel and (3) had no intent to use the firearm or destructive device in a harmful or threatening way. A student may not be suspended for 365 days for a weapons violation except in accordance with this subsection.

For the purpose of this subsection, a firearm is (1) a weapon, including a starter gun that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon or any firearm muffler or firearm silencer. A firearm does not include an inoperable antique firearm, a BB gun, a stun gun, an air rifle or an air pistol. For the purposes of this subsection, a destructive device is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (1) bomb, (2) grenade, (3) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (4) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one- quarter ounce, (5) mine, or (6) similar device.

Any student having knowledge of criminal behavior or behavior that could threaten the safety of students or staff at school and/or school-sponsored event, they should immediately report the information to a teacher, administrator or SRO. Students and families can report safety concerns to the school, RCS Administrative Offices, Crime Stoppers at 336-349-9683 and the Sandy Hook Promise Say Something Anonymous Tip platform.

4.7 – Gang-Related Activity

Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning

and achievement.

Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within the schools. For the purposes of this policy, "gang-related activity" means: any conduct that is prohibited by another board policy and is engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang or as a result of the student's gang membership; any conduct engaged in by a student to perpetuate, proliferate, or display the existence of any identified gang.

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

- Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs or other items with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang
- Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.) with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang
- Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey membership or affiliation in a gang
- Requiring payment of protection or insurance or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity
- Inciting others to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity
- Soliciting others for gang membership
- Committing any other illegal act or other violation of school system policies in connection with gang-related activity.

4.8 – Safe and Drug-Free Schools

It is the policy of the Rockingham County Board of Education that a drug and alcohol-free school environment shall be maintained. The Board prohibits the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcohol or any other psychoactive or controlled substance or counterfeit substance as defined in Schedules I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C.812) and further defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1308.11 through 1308.15 or by the General Statutes of the State of North Carolina.

This policy shall govern each student while on any property owned by or under the control of the Board and, in addition, shall apply at any school-sponsored event or activity, regardless of whether held during normal school hours. Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on the campuses of Rockingham County Schools. Any student caught dispensing, distributing, possessing, selling an illegal drug will be recommended for a suspension from school for a minimum of the remainder of the school year. If probable cause exists, the student involved will be charged and/or arrested. If you have specific information concerning the sale or possession of drugs on your campus, please contact a teacher, administrator or SRO. You may also contact Rockingham County Crime Stoppers at 336-349-9683.

4.9 – Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying

Rockingham County Schools acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, positive and caring learning and working environment that facilitates student achievement. Students are prohibited from engaging in discrimination, harassment or bullying under RCS Policy Code #1735/4329/7311: Bullying and Harassment Behavior Prohibited

by other students and will not be tolerated. Discrimination is any act or failure to act, whether intentional or unintentional, that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on an individual's real or perceived race, color, creed, political belief, ancestry, national origin, religion, linguistic and language differences, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, height, weight, physical characteristics, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, disability, or age. Harassment or bullying behavior is conduct intended to intimidate, discredit, injure or disturb another person or a group of persons. Such conduct violates when RCS policy when any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication places a student in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property or creates or has the reasonable potential to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, behavior described above that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic or motivated by an individual's association with a person who has or is perceived to have such a differentiating characteristic. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, acts of disrespect, intimidation, or threats, such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Harassment and bullying may also occur through electronic means ("cyberbullying"), such as via the internet, emailing, or text messaging, or by use of personal web sites to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior intended to cause harm to persons or groups.

Any violation of this policy is serious and school officials shall promptly take appropriate action. School administrators respond and investigate claims of discrimination, harassment and bullying. Based on the nature and the severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, a student could be subject to appropriate consequences and remedial actions ranging from positive behavior interventions up to, and including, expulsion. Each school has implemented PBIS (Positive Behavior and Interventions and Supports) to establish expectations for behavioral norms. School counselors work to promote kindness and character education and foster a school culture of acceptance, tolerance and respect. A student experiencing discrimination, harassment or bullying is encouraged to report it to a caring adult.

Additionally, accessible through a cell phone or on the website, is an anonymous tip line the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System. The Say Something Anonymous Reporting System allows students or anyone to submit secure and anonymous safety concerns to help identify and intervene for at-risk individuals before they hurt themselves or others. Students and/or adults can do this by reporting observed threats, behaviors, actions and harassment. Administrators at each school have access to the information and will investigate according to Board Policy.

4.10 – Prohibited Behavior

Possession or use of illegal drugs and alcohol is harmful to students. Students are prohibited from possessing, dispersing, selling transmitting, using or being under the influence of any of the

following substances:

- Narcotic drugs;
- Amphetamines;
- Barbiturates;
- Hallucinogenic drugs;
- Prescription drugs and inhalants not intended for the individual prescribed;
- Marijuana or any other controlled substance;
- Any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage or fortified wine or other intoxicating liquor;
- Any chemicals or products procured or used with the intention of bring about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior; or
- Vaping devices & other tobacco products

Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, transporting or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs. Students may not in any way participate in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property. The first violation of possession, consumption or distribution of an illegal drug, unauthorized prescription medication or alcohol will result in long term suspension. Possession or use of prescription and over the counter drugs are not in violation of this policy if possessed and used in accordance with Board Policy #6125, Administering Medications to Students. All Rockingham County Schools are tobacco free campuses. No adults or student shall possess, smoke or otherwise use any tobacco, including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products, as well as electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, JUUL's, and other electronic smoking devices even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine, in any school building or vehicle at any time during the school day or during any period of time when students are subject to the authority of school personnel. The principal may authorize other lawful uses of substances otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.

4.11 – Water Bottle Container Guidelines

To support a safe, secure, and efficient learning environment, Rockingham County Schools requires students to use approved water bottle containers. This guideline supports the effective operation of the district's weapons detection systems, allows staff to readily verify the contents of drink containers, and helps reduce the concealment of prohibited items, including electronic vaping devices and other prohibited materials. By using approved water bottle containers, students help ensure a safe and orderly school environment.

The following water bottle containers are *acceptable*:

- Be clear or transparent so the contents are visible.
- Be made of materials that can safely pass through the district's weapons detection system.
- Have colored lids, caps, or straws if desired.

The following water bottle containers are *prohibited*:

- Metal or stainless-steel water bottles.
- Opaque drink containers that do not allow the contents to be seen.
- Glass bottles.
- Any container used to conceal prohibited items.

Students may refill approved water bottles at the water filling stations located throughout each

school.

Students who bring a prohibited drink container to school may be required to store the container in the school office or replace it with an approved container. Repeated violations will be considered non-compliance and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Rockingham County Schools Code of Student Conduct.

SECTION 5: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

5.1 – Emergency Preparation

The school district works closely with local government, law enforcement and other emergency management officials to monitor safety concerns and respond quickly to situations as they arise. The district and all of our schools have plans to respond to emergencies, including inclement weather, fire, dangerous items on campus, utility outages, intruders, etc. Our schools have updated their site-specific Safe School and Emergency Response Plans and they have been reviewed by the Director of Communications, Public Relations, & Safety with assistance from the District Crisis Leadership Team.

The district also provides several training opportunities to school staff to assist them in preparing for a wide range of potential emergencies. In addition, all schools conduct emergency drills throughout the school year so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses. Each school has assigned key staff members to perform roles and responsibilities during emergency situations.

5.2 – Parents' Role in Emergency Response

Parental support and community involvement are vital to helping the district maintain safe, orderly schools. During and following an emergency situation, school and district officials must act quickly and follow established emergency protocols to safeguard students and staff, secure schools, and communicate accurate information in a timely manner. Parents can assist greatly by helping with preparation before the emergency. Here are a few critical steps you can take:

- Please do not call or go to your child's school during an actual emergency. Local law enforcement advises you to remain out of the area and keep lines of communication open. Please do not go to your child's school unless you received direction from the school or district officials. Vehicular traffic around the school may impede the ability of emergency responders from entering/exiting the campus.
- Please do not attempt to contact your child or school faculty and staff during an emergency. Students need to focus on emergency direction from school personnel and school personnel will be responding to emergencies and addressing the needs of students. Calling the school will only tie up phone lines that must be used for emergency communications with staff and emergency responders.
- Give school officials accurate contact information so you can be reached in case of an emergency. District phone calls are made throughout an emergency to ensure parents and families are updated. The most accurate information is critical.
- Keep contact information current by notifying officials of any changes as soon as they occur. Multiple contact sources are helpful, including home, office and mobile telephone numbers and email addresses. In the case you cannot be reached, the up-to-date names

and contact information of family members, friends, and any other adults authorized as emergency contacts for your child are important.

- Be alert for a Rockingham County Schools notification. The district and schools will send emergency and routine messages to parents/guardians via our mass telephone, email and text notification. Parents may register multiple phone numbers with their child's school to ensure messages are received. Talk to your child about your personal emergency notification arrangements and let your child and school officials know if you anticipate being unavailable or difficult to reach for an extended period of time.
- Stay informed about emergencies, potentially serious situations or inclement weather. When serious conditions arise at school or in the community which may result in school evacuations, early dismissals or school closings, information will be provided in several platforms: Rockingham County Schools website; mobile application; email; the district's Facebook/Instagram/Twitter social media sites; and local media outlets.
- Notify school officials if you see or hear of anything that could create a danger at school or call 911.

All schools are equipped to safely continue operations and food services despite unforeseen utility outages. There is no need to come and pick up your child due to a utility outage unless you have been notified by the district and/or school to do so.

5.3 – Delays, Dismissals, and Emergency School Closures

Occasionally, an unforeseeable event or emergency may require the closing of a school or all schools for a period of time. The decision to close schools, or alter opening and closing times is made by the superintendent after consulting with county and municipal public safety agencies and school district staff. Notification of emergency closings is given as soon as possible so parents and guardians can plan for students to be cared for during these times. The decision to close schools is based on many considerations, the most important being the safety of students, staff, parents and others in the community. In cases of threatening weather, the district maintains close contact with the National Weather Service, the Rockingham County Emergency Management Agency and local law enforcement officials to help make decisions about dismissal of students or school closings. Officials want to make the safest possible arrangements for students and may delay the dismissal of students during exceptionally hazardous weather conditions, such as lightning. The district's communication protocols will be used to notify parents about delayed dismissals, closings or other emergency conditions. In most situations involving delayed dismissal, students who walk or ride bicycles may be kept at school until parents can arrange for them to be picked up. Bus riders will be delivered home when conditions allow for a safe dismissal.

5.4 – Emergency Release of Students to Parents

School officials want to maintain as safe and orderly an environment as possible at all times. During an emergency, special procedures are followed to help ensure student safety. Principals have procedures in place to help parents who wish to pick up their child from school. Depending upon the emergency conditions, students may be released from a designated area to parents and guardians with proper identification. For your child's safety, your child can be released only to an adult who you have properly designated as an emergency contact and who has proper identification. Noncustodial parents who may pick up students must be listed with your child's

emergency contact information as a guardian and also must show proper identification.

5.5 – Reuniting with Your Child

When the situation allows, students will be released following reunification procedures. This procedure ensures each student is released to a parent, relative or other authorized person designated by the parent in an orderly manner. Individuals picking up students will be asked to present valid picture identification and may be asked to sign students out to ensure safety and accountability.

Alternate Pick-Up Site: In some emergencies, it may become necessary to move students and staff from their school to an off-campus evacuation location. Due to the unpredictable nature of any emergency, the location of the evacuation site will be announced only at the time of the event. If this occurs, parents will be notified via multiple means, including the district's electronic messaging system and local media. Students who remain at school – If a parent, guardian or authorized designee cannot pick up their child following an emergency, they will remain under staff supervision until the parent, guardian or authorized designee arrives at the school.

5.6 – Emotional Support for Students During Emergencies

It is important that students feel safe in their schools, especially after a crisis has occurred. Should there be a need, the district can provide counseling services to students and/or staff through the school psychologists, school counselors and school social workers within our district's Instructional Support Services and Behavioral Health department. If you have any concerns or questions about Rockingham County Schools emergency protocols, please contact your school's principal or the district's Student Services Coordinator at 336-627- 2661.

5.7 – Inclement Weather Procedures

In the event of inclement weather, a decision to close or delay school may be made. RCS collects information from our transportation team, as well as, local, state and federal agencies in order to make the most informed and safest decision for our students, staff and families. School transportation personnel will drive the bus routes to check firsthand on local conditions. The Chief Operations Officer and the Director of Communications, Public Relations, & Safety will consult with the National Weather Service, Emergency Management and local Law Enforcement. A decision is then made no later than 6:00 a.m. to either cancel or delay the opening of school. RCS will immediately alert the media, post an alert on the school website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (X) and send a message to all parents and students through the Apptegy mobile application. All delays or early closing announcements will be made in terms of hours: one-hour delay, two-hour delay, etc. Parents of children in the before and after school day care program will receive inclement weather information announcements through our news partners, social media and website. RCS strives to give parents as much time as possible to plan for closings or delays.

Extracurricular Activities on School Closings/Delays: When school is closed for the day or dismissed early due to inclement weather, all extracurricular activities and athletic games and/or practices will be canceled for that day. On days when school is delayed, student extracurricular activities, athletic games and/or practices may be canceled, held as normally scheduled or rescheduled depending on local weather conditions and other pertinent factors. A delayed opening does not automatically cancel an event. RCS personnel who are normally involved in

scheduling these events shall work out the schedules for days affected by delayed openings and closings.

Severe Weather/Watches and Warnings:

- **Severe Weather Watch**: Transportation operations will proceed as usual during a severe weather watch. The Director of Transportation monitors conditions to ensure safe travel can be made by school buses. In order to maintain consistency in schedules, school buses will not deviate from the normal scheduled routes and will not make additional bus stops.
- **Severe Weather Warning**: If a severe weather warning is issued before buses are loaded and away from campus, bus operations will be suspended and the students, under the direction of their principal, will take shelter in the school building until the warning expires. If a severe weather warning is issued after buses have departed from the school, bus drivers will be instructed to proceed cautiously to a safe area to park the bus until the storm warning has expired.

Announcement Options:

- TV Stations: CBS-WFMY -2; FOX-WGHP – 8; NBC-WXII – 12; Spectrum News – 1
- Social Media: Facebook, Instagram & Twitter (X), RCS Website and Mobile App

SECTION 6: HEALTH & WELLNESS

6.1 – School Nutrition Programs

Rockingham County Schools' School Nutrition Program is responsible for providing nutritious meals and snacks. For all students enrolled in our schools across the district. We value the opportunity to participate in your student's education and nutritional experience and strive to provide balanced, nutritious meals while promoting positive food habits. In Rockingham County, our School Nutrition Program adheres to federal and state statutes and guidelines to ensure our compliance with all requirements to continue to receive funding. All meals served meet nutritional guidelines set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and support our students' healthy growth and development.

For the 2026-27 school year, all students in Rockingham County will continue to receive breakfast and lunch at no cost through our participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The Community Eligibility Provision is a program that allows school districts that meet certain criteria to offer meals to students at no cost. By participating in this federally funded program, families of Rockingham County students will not have to submit free and/or reduced lunch applications to receive meals at reduced or no cost.

Charges: Breakfast and lunch are provided to all students at no cost. Smart snack options, i.e., a la carte items, are available for purchase by students and adults at the point of sale. Students and adults are not permitted to charge a la carte items.

LINQ Payments: LINQ Payments is a mobile-friendly website that allows a parent or guardian to manage a student's meal account from a mobile device. Parents and guardians can visit k12paymentcenter.com to add money to and track balances on their students' meal accounts. These accounts can be used for a la carte purchases, such as desserts, potato chips, smart snacks, and drinks that are available on the serving line.

Dietary Orders: In accordance with the USDA's regulations for "substitutions or diet modifications in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diet, all diet orders must reflect the current dietary needs of the child. "It is the responsibility of our School Nutrition Program to make the necessary substitutions as listed by a licensed physician on the medical statement form.

6.2 – Disabilities and Chronic Health Concerns

Parents of children with identified chronic health conditions should the school nurse. The nurse will create a health care plan for the student with input from the parents, school personnel, and the student's physician. Students with diagnosed diabetes may attend school without discrimination.

Concussion/Traumatic Brain Injury: Rockingham County Schools follows State Board of Education policy related to concussions and traumatic brain injury; whether or not the concussion is related to school athletics. The school guidance counselor or school nurse should be contacted any time a student experiences a concussion or traumatic brain injury. Return to Learn guidelines will be followed for academic considerations in the classroom. Student athletes must also inform their coach if they experience a concussion, and Return to Play guidelines will be followed. A student athlete who is suspected of having a concussion will be removed from play and prohibited from participating in athletics until the student receives clearance from their licensed medical provider.

Food Allergies and Special Nutritional Needs: Parents/guardians of students with known food allergies or special nutritional needs must inform the school and notify the school nurse. A completed Medical Statement for Students with Special Nutritional Needs for School Meals form is required. The form is available from the school nurse or on the district website under the Nutrition tab.

The form must be completed by both the parent/guardian and a licensed physician and submitted to the school nurse. Once submitted, it will be shared with the Child Nutrition Department to ensure appropriate meal modifications are provided. Upon notification of a food allergy, the school nurse will collaborate with the parent/guardian to develop an individualized Health Care Plan/Emergency Action Plan to support the student while at school.

6.3 – School-Wide Screening

Students in grades K-5 and 8 receive vision screening annually; students in grades 1 and 3 receive hearing screening annually. The screenings are done during the fall and parents may contact their child's school to obtain the health screening dates. Parents may notify the principal/teacher prior to the screening if they choose for their child to not participate.

Dental screenings for kindergarten students are scheduled separately by the NC Public Health Dental Hygienist; this schedule is also available at each school. Screening results are reported to the parents/guardian. Students with identified concerns will be referred for further evaluation. Parents may notify the principal/teacher if they choose for their child to not participate.

6.4 – Head Lice

Parents, especially those of elementary students, are encouraged to frequently check their child's hair for live lice and lice eggs/nits. School staff is authorized to inspect the hair of students who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of lice. If a student with lice has siblings in RCS

schools, the sibling(s) will be checked prior to parental notification.

Parents will be notified if their child is found to have live lice, and the student will need to be picked up from school and receive treatment. The parent will receive written information about head lice treatment and recommended home/environmental interventions. The parent is expected to accompany the student to school on the first day back after treatment and with the student until the student's hair is checked. If live lice are still present, the student will be sent home, and the parent must continue to accompany the student to school until the student is free of live bugs. Students with remaining nits will be allowed to stay at school; however, the parent must continue to work on nit removal at home. The student will continue to be monitored.

When elementary/middle school students are sent home after half day, they are considered present for that day. Students are allowed a maximum of two days excused absence per incidence of head lice with additional absences unexcused. Both the school social worker and school nurse may visit students at home with unexcused absences due to lice infestation. It is not necessary for an entire classroom to be checked if a case of lice is found. A letter will be sent home with all class members if 20% or more of the students in the classroom are concurrently found to have live lice.

6.5 – Health Assessment

All students entering public school in North Carolina for the first time are required, under NC General Statute 130A-440, to complete a health assessment within 12 months prior to their first day of attendance. The results must be submitted using the North Carolina Health Assessment Transmittal Form (Rev. January 2016), unless a permitted exemption applies.

The Health Assessment Transmittal Form is available at each school and must be completed by a licensed health care provider. The completed form must be submitted to the school within 30 days of the student's first day of attendance. Students who have not submitted the completed form by the 30th day will not be permitted to attend school until the form is on file.

This law applies to:

- All students enrolling in kindergarten for the first time
- Any student enrolling in a North Carolina public school for the first-time grades 1–12

6.6 – Immunizations

All students entering public school in North Carolina are required by NC General Statute 130-A155 to submit a current and up to date certificate of immunization within 30 days of school attendance, except for permitted exemption. Students who have NOT provided the immunization record to the school within 30 days will NOT be allowed to attend school until the immunization certificate is received. Neither a transcript nor school data management immunization record is the official immunization certificate. Parents are responsible for obtaining the immunization certificate and providing it to the school. Records from previous schools will be requested as a courtesy to parents; however, the 30-day rule will still apply if records are not received within 30 days of the first day of school attendance.

Absences for Failure to Provide Health Assessment and/or Immunization Certificate: Absences will be marked for students who fail to turn in the required information by the 30th day, but students will be allowed to make up their missed work. The parent or student should contact the student's teacher(s) to arrange and obtain missed work.

Kindergarten Immunization Requirements (effective 7/1/2015):

- **5 DTP/DTaP Doses**: 5th dose on or after 4th birthday. If the 4th dose is after the 4th birthday, the 5th dose is not required.
- **4 Polio Vaccine Doses:** 4th dose on or after 4th birthday. If the 3rd dose is after your 4th birthday, the 4th dose is not required.
- **1-4 Hib Doses:** Series is complete if 2nd, 3rd, or 4th doses given on or after 12 months of age. If the 1st dose is given at 12-15 months of age, two doses are required.
    - If the 1st dose is given on or after 15 months of age, only one dose is required.
- **3 Hepatitis B Vaccine Doses:** 3rd dose must be given on or after 24 weeks of age.
- **2 Measles Vaccine Doses:** 1st dose on/after 12 months of age and 2nd dose before entering school.
- **2 Mumps Vaccine Doses:** 1st dose on/after 12 months of age and 2nd dose before entering school.
- **1 Rubella Vaccine Dose:** On or after 12 months of age.
- **2 Varicella Vaccine Doses:** 1st dose on or after 12 months of age, and 2nd dose is required before entering kindergarten.

7th Grade Immunization Requirements (effective 7/1/2015):

- **TDaP:** 1 dose
- **Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV):** 1 dose

12th Grade Immunization Requirements (effective 7/1/2015; implemented 8/1/2020):

- **Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV):** 1 dose

6.7 – Administering Medication

The Board of Education recognizes that under certain circumstances, it may be necessary for students to take medication during school hours and after hours while participating in extracurricular activities. To minimize disruptions during the school day, medications should be taken at home whenever feasible, and the school reserves the right to decline to administer medications to students. The North Carolina General Statutes permit school employees, when authorized by the Board of Education and trained by a school nurse, to administer medication prescribed by a licensed health care provider upon the written request of the parent or guardian.

Rockingham County School Board authorizes school personnel to administer medication to students in case of chronic health problems or to students with unusual health problems when emergency measures are required.

School personnel may administer prescription and/or over-the-counter medication to students at school only if the licensed health care provider deems it necessary for the medication to be given during school hours, and the parent or guardian and licensed health care provider make a signed request in writing on the RCS Permission to Administer Medication Form. Medication shall be administered in accordance with the licensed health care provider's written instructions and procedures. School personnel must be trained by the school nurse prior to administering medication.

Following the RCS medical advisor's protocol, the school nurse (when on campus) is permitted to administer over-the-counter medication to a student with written parental permission. (RCS Permission for School Nurse to Administer Over the Counter Medication per Standing Order

Form.)

The school will assume no responsibility for students who self-medicate or for the transportation of medication to and from school. Students who self-medicate must follow the administrative rules regarding self- medication procedures or risk possible violation of the Drug, Alcohol, or Tobacco provision of Student Behavior Policy.

6.8 – Emergency Epinephrine Delivery Devices

All schools maintain a supply of emergency epinephrine delivery devices on school property for use by trained school personnel to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering from an anaphylactic reaction during the school day and at school sponsored events on school property. Epinephrine delivery devices provided by the school are intended for unforeseen emergencies. Students known to have a medical condition requiring the availability of an epinephrine delivery device are expected to provide such devices for their use at school. Parents of students with known life-threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis should consult the school nurse and provide the school with written instructions from the students' health care provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student specific order in accordance to policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students.

Naloxone Nasal Spray on School Property (Narcan): All schools maintain a supply of emergency naloxone spray on school property for use by trained school personnel to provide emergency medical aid to individuals experiencing a suspected opioid overdose during the school day and at school-sponsored events held on school property. Naloxone nasal spray provided by the school is intended for use in unforeseen emergencies.

6.9 – Respiratory and Infectious Illness

RCS follows CDC and NCDHHS guidance regarding prevention and management measures for respiratory illnesses and other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and norovirus. These measures support healthy learning and work environments for all.

The following actions are recommended prevention steps and strategies to optimize health and wellness within schools which improve academic success:

- Stay Home when Sick
- Practice Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette
- Ensure Proper Cleaning of Surfaces and Spaces
- Provide Proper Ventilation
- Stay Up to Date with Routine Vaccinations
- Monitor Community Transmission Levels
- Masks Recommended during Community Spread
- Test at Home or Seek Medical Evaluation during Symptoms
- Follow Isolation Guidelines when Diagnosed

6.10 – Additional Healthcare Resources

Student Health Centers: The Rockingham County Student Health Centers are located at each of the four traditional high schools and provide on-site services to middle school students through their shared high school. The mission of the Student Health Centers is to improve the health and school performance of Rockingham County students by providing comprehensive health care

through education, treatment, prevention and referral. Support for the centers is provided by the local hospitals, Rockingham County Schools and grants. The Student Health Centers are a United Way of Rockingham County agency. Parental consent is necessary for treatment, except in the event of an emergency. The Student Health Center offers a wide range of medical services. The centers are open school days from 7:30am - 4:00pm and are staffed by a multidisciplinary team of providers that includes: Nurse Practitioners, Physicians Assistants, Registered Nurses, Mental Health Counselors, Health Educators and Nutritionists. Physicians volunteer to serve as medical directors and review the charts of students treated.

Together the team can diagnose and treat injuries and illnesses, monitor chronic diseases in conjunction with a student's Primary Care Provider, provide sports physicals, immunizations, nutrition and mental health counseling as well as health education. The staff works together to keep our students healthy so that they can graduate from high school and start their futures with a continued focus on wellness. The Student Health Centers result in improved school attendance thus increasing students' chances for academic success.

School-Based Telehealth Clinics: School-based telehealth sites provide students with convenient access to healthcare services during the school day through secure video visits with licensed healthcare providers. These services may include treatment for minor illnesses, management of chronic conditions, and mental health support, all delivered in a private space at school with the assistance of trained staff. Telehealth helps reduce time away from class and supports student health and well-being, with parental consent required for participation. Support for the centers is provided by a local hospital, Rockingham County Schools and grants. These services are currently available in two elementary schools, with plans to expand to additional elementary schools in the future.

6.11 – Behavioral Health

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Rockingham County Schools creates opportunities for students to develop social emotional learning skills in classrooms from early learning through high school, students learn invaluable skills that help them navigate their way through school as well as their community. In addition to social emotional learning and support, RCS is building a full continuum of social emotional and mental health supports.

Good mental health is critical to children's success in school and life. Mentally healthy children are more successful in school and life. Research demonstrates that students who receive social–emotional and mental health support achieve better academically. School climate, classroom behavior, on-task learning, and students' sense of connectedness and well-being all improve as well.

The Instructional Support Services department supports the social emotional and behavioral health of students within RCS. In addition, we provide psychological services, behavioral health services, and crisis intervention support to our students and early learning/preschool through 12th grade. For more information, please contact the Coordinator of MTSS, SEL and 504 Services at 336-627-2705.

6.12 – Day Treatment Program

The (RCS Inspire Academy -Day Treatment Program) provides intensive mental health services within a public-school setting. The program focuses on reintegrating students into traditional classrooms by helping them develop essential behavior management skills, social competencies, and academic strategies.

We utilize a collaborative team approach, serving small student groups with a dedicated staff of licensed mental health professionals, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals. Eligibility and placement are determined through joint assessments by families, mental health professionals, and school personnel. The oversight of the program is conducted by Youth Haven Services in Reidsville.

Day Treatment is located at New Vision, 705 NW Ayersville Road in Madison, N.C, 27025. The Director of Day Treatment can be contacted at (336) 634-3984.

SECTION 7: STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

7.1 – Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance Monitoring/Accounting: Rockingham County Schools Board of Education believes regular school attendance is of crucial importance to the educational achievement of each student. Further, the board affirms the primary responsibility for regular attendance resides with the parents/guardians and the individual student. It is the responsibility of all school personnel to promote and encourage regular school attendance and to create and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. To be considered in attendance, a student must be present for one-half school day or at a place other than school with the approval of the appropriate school official for the purpose of attending an authorized school activity.

The following are excused reasons to be absent when satisfactory evidence for the excuse is provided to school officials: Policy Code #4400

- Illness or Injury
- Quarantine or quarantine that is a required state or local control board measure
- Death in the Immediate Family-Includes grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters but is not limited to these family member
- Medical or Dental Appointments
- Court or Administrative Proceedings
- Religious Observance
- Educational Opportunity-Prior approval must be granted by Principal
- Absence due to pregnancy and medical related conditions
- Visitation with the Student's Parent or Legal Guardian
- Student cannot be at risk of academic failure because of unexcused absences and
- Parent/Legal Guardian has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting

- Any other reason as approved by the board in a board resolution

Procedures for Attendance: Parents and guardians are requested to contact school officials immediately when unanticipated absences occur. When a student must miss school, an explanation of the absence must be communicated, by any method reasonably designed to achieve notice (e.g. written note or email) to the student's teacher or attendance office official as soon as possible and within three days of the student's return. The principal may require a note from the student's physician after five (5) consecutive or ten (10) accumulated absences in a semester. When a student has a passing grade in a course but receives no credit because of attendance, the grade will be averaged as 59 for that semester.

After three (3) unexcused absences in the school year, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian that these absences are unlawful. The principal shall send a written notice to the parent, guardian, or custodian when a child has six (6) unexcused absences. Once the parents are notified, the school social worker shall work with the child and his/her family to analyze the causes of the absences and determine steps, including adjustment of the school program or obtaining supplemental services, to eliminate the problem.

After ten (10) accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the principal shall review any report or investigation prepared by the school social worker and will confer with the student and his or her parent, guardian, or custodian if possible to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification pursuant to this section and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the principal determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal will notify the district attorney and the county director of social services. If the principal determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse. The principal will keep documentation of all contacts and correspondence related to the absences.

Unexcused Tardy Procedures for Attendance:

Elementary School: Parents and guardians are requested to contact school officials immediately when unanticipated absences occur. When a student must miss school, an explanation of the absence must be communicated, by any method reasonably designed to achieve notice (e.g. written note or email) to the student's teacher or attendance office official as soon as possible and within three days of the student's return. The principal may require a note from the student's physician after five (5) consecutive or ten (10) accumulated absences in a semester. When a student has a passing grade in a course but receives no credit because of attendance, the grade will be averaged as 59 for that semester.

Middle School: Consequences start over at the beginning of the grading period. Parents are required to come into the main office upon arrival and sign students in when tardy so the student can receive a pass to class.

- 1-2 tardies – Conference/warning
- 3 tardies – Lunch detention
- 4-6 tardies – Lunch detention and loss of privilege including athletic & social participation
- 7 tardies – Social Worker contact and administrator consequences, up to and including possible ISS

- 12 tardies and beyond – Student is ineligible for annual perfect attendance award, disciplinary actions could be assigned by administration (i.e. ISS, after school detention, silent lunch, etc., at the principal's discretion) and involvement of the school social worker

High School: Consequences start over at the beginning of each grading period.

- 1-4 tardies – Warning/Call Home
- 5-8 tardies – 1 period of ISS
- 9-11 tardies – 1 day of ISS
- 12 tardies and beyond – Up to 2 days OSS and involvement of school social worker A Behavior Contract is developed after OSS

Excessive tardiness may result in loss of school privileges to include, but not limited to, the following: driving privileges on campus, attendance at athletic and extra-curricular events, club participation, exam exemptions, lunch detention, after school detention and prom

Schools will encourage students by creating incentives to promote attendance and promptness to class

Appeal Procedure: Parents or students who believe excessive absences causing retention or loss of credit are due to extenuating circumstances may appeal the decision to the principal or his designee.

Forfeiture of Promotion or Course Credit:

- **Grades K-8:** Students with more than 20 absences in a year, including out-of-school suspension, will be subject to retention.
- **Grades 9-12:** Students with more than 10 absences in a semester or 20 absences in a year, including out- of-school suspension, will not receive credit for that course

7.2 – Student Use of Wireless Devices

Rockingham County Schools recognizes G.S. 115C-76.100 as the governing guidance on possessing and using wireless communication devices (WCDs). These devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, wireless earbuds/headphones, gaming devices, electronic devices with internet capability, paging devices, two-way radios, and similar devices. This regulation is intended to fully comply with the law and provide procedures to promote uninterrupted instructional time, student safety, and responsible digital citizenship.

Communication of Expectations:

- **Annual Notification:** Schools will distribute Regulation 4318-R annually to students, parents/guardians, and staff via handbooks, websites, and meetings.
- **Visible Reminders:** Signage must be posted in classrooms, hallways, restrooms, and common areas, reinforcing bell-to-bell restrictions. Teachers should offer brief daily reminders during classroom routines.

Device Use Protocols:

- **Bell-to-Bell Restriction:** Students may use their WCDs responsibly on the bus, walking into school, and before entering homeroom each morning.
- Elementary and Middle school students may not use WCDs from the start of the instructional day (either homeroom or a designated bell time) to the end of the last class period, including transitions, lunch, and restroom breaks.

- High schools may not use WCDs from the start of the instructional day (either homeroom or a designated bell time) to the end of the last class period including restroom breaks. Students may check their WCDs during their designated lunch time and during transitional times (i.e. class changes).
- All students will be allowed to check phones 10 minutes each day prior to dismissal in case there is an important message from parents. If parents need to get in touch with their child during the school day, please call the main office and we will assist. Students may use their WCDs after dismissal. Devices must be powered completely off and stored out of sight during this time.

Device Storage Guidelines:

- **Elementary and Middle Schools:** Students are discouraged from bringing WCDs to school. If such devices are brought, they must be powered off completely and stored in the student's bookbag or in an appropriate storage option determined by the classroom teacher throughout the school day. A WCD should not be on a student's person or visible on a desk or other area while in classes, hallways, restrooms and other areas of the school.
- **High Schools:** Students are discouraged from bringing WCDs to school. If such devices are brought, they must be powered off completely and stored in the student's bookbag or in an appropriate storage option determined by the classroom teacher throughout the school day. A WCD should not be on a student's person or visible on a desk or other area while in classes and restrooms.
- School personnel are not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of WCDs.

Exceptions to Device Restrictions:

- Use of WCDs may be permitted during the school day only under the following conditions:
    - **Medical or Health Monitoring Requirements:** Devices required for medical reasons must be documented by a physician or approved medical professional and submitted to the school nurse or designated school official.
    - **IEP or 504 Plan Accommodations:** Device usage must be specifically outlined and approved in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
    - **Educational Use:** Students may only use their WCDs during the day with explicit teacher permission or direction.
        - This may include teachers asking or allowing students to use their WCDs to access apps, information, or for learning purposes.
        - This also includes when students ask to use their WCD for any educational purpose, and permission must be granted by the teacher before use. This decision is at the discretion of the teacher/staff member.
    - **Emergency Situations:** Device use during emergencies must be directed or authorized by school administration. Students needing to contact parents/guardians must request permission through the front office.

Rockingham Early College High School and CTE Innovative High School: Students are expected to follow the policy while in RCS courses or within the cafeteria setting.

- Device use while in physical attendance in RCC courses will not be monitored by the Early College or CTE Innovative High School staff.

Field Trips: Device use is permitted according to guidelines specified by the school principal. Information regarding the specifications of the use of WCD should be included on the field trip from home.

Staff Enforcement Procedures/Responsibilities: All school staff are responsible for the consistent enforcement of this regulation. Staff shall report and document violations by using the matrix (minor and major).

Progressive Consequences:

- **First Violation:** Staff confiscates the device, labels it with the student's name, and places it in a clear plastic bag and takes it to the main office to be stored in a secure area. The student may pick the WCD up at the end of the day. Students will not be let out early to pick up the WCD.
    - High School – If a student has a violation during their 5th block class, the phone will be taken for the next day. The student may pick the WCD up at the end of the day. Students will not be released from class early to pick up the WCD.
- **Second Violation:** Staff confiscates the device, labels it with the student's name, places it in a clear plastic bag, and takes it to the main office to be stored in a secure area.
    - For all students, the administration will make contact with the parent. The device will be held until picked up by a parent/guardian.
- **Third Violation:** Staff confiscates the device, labels it with the student's name, places it in a clear plastic bag, and takes it to the main office to be stored in a secure area. An office referral is created for noncompliance and submitted to the administration, which will contact the parent. Students with a third violation may be suspended, in-school or out-of-school, and the device will be returned only to the parent/guardian.
- **Repeated Violations:** Administration will be notified each time and will decide further consequences. This may result in an individualized behavior support plan, parent conference, extended device restrictions, or further disciplinary consequences up to additional days in ISS or OSS. Student's privileges to bring a WCD to school may be revoked if the noncompliance persists

Responsibilities of School Personnel:

- **Principals** shall ensure that staff are trained annually on this regulation and its consistent enforcement and shall monitor data on violations to assess implementation fidelity and equity.
- **Teachers and staff** shall model expected behavior, reinforce expectations, issue consistent consequences, report violations accurately, and request administrative support in cases of repeated defiance.
- **Monitoring and Review:** This regulation may be reviewed annually by the Superintendent in collaboration with school administrators. Based on stakeholder feedback, legal updates, and school discipline data, adjustments may be made.

7.3 – Chromebook Responsibilities

Technology: RCS encourages our families and students to take advantage of the RCS Technology Help Desk for technology issues and support. Students and parents may contact the

Help Desk at 336-627-2700 from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Monday-Friday for support regarding technology devices, accessing instructional resource tools and account issues.

Technology Acceptable Use/Chromebook Responsibility and Inappropriate Use: All high school students and families are required to sign the Rockingham County Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) prior to receiving a Chromebook. Inappropriate use as described below is a violation of the AUP. These violations may result in severe consequences. If you have questions regarding these violations of appropriate use please contact your school.

Inappropriate/Unacceptable Use:

- **Tier I – Inappropriate Use (includes but not limited to the following):**
    - Using any web browser other than those approved or provided by the RCS district Technology Department
    - Any unapproved software installs completed on district computers without prior consent or approval
    - Using computers not assigned to you when not approved (Teachers may allow students to look on with another student for instructional purposes only)
    - Video and audio recording on school property when not related to a school assignment
    - Messaging or chatting during class when not expressly permitted by the teacher
    - Profanity
    - Gaming, when not related to an educational, classroom associated use or not expressly allowed otherwise.
- **Offenses/Consequences:**
    - 1st Offense: Verbal/Written Warning and/or Parent Contact
    - 2nd Offense: Up to 1 day of ISS
    - 3rd Offense: Up to 2 days of ISS
    - 4th Offense and Beyond: OSS
- **Tier 2 – Unacceptable Use (includes but not limited to the following):**
    - Pornography (real life or cartoon) - Pornography can be a felony offense and if so will be turned over to authorities
    - Possession of pornography stored on an RCS device or using an RCS managed account
    - Manufacturing of pornography on an RCS device or using an RCS managed account
        - Using a camera to create pictures/movies on an RCS device or using an RCS managed account
        - Distributing – sending/sharing with others on an RCS device or using an RCS managed account
    - Images of weaponry that is not related to instructional materials or instruction use be turned to authorities
    - Pirating/Unlicensed movies, music, or software
    - Logging into a computer/application using someone else's credentials
    - Cheating
    - Using a computer to plan a fight, cause harm, or commit a crime
    - Profanity directed to/at faculty or staff

- Threats and/or cyberbullying
- Using proxy sites to bypass district content filtering
- Using cellular access and hotspots to bypass district content filtering
- Hacking or attempting to hack any district computing device
- Viewing network traffic by any means and for any reason
- Capturing network traffic by any means and for any reason
- Distribution of Malware by any means and for any reason
- Damage intentionally done to RCS device or asset including actions in relation to a social media trend or following

- **Offenses/Consequences:**
  - 1st Offense and Beyond: Up to 10 days OSS, restitution, escalation of insurance premium, day use after issuance of 3rd device
- **Tier 1 – Care and Responsibility: Neglect and Misuse (includes but not limited to the following):**
  - Closing objects between the lid and body of the mobile device
  - Removing/Swapping labels and identifying stickers on an asset or mobile device
  - Attempting to connect any peripheral to a part not intended for the peripheral device form factor and/or size
  - Using any charger not specifically designed for the device
  - Causing physical damage to the device – device is still useable
  - Causing physical damage to the device – device is unusable
- **Offenses/Consequences:**
  - 1st Offense: Verbal/Written Warning and/or Parent Contact
  - 2nd Offense: Up to 1 day of ISS
  - 3rd Offense: Up to 2 days of ISS, escalation of insurance premium, restricted day use only
  - 4th Offense and Beyond: OSS
- **Tier 2 – Care and Responsibility: Intentional Misuse or Abuse (includes but not limited to the following:**
  - Intentional actions which are harmful or potentially harmful to the computer, charger, network, and/or computer case
  - Removing keys, damaging input devices (i.e. mice, trackpads), ports, or intentionally damaging the devices
  - Damage intentionally done to an RCS device or asset relating to a social media trend or following
  - Booting any device from operating system image not installed by the district Technology on an RCS asset
  - “Botting” (installing robotic software) on any device from any external device or by any device case
  - Attempting to remove any pre-stalled hardware to open any device case
  - Performing a hardware factory default reset on any district device
  - Turning on Chromebook Developer Mode
  - Causing physical damage to the device – device is still usable

- Causing physical damage to the device – device is unusable

- **Offenses/Consequences:**
  - 1st Offense and Beyond: Up to 10 days OSS, restitution, escalation of insurance premium, day use after issuance of 3rd device

7.4 – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

Rockingham County Schools recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) tools can support learning, creativity, and problem-solving when used appropriately. Students may use approved AI tools only as permitted by their teacher and for educational purposes.

Students are expected to use AI responsibly, ethically, and honestly. AI should be used to support learning, not replace a student's own thinking, effort, or original work. Students must follow teacher directions for each assignment and should ask for clarification if they are unsure whether AI use is allowed.

Using AI in a way that violates academic integrity expectations is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, submitting AI-generated work as one's own, using AI when it is not allowed, misrepresenting the use of AI, or using AI to cheat, plagiarize, or harm others. Students are also responsible for checking AI-generated information for accuracy and appropriateness.

Misuse of AI tools may result in academic consequences and/or disciplinary action in accordance with the Rockingham County Schools Student Code of Conduct, Board Policy #4310, and other applicable school or district guidelines.

7.5 – Elementary and Middle School Testing

WIDA Screener is administered to initially enrolled students of a second language. This test serves as a screener for the initial identification of English Learner (EL) students. It is also used for program placement for students who are identified as English Learners. Access for English Learners (EL) is a state assessment administered annually during the spring semester. This test is used to assess the English proficiency of English language learners.

- The North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests (EOG) are multiple choice tests designed to measure student performance on the goals and objectives specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The READY EOG tests are administered to grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics. Grades 5 and 8 are also administered a READY EOG science test. Students in grade 3 who do not test a level III or higher on the English Language Arts (Reading) EOG or do not meet a Good Cause Exemption, may be administered the Read to Achieve Test to demonstrate mastery.
- The elementary and middle school students participate in periodic benchmark testing in reading, math and science called NC Check-Ins which are provided by the State. Benchmark assessments are administered to students periodically to assess the learning that has taken place up to a particular point in time and to track the instructional progress on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
- Students in grade 3 are tested during the first 15 days of school on the Beginning of Grade 3 English Language Arts Test. Students in grade 2 are tested in February using the Cognitive Abilities Test to assist with identifying students who may be academically or intellectually gifted.

7.6 – High School Testing

At the completion of first and second semesters, the high school students will take the North Carolina READY End- of- Course (EOC) tests. EOC tests are used to sample a student's knowledge of subject related concepts as specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. All students enrolled in Math I, Math III, Biology, and English II for credit are required to take the tests. Results of these assessments account for 20% of the final course grade. Check-Ins will be available for English 2, Math I, Math 3, and Biology during the 2024-2025 school year. Additional information is available online at: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/accountability-and-testing MSL information is available at: www.dpi.state.nc.us/effectiveness- model.

SECTION 8 - HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION

8.1 – College Admission Tests

ACT-American College Testing: The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has entered into a partnership with the American College Testing Program (ACT®), a not-for-profit organization that provides educational assessment, research, information, and program management services. North Carolina 11th graders will take the ACT® test. Some students will also take the WorkKeys assessment. These assessments will measure what students have learned in their courses and help educators identify the information that students still need to learn to succeed in college or a career. For additional information regarding North Carolina's plan for preparing students for college and careers you may access the following web link: http://www.act.org/stateservices/northcarolina.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT): The Scholastic Aptitude Test of the College Board will be given on Saturdays during the school year. The test is designed for college bound students and usually is taken by interested students in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. Details concerning this test and procedures for applying may be obtained from the school's Student Services Department. Applications are available online at www.collegeboard.com. Test dates and locations are published on the registration form.

8.2 – College Financial Aid

All students planning to attend College in the upcoming fall should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA form is the first step in receiving financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants and/or loans. It is critical to get this form completed in a timely manner. The FAFSA form is online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. This form is free to complete and submit. The FAFSA is available now and can be completed between July 1, 2026 and June 20, 2027. Parents must file taxes as early as they can in order to complete the FAFSA form for their child to go to college and obtain financial aid. The first requirement is to obtain a PIN number which is required in order to sign the FAFSA in a secure manner. Students can apply for a PIN number by going to: https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch. The College Foundation of North Carolina

(CFNC) provides a wealth of information regarding college and career planning. Students are required to create an account to access information on the website www.cfnc.org. The Carolina College Adviser on your campus can assist you with this process.

8.3 – Driver Education

Rockingham County Schools offers Driver Education for a fee of $40 to all public, private, charter, and home school students who are eligible. Students must be at least 14½ years of age to enroll in Driver Education. The program is designed and dedicated to help the students gain a basic understanding of how to operate a motor vehicle safely. It will help prepare the student for the Behind-the-Wheel Instruction and eventually the NC driver's license exam requirement. For information, please contact the high school Driver Education Coordinator where the student attends school or would attend if enrolled (for church, private and homeschool students).

Driver Education Coordinators' Contact Information:

- McMichael High School: (336) 427-5165
- Morehead High School: (336) 627-7731
- Reidsville High School: (336) 349-6361
- Rockingham County High School: (336) 634-3220

A Student Losing Driving Privilege: North Carolina law mandates that students under 18 years of age have their learner's permit or license revoked for the following reasons:

- Dropping out of school, or
- Failure to pass 3 out of 4 core courses in a semester

Parents will be notified of the revocation of the learner's permit or driver's license and will have the option of requesting a waiver based on hardship. Parents will be given 10 days to return a Hardship Form and provide documentation to support the request.

8.4 – Educational Opportunity Programs

This event provides juniors, seniors, and their parents the opportunity to talk with representatives from approximately eighty colleges and universities (primarily in North Carolina), specialized schools, and the Armed Services. This opportunity enables students and parents to learn about offerings available at these post-secondary institutions and the military. Details will be given through group guidance sessions at the school.

8.5 – Exam Exemption

Students who meet the criteria below may exempt the exam for that class, provided it is not a state required End of Course, NC Final Exam or VOCATS exam. Students are required to take all End of Course, NC Final Exams and VOCATS exams at the end of the course.

- A student with an average of at least a 90 and no more than 3 class absences
- A student with an average of a least an 80 and no more than 2 class absences
- A student with an average of at least a 70 and no more than 1 class absence

Any student who has any ISS periods or OSS days will be ineligible for an exam exemption. There will be no "excused "or "unexcused" designations for exam exemptions. The only exceptions will be when students are absent while attending school-related and approved functions under the supervision of school personnel or attending college scholarship interviews with prior approval from their counselor. Seniors will receive (1) college visit that will not count toward the exam

exemption. A student who qualifies for an exam exemption in a class may choose to take the exam to improve his/her final average**.** Any student who qualifies for an exam exemption and is in attendance will be required to take the exam. The exam will not be recorded if it lowers his/her final average. If a student is exempt from an exam and does not attend school for that reason, the student will receive an excused absence.

8.6 – GPA Grading Procedures

The Semester Grade should reflect two grading periods plus the exam grade. The final exam must count for 20 percent of the semester grade. GPA (Grade Point Average) is calculated two ways at high school. For the sake of clarity and discussion, we will call these the 4.0 system and the 5.0 system. The 4.0 system is non- weighted, and the 5.0 system is weighted.

The 4.0 system is used to report GPA to colleges, schools and prospective employers when requested. This system also will be reported on report cards. In addition, it is used to determine eligibility for the National Honor Society, Scholar/Athletic Awards, Presidential Academic Fitness Awards and the North Carolina Scholars Award. This system is reported when there is competition for awards, scholarships, etc. when other schools are involved.

The 5.0 system is used to determine Rank-In-Class. The Rank-In-Class is reported to colleges and schools as part of the student transcripts. This system also is used to determine eligibility for Junior Marshals and Honor Graduates.

8.7 – Graduation/Endorsements

Students entering grade 9 are under the requirements of the Future Ready Core course requirements for a high school diploma. These requirements include successful completion of: 4 English courses, 4 Math courses, 3 Science courses, 4 Social Studies courses, 1 Health and Physical Education course, Computer Science course, and 5 electives for a total of 22 credits. Additionally, students interested in graduating in their 11th grade year must have parent permission, unless they are 18 years old or older, and work with their high school counselor in the 9th grade to declare their intent. Specific courses must be taken in order to have met the 22-credit requirement for early graduation.

For more information go to**:** https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/high-school-graduation-requirements.

According to GS 115C-158.10 all middle and high school students enrolled in a local school administrative unit are required to complete a Career Development Plan. Promotion from eighth grade is contingent upon the creation of a CDP, and promotion from tenth grade requires a revision of the plan.

High School Diploma Endorsements: Students in North Carolina public schools may earn one or more endorsement on their high school diploma. These endorsements indicate that students have compelled specific course concentrations preparing them to be ready for careers and/or college. Students may earn more than one diploma endorsement. Students are not required to earn an endorsement to graduate.

8.8 – Honor Graduates

Seniors who have a seven-semester weighted G.P.A. above 3.5 will be recognized as honors graduates. Honors graduates are recognized on the Latin system. A senior with a G.P.A. of 3.5-3.79 will be designated as Cum Laude (with praise). A senior with a G.P.A. of 3.8-3.99 will be

designated as Magna Cum Laude (with great honor). A senior with a G.P.A. of 4.0 and above will be designated as Summa Cum Laude (with highest honor). Rockingham County Schools will additionally recognize a Valedictorian and Salutatorian for each high school after the completion of the academic year in July. Valedictorians and Salutatorians will not be recognized until all grades are finalized by the state of North Carolina during the year-end transition period that occurs in late June and early July.

8.9 – Junior Marshals

Academically top ranked juniors with commendable citizenship will be chosen in the fall to serve as junior marshals. Those who qualify will be interviewed to acquaint them with responsibilities before the final selection is made. The top fifteen juniors will serve as junior marshals and the chief marshal will be the student with the highest-class rank. The junior marshals will be chosen by their academic rank at the end of their sophomore year.

8.10 – North Carolina Scholars Program

Qualifying students will be designated as "North Carolina Scholars" and will receive special recognition by the State Board of Education. To qualify, a student must have an overall four-year GPA of 3.5 or better and must have taken certain prescribed courses. These courses are listed for you in the High School Registration Guide.

8.11 – President's Award

The President's Education Award Program was established during 1984 to recognize graduating seniors who have pursued a solid core of academic courses and have attained a high level of academic achievement. To receive this award, in addition to having successfully completed certain courses, the student must have earned a minimum 3.5 grade point average and either a Verbal SAT score of 630 or a mathematics SAT score of 640.

8.12 – Promotional Standards

- From Grade 9 to Grade 10: 6 units of credit, including English or a Language Arts Elective
- From Grade 10 to Grade 11: 13 units of credit, including one unit of English and one unit of Math
- From Grade 11 to Grade 12: 20 units of credit, including two units of English

8.13 – PSAT/NMSQT

The combination PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) is a test which college bound students (usually juniors) take as a preliminary test to the SAT of the College Board. PSAT/NMSQT will be given at school. It is administered only one time during the academic year in October. The Student Services Department at each high school will distribute details and procedures for registration to take the PSAT/NMSQT.

SECTION 9: PARENT AND GUARDIAN INFORMATION

9.1 – Custody Rights

Legal opinion states that each parent has equal rights to their children unless a "court issued legal document" is issued and filed in the child's cumulative folder and recorded in the principal's office. In the event that a parent states that they have such a document, it is imperative that the

document be brought to school to be included in the child's school record. The school will not engage in parental disputes and will follow the specifications of the "court issued legal document" accordingly. Parents should communicate with each other and work to resolve custody issues outside of the school setting so that school personnel are clear on custodial and visitation of students during the school day. In the case of foster care, the school district works with the Department of Child Protective Services to ensure that they have the most accurate information as it relates to the issues of custodial rights of parents/guardians.

9.2 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. The law applies to all schools receiving funds under an applicable program of the U. S. Department of Education. The law stipulates schools may disclose, without parent consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, phone number, date and place of birth, grade level, picture, school activities, honors and awards and dates of attendance. The law also provides parents with the opportunity to request the schools not disclose information about their child(ren). Parents may contact the school principal in writing within 15 calendar days of the fall opening of school if they wish to request the schools not disclose directory information.

FERPA requires that Rockingham County Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain parent written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records except to another public-school system if the student moves. However, Rockingham County Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent has advised the district to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Rockingham County Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications.
Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your child's role in a drama production
- Graduation programs
- The annual yearbook
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members
- Honor roll or other recognition lists

Rockingham County Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Picture
- Address
- Telephone number
- Electronic mail address
- Grade level
- Date and place of birth
- Date of graduation
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams' dates of attendance ("from" and "to" dates of enrollment)
- Diplomas, certification and awards received (including A, A/B Honor Roll)

- Student work for display, without grade, at the discretion of the teacher
- Most recent previous school or education at institution attended by the student
- Photographs or videos taken on buses, school grounds, in school buildings and at school activities unless the picture or video may reveal confidential information about a student or is evidence in a disciplinary matter.

Rockingham County Schools forwards education records to other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. Parental consent is not required before personally identifiable information (including special education records when appropriate) is released to school officials at receiving schools.

9.3 – Curriculum/NC Standard Course of Study

North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS): The North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) is a set of shared, Kindergarten through 12th grade state standards in all content subjects. The NCSCOS standards will allow teachers to develop students' understanding of the content on a deeper level by focusing on the most vital concepts. The NCSCOS standards also provide a more logical progression of skills that spiral and build in complexity from one grade level to the next. The content area standards were developed specific to North Carolina. North Carolina has created standards for all subject areas. The standards are aligned with literacy standards and professional development is being provided for teachers in integrating these literacy skills across all content areas including:

- English/Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages
- Arts Education
- Guidance
- Instructional and Technology Skills
- Occupational Course of Study
- English Language Development
- Career and Technical Education
- Healthful Living

9.4 – Dress Code Regulations for Students (Grades 6-12)

In Rockingham County Schools, students are expected to dress appropriately for the school learning environment. Clean, neat, appropriately sized, comfortable clothing, which allows students to participate in all events of school without undue concern, will be most appropriate. Reasonable consideration will be made for those students who, because of sincerely held religious beliefs, cultural heritage, or medical reasons, request in writing to the school administrator a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance. Decisions of this nature will be made by the school administrator. Please reference Policy Code #4316. The following guidelines are bulleted below:

- Clothing must be age appropriate, cannot be distracting, revealing, indecent, or vulgar. Skirts and shorts should be worn without holes. Shorts and skirts may not show

undergarments or display buttocks.

- Headgear (inside of the school) which includes hats, caps, earmuffs, bandanas, hoods, sweatbands, or sunglasses may not be worn. School administration may provide prior approval for specific events or activities, (i.e., spirit day, hat day).
- All tops must have a fitted arm opening. Spaghetti string tops are not permitted. All tops must cover the waistband of the bottom garment and the midriff at all times. Undergarments should not be visible.
- Students may be allowed to wear leggings that are not seen through with shirts that cover the waistband of the leggings.
- Clothing will not be allowed which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, the use of controlled substances, depicts violence, is of a sexual nature, is racially offensive, demeaning or degrading to a particular group or individual, or is disruptive in nature.
- Clothing is not to be sheer or of mesh material as to reveal the body or undergarments.
- Any accessories or attire that has the potential to be used as a weapon is prohibited.
- All pants must be worn and fitted at the waist without holes or tears above the mid-thigh and do not show undergarments. (no holes above the belt)
- Sleepwear is not permitted, unless prior approval has been obtained by administration for specific activities (i.e., spirit week).
- Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. Flip flops in elementary school should not be worn for safety purposes.
- Jewelry or body piercings are allowed with the exception of those that pose a health or safety risk.

9.5 – Field Trips

Classes may take field trips as an extension of the grade level curriculum and are considered part of the educational program. All students are required to have signed written permissions filed in the school office prior to departure in order to participate in class field trips. It is recommended students have school or personal insurance coverage. Rockingham County Schools does not provide student insurance; however, students may purchase school insurance. Enrollment brochures are available in the office and are sent home with every student. Since field trip bus, ticket, and lunch money must be paid in advance, there will be no refunds of field trip money If a child or parent is unable to attend once funds are sent to vendors. Any parent participating in a field trip will be acting as a chaperone as needed and will assist in supervision and instruction. Per Board Policy 5015 and Board Regulations 5015-R, volunteers acting as chaperones must provide proof of a valid background check for participation and supervision of students in this capacity. Inform your school if you wish to participate and obtain a background check. Background checks from other agencies are not accepted.

Siblings and children not enrolled in the class may not participate in field trips. Students participating in school-sponsored field trips must travel with their class on school vehicles to the destination in order to participate in the trip. Parents, as chaperones, may ride activity buses provided space is available. A student may return from the trip in a private car with his/her parent or guardian providing the child is properly signed out with the teacher before leaving.

A student may be prohibited from participating in a school sponsored field trip if unsatisfactory conduct is exhibited in the classroom or on school grounds.

The Rockingham County Schools Tobacco Free District Policy applies to all school sponsored field trips.

- The number of Trips (excludes district sponsored activities/trips):
- Kindergarten through 5th Grade: May take 3 trips including one community/in-county trip
- 80% Parent/student commitment is expected for overnight grade level field trips

9.6 – Grading System for Rockingham County Schools

RCS will implement a 10-point grading scale for all subjects in grades 3 – 12.

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

Elementary students in grades K-2 are assessed with standards-based report cards. Conduct is evaluated as follows:

- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs Improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

9.7 – Honor Roll

- "A" Honor Roll: Students making all "A's"
- "A/B" Honor Roll: Students making no grade less than a "B"

9.8 – Report Cards, Interim Progress Reports, and Parent Conferences

Report Cards will be issued to parents every grading period for grades K-12 as established by the annual school calendar(s) for traditional and year-round schools. Interim progress reports may be issued at any time by the teacher to report progress or concerns about student performance or behavior. Each school shall report a student's interim progress to the student and his/her parents at the mid-point of the grading period if the student is in danger of failing. Interim progress reports are to be taken home by the student, signed by the parent and returned to the teacher. Parent conferences may be scheduled at any time. Parents may schedule a conference by contacting the school.

9.9 – Grievances

Parents who have a concern about something at the school level should follow these steps:

- Contact the child's teacher.
- Contact the assistant principal or principal if the concern is unresolved after talking to the teacher. Contact the appropriate department at the Central Office if not satisfied after talking with the teacher and principal.
- Initiate a written grievance – Please review the Policy Code #1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure.

Using these channels of communication for all concerns will be helpful in getting concerns and will be helpful in getting concerns taken care of in a timely manner. School staff will work with parents to resolve problems.

9.10 – Instructional Materials (Parental Inspection and Objection to Instructional Materials)

RCS Board of Education policy states, parents have the right to review and inspect instructional materials and object to the use of any materials. Please review the Parents Bill of Rights Instructional Materials Form on the RCS Website listed under the Parent's Section.

9.11 – Parental Forms

If you are interested in obtaining any of the forms listed below, please contact your child's school or visit: www.rock.k12.nc.us/parentforms.

- **Military Opt Out Form:** Parents have the right to refuse the release of their child's information to military recruiters and to do so must complete a Military Recruiter Information Refusal Form.
- **Publicity Decline Form:** Parents have the right to not have their child's name or name with a photo used in any or all school publications and to do so must submit a Rockingham County Schools Publicity Decline Form to the school.
- **Telecommunications Opt-Out Form:** Parents have the right for the school to restrict internet access.
- **Reproductive Health & Safety Opt In Form:** Reproductive Health and Safety Education Opt In Form (Grades 7-9) and Puberty Education Opt In Form (Grades 5-6) will be distributed to all students in these grade levels.
- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U. S. Department of Education.Parents and guardians have the right to opt-out of sharing directory information. Schools use directory information to publish items such as yearbooks, honor roll, newsletters, and graduation announcements. This also includes information about opportunities for scholarship programs and colleges to be sent to you. **FERPA Opt-Forms**

9.12 – Parents' Rights for Their Child's Education

Under State Law (S.L. 2023-106), parents are allowed to exercise the following rights with regards to their child's education:

1. The right to consent or withhold consent for participation in reproductive health and safety education programs, consent with G.S. 115C-81.30 (Policy #3540).
2. The right to seek a medical or religious exemption from immunization requirements, consistent with the requirements of G.S. 130156 and G.S. 130A-157 (Policy #3510).
3. The right to review statewide standardized assessment results as part of the State Report Card (Policy #1320/3560).
4. The right to request an evaluation of their child for an academically or intellectually gifted program, or for identification as a child with a disability (Policy #3520).
5. The right to inspect and purchase public school unit textbooks and other supplementary instructional materials (Policy #3210).
6. The right to access information relating to the Board policies for promotion or retention, including high school graduation requirements (Policy #3420 and #3460).
7. The right to receive student report cards on a regular basis that clearly depict and grade the student's academic performance in each class or course, the student's conduct and the student's attendance (Policy #3400).

8. The right to access information relating to the State public education system, State standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements and textbook requirements (Policy #1320/3560).
9. The right to participate in parent-teacher organizations (Policy #5010).
10. The right to opt in to certain data collection and protected student information surveys.
11. The right to review all available records of materials their child has borrowed from a school library (Policy #1310/4002).

9.13 – Student Transfer Assignments

The Superintendent or his designee assigns students to schools. The Superintendent's designee works through Policy #3620. Requests for new transfers are reviewed and appropriate decisions are made based on reason (s) and building capacity. The designee may only grant the transfer if the school has sufficient space, meaning the calculated school membership is under 95%, there are adequate staff allotments, and consideration of grade level capacity, which can include state required teacher/student ratio and appropriate programing. Each spring the deadline for application is by May 1. Parents may complete the transfer request for reassignment throughout the year by completing the online Student Reassignment Application Form on the RCS website. Effective 2026-27 school year, high school students and their parents should read Policy Code #3620: Extracurricular activities and Student Organizations. Under Section 6.a. It reads: "Upon entering the 9th grade, a student's eligibility for interscholastic athletics is restricted to the high school within the feeder pattern of the middle school they attended in the 8th grade. This policy applies to all students, including those enrolled in the traditional high schools, Early College, or the CTE Innovative High School. Any exceptions require Superintendent approval and must remain consistent with State Board of Education regulations."

9.14 – Transcripts

Transcripts or student records are released according to The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and the Rockingham County Board of Education. A release signed by the student or, by his/her parents if the student is under 18, must be on file in the guidance office before a record will be released. Through group guidance sessions early in the fall, seniors will receive more detailed information about the procedure for requesting transcripts. Anyone having questions concerning transcripts or the transferring of his/her school records should see a school counselor in the school's Student Services Office. Each high school website contains information about transcripts under the Student/Parent section.

Students transferring to another high school can have records sent without a charge. One transcript will be sent free for a senior who is making an application to college or who needs a transcript for some other purpose. Any individual who is no longer enrolled may go to https://www.parchment.com/u/registration/83880378/institution.

Select the high school attended and request the transcript online by following the directions. There is a fee for each transcript request.

Home School Transcripts: Students enrolling in RCS high schools from a home school will present the home school transcript along with the other required information. Home school transcripts will be reviewed by school administration. Grades will be entered as PASS/FAIL only. Third party home transcripts may be reviewed by central office personnel upon parental request

to ensure numeric grades.

SECTION 10: STUDENTS SERVICES

10.1 – Academically and Intellectually Gifted

Program RCS AIG Identification: Students are identified for Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) services in reading, mathematics, or both, based on their specific qualifications.

- **Grades K–3 (Nurturing):** All students receive talent development through differentiation and enrichment programs, such as Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) lessons.
- **Grades 4–13 (Formal Identification):** Formal identification is determined using various screeners, including the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), EOG/EOC assessments, PSAT/SAT, and Pre-ACT/ACT.

AIG Services: Every school is supported by an instructional coach who partners with teachers to implement diverse, effective classroom strategies. The instructional coaches collaboratively plan with instructional staff to ensure appropriate services for gifted learners.

- **Grades K-3 AIG Services:** The K-3 program is intended to nurture and develop the potential of these students. Students may be identified for talent development services and are cluster-grouped in classes. The instructional coach provides indirect support by collaborating weekly with the regular classroom teachers to plan instruction and review various types of assessment data. The instructional coach also provides enrichment resources that can be used as lesson extensions or for differentiation.
- **Grades 4-5 AIG Services:** At this level, AIG students are cluster-grouped in classes. The instructional coach collaborates weekly with the regular classroom teachers to plan instruction, teach, and assess AIG students. Additional opportunities offered include science fairs, after-school clubs, Continental Math League, Battle of the Books and A.S.P.I.R.E. a week-long summer enrichment camp.
- **Grades 6-8 AIG Services:** At the middle school level, students are subject-grouped according to their area of identification. The instructional coaches collaboratively plan with instructional staff to ensure appropriate services for gifted learners. Coaching cycles are utilized to facilitate teacher growth and improvement in instructional practices. Additional opportunities offered include science fairs, field trips, after-school clubs, Middle School Academic Challenge Competition, Battle of the Books, and A.S.P.I.R.E. a week-long summer enrichment camp.
- **Grades 9-13 AIG Services:** At the high school level, students are able to self-select courses and participate in special activities. This self-selection process is supported through counseling, DEP meetings, and recommendations from teachers, instructional coaches, and school counselors. Students have the option to pursue Honors and Advanced Placement classes, as well as participate in the college and career promise program.

10.2 – Alternative Education in Rockingham County Schools

SCORE (Second Chance Opportunity Resource Education Center) is an alternative school in a separate setting for referred students who have been unsuccessful in the traditional classroom. SCORE gives students an opportunity to continue their education in a smaller environment utilizing a variety of teaching techniques and behavior modification options. Students are

provided counseling, anger management, conflict resolution and career exploration through collaborative efforts of school and community resources. Entry and exit conferences are required; students, parents, home school representative(s) and SCORE staff are required participants in conferences.

SCORE offers only temporary placement for referred students who desire an opportunity to work on issues that are interfering with academic achievement and school success. Standards for participation are high. Students are given the tools as well as the opportunity to overcome the obstacles or issues that precipitated the referral. When they are ready students transition back to their home school. SCORE is located at New Vision, 705 NW Ayersville Road in Madison, N.C, 27025

10.3 – Spanish Language Immersion Program – SPLASH

The SPLASH program offers a wonderful opportunity for English-speaking students to immerse themselves in a Spanish-speaking environment. Through this program, students develop proficiency in both languages, becoming bilingual, bi-literate, and embracing both cultures. They achieve near-native fluency in Spanish while maintaining their English skills. Studies have shown that integrating a second language into regular school subjects is most effective for children's language learning. Immersion programs often lead to better test performance compared to traditional classes. Additionally, research indicates that immersion education benefits diverse learners, including academically gifted students, non-native English speakers, and those with special education needs or socio-economic challenges.

Rockingham County Schools offers two SPLASH programs:

Full Immersion Program (Bethany and Stoneville): These programs serve native speakers of English in an environment where Spanish is used exclusively. Content is delivered in Spanish. English Language Arts is introduced beginning in 2nd grade. The students become bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural and are equally proficient in both languages with near-native fluency in the target language.

CONEXIONES Program (Rockingham County Middle School and Western Rockingham County Middle School): CONEXIONES is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary middle school curriculum designed to enable students to use their language skills to communicate effectively, learn about different cultures, make connections across disciplines and issues, compare their own reality to others, and engage in meaningful exchanges with local as well as global communities. Students participate in CONEXIONES as an elective during their middle school years. Successful completion of these electives will lead a student to earning Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 high school credit.

10.4 – Multilingual Learners

All new students enrolling in Rockingham County Schools will complete the Home Language Survey, which is part of every enrollment packet. If a student is identified as a language minority student based on the Home Language Survey, then the student will be screened to determine their English language proficiency level. In June 2008, the North Carolina State Board of Education approved the adoption of the WIDA Consortium English language proficiency standards. The World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium, otherwise known as the WIDA Consortium, is comprised of states who share English language standards and

assessments that are aligned to those standards.

Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test, also referenced as the W-APT, is to be administered to all initially enrolled language minority students. This test functions as a screener that is used for the initial assessment for Multilingual Learner program placement of students who are identified as Multilingual Learners. The annual test, ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners), is designed to satisfy ESSA requirements for Title III. If the student is identified as a Multilingual Learner based on the language proficiency score, then the student is then entered into the Multilingual Learner database and services are determined for the student at the school level.

10.5 – Migrant Education

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is a federally funded program designed to aid those families that have moved within the last three years from one school district to another seeking temporary or seasonal agricultural employment. Students eligible for this program must be between the ages of 3-21. Migratory children sometimes experience difficulties making the transition into a new school setting. The program is designed to ease the transition by assisting families and children as needed within the guidelines of the Migrant Program. The MEP provides supplemental services to migrant students to help them succeed in the regular school program, meet the challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet, and graduate from high school. Services may include, but are not limited to: Identifying and recruiting of eligible migratory students; providing high quality supplemental support services; coordinating assistance to migratory families through partnerships with agencies, organizations and businesses; coordinating with other states to provide continuity of education; assisting in record transfer to new schools; translating; and interpreting at school conferences.

10.6 – Before and After School Program

Rockingham County Schools Kids' Companion Program is a three star before and after child care program operated by the schools. Programs serve the following elementary schools: Bethany, Dillard, Huntsville, Lincoln, Monroeton, Stoneville, and Wentworth. The KC Program serves students from age 5 (must be attending Kindergarten) through age 12 or the 6th grade. Educational activities, physical development and social skills are supported by the program and staff. All sites are part of the Division of Child Development star-rated sites. A staff/child ration of at least 1/24 is maintained in order to ensure excellent supervision, safety and personal attention to the needs of the participants. The Before and After School Programs have worked to meet required safety protocols as outlined by the Division of Child Development and Early Education and the Department of Health and Human Services. For additional information on the program including hours and fees, contact the SACC Specialist, Ms. Leah Ward at Monroeton Elementary School or email her at lward@rock.k12.nc.us

When important inclement weather announcements are made, please pay attention to the hours that Child Care may be operating. Often when school is closed or delayed, the child care program may have a delay as well. Local school aged child care programs ages 5-12, other than the Kids Companion Program, are available to parents to explore such as the YMCA or the Boys and Girls Club in the cities of Reidsville and Eden.

10.7 – Next Step Advisers

Next Step Advisers, based at the traditional high schools and the Early College, work with the Student Services support staff. Their role is to support and encourage all potential college-bound students. They specifically assist underrepresented and first-generation college students who have the skills and preparation, but need assistance with the application process. The College Advisers assist parents and students with college applications, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and college exploration. Campus tours may be arranged as well. Students may see the College Advisers during the school day, or when necessary, by arranging an appointment for after-school hours through the Student Services Office at their school. These are young adults who have just completed the process themselves and are extensively trained to assist your child. If there are any questions or concerns regarding a Next Step Adviser at any of the schools, the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services acts as a liaison and can be reached at 336 -627-2688.

10.8 – Exceptional Children's Program

Rockingham County Schools (RCS) offers a full continuum of services for students with disabilities, ages 3 through 22. Our mission is to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), tailored to each student's unique academic and functional needs as defined by their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Our Team: To support student success, our multidisciplinary team includes: special education teachers and assistants, school psychologists, occupational and physical therapists, audiologists and speech-language pathologists, and a behavioral liaison.

Eligibility for Services: Eligibility is determined by a collaborative team including school staff, regular education teachers, administrators, parents, and — when appropriate — the student.

Referral Process: Parents and/or school staff may refer a student for special education evaluation. If you have concerns about a student's progress, please contact:

- School Level: teachers, counselors, or administrators at the student's assigned school
- District Level: Exceptional Children's Office at (336) 627-2705

For more information, visit www.rock.k12.nc.us or contact the Office of Exceptional Children at 336-627-2705.

10.9 – Homebound Services for Regular Education Students

When a student is confined to bed and/or the home due to a pregnancy or a chronic medical condition which prohibits him or her from attending school either on a part-time or a full-time basis (See Policy Code #3525), a licensed teacher may be appointed to go into the home or another safe site and provide up to 3 hours of instruction per week. To be eligible for the service, a medical doctor or licensed mental health professional must provide written certification that no reasonable accommodations can be made to allow the student to attend school. Parents may also sign an authorization to allow school professionals to consult with the doctor or mental health professional so academic decisions can be made most effectively. Failure to be available for Homebound Instruction unless you have an excused absence and have notified the Homebound Teacher in advance will be considered an unexcused absence.

Homebound requests, when approved, must be re-certified every 4 weeks to assess changes in health conditions. A school nurse and another staff person will visit the family to assist with

transitioning the student back to school successfully. The rendering of homebound services is severely limited, and is designed to provide limited instruction. Parents/guardians of students who see their stay-at-home lasting longer than 12 weeks may need to explore an online option such as the North Carolina Virtual Public School (K-12) for a period of time until the student is able to attend school on a full-time basis.

10.10 – Students in Transition/Homeless

The federal McKinney-Vento Act is dedicated to ensuring all children and youth experiencing homelessness have access to the educational services for which they are entitled. It is designed to increase the school enrollment, attendance and success of children and youth who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Qualifying situations may include:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to the lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Unaccompanied youth living in the circumstances described above
- Migratory children and youth living in the circumstances described above

All McKinney-Vento eligible students, including unaccompanied homeless youth have the same rights:

- Immediate enrollment, even when lacking records
- Attend either the school of origin, if feasible and in the student's best interest, or the local attendance area school
- Receive district transportation back to the school of origin, if requested by parent, guardian or local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth
- Receive free school meals (no application necessary)
- Equal access to programs and services
- Access to the dispute resolution process

10.11 – Head Start Program

Head Start is a federally funded program that promotes the school readiness of children from three to four for low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social and emotional development. Head Start Programs seek to help build relationships with families that support family well-being and to increase parent's skills, attitudes, and knowledge, which in turn could lead to positive gains in children's development. Rockingham County Schools Head Start Program has 11 classrooms across the county to serve the families and students in areas in which they reside. The Head Start Program seeks to provide resources and offer enrichment opportunities in a variety of environments.

Parents or guardians interested in enrolling a child should contact (336) 548-4780 during the hours of 8:00am-3:00pm, Monday through Friday.

The Rockingham County Schools Head Start is located at 705 Ayersville Road, Madison, NC 27025.

10.12 – Preschool Services

Preschool services are provided for students with disabilities ages 3-5 as well as students who are eligible for NCPK, in most of the elementary schools, Western Rockingham Early Childhood Center and Reidsville High School Early Childhood Center (RHSECC). All of these preschool classes provide blended settings whereby students with disabilities are provided special education services in classes with their typically developing peers. Rockingham County Schools contracts with the Partnership for Children for NCPK services. Students are provided a full continuum of services based on individual needs. School based and home-based itinerant services are also provided to some students. Support staff through the Exceptional Children's program provide services to qualifying students in a co-teaching setting with licensed Birth – Kindergarten teachers. Referrals for the preschool program may be sent to the Preschool Office. Limited fee-for-service slots are available in the preschool classes.

Free developmental screenings are also offered for children ages 3-5. Contact the Exceptional Children's Office for further information (336) 627-2705.

10.13 – Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS)

Improving student academic and behavior outcomes is about ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and intervention possible. In RCS, all schools have been trained in PBIS implementation. PBIS is a research-based framework that is designed to enhance the capacity of schools to effectively educate all students, including those students with challenging social behaviors. Efforts are made to prevent disruptive behavior from occurring, rather than reacting after there is a problem. The purpose of school-wide PBIS is to establish a positive school climate in order to build a foundation in which all students can achieve social and academic success.

All PBIS schools have a team who has been trained in multi-tiered components of PBIS. This team uses data to help determine evidence- based practices, which will aid staff members in improving academic and behavioral outcomes for all students. All PBIS schools develop a matrix, which establishes consistent behavioral and social expectations. These expectations translate into observable and measurable behaviors that we want students to perform when they are in specific settings throughout the school. This provides an atmosphere of safe, respectful, and responsible behavior. Teachers teach these behaviors often and acknowledge students when they see students demonstrating the expected behavior.

All PBIS schools provide the interventions necessary when students are unclear about school wide expectations for behavior and whenever behavior is interfering with academic progress. These interventions are evidence- based and provide instruction as well as reinforcement for replacement behaviors that are necessary for students to gain success.

10.14 – Section 504 Services

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination and protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States…shall, solely by reason of his

or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..." 29 U.S.C 794(a). Section 504 regulations require that all public schools and school districts, as well as all charter and magnet schools receiving Federal assistance from the Department of Education comply with Section 504 and provide a "free and appropriate education (FAPE)" to each qualified student with a disability. An individual (student) with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities that may include caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and/or communicating. Parents, teachers, MTSS teams, or other school personnel can initiate a Section 504 referral if a child is known or suspected of having a disabling condition that substantially limits a major life activity. A 504-case manager is assigned to each school to handle Section 504 referrals. In most cases, the 504-case manager will be your school counselor. Each referral or request for consideration for Section 504 eligibility will be explored on a case-by-case basis by the school's 504 team.

10.15 – Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

All schools in the Rockingham County School District utilize the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). MTSS is a framework which promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based practices and data- driven problem-solving efforts that address the needs of the whole child. These supports are broken into three levels:

- Core Supports (Tier 1 instruction and interventions that are available for all students),
- Supplemental Supports (Tier 2 supports for small groups of students in specific areas of concern), and;
- Intensive Supports (Tier 3 supports and interventions for individual students or very small groups).

At each school, MTSS teams composed of personnel with a variety of expertise (teachers, administrators, support service staff, instructional coaches) collaborate to improve school-wide systems and practices, increase the quality of core instruction, and provide support to students experiencing difficulties. These teams identify student needs in the areas of academics, behavior, attendance, social-emotional concerns and mental health. Research-based interventions are then provided to help students progress toward grade-appropriate standards and expectations.

Intervention and Enrichment Time (I&E) are a scheduled period each school day in which educators and students can work together on specific skills needed to reach grade level expectations. These general education supports are available to all students and include time for remediation of grade level standards, intervention on specific skills, maintenance of grade-level curriculum and enrichment opportunities. MTSS teams monitor progress as students participate in these intervention and enrichment opportunities, working with the student and the family to encourage the student's success in the school setting.

As part of MTSS, educational teams collect and review information such as your child's grades, performance on grade- level and classroom assessments, and other sources of data to help better determine your child's educational needs. These assessments may look at your child's academic needs, but may also include hearing and vision, medical, behavioral, or social-emotional screeners. Parents of students considered for supplemental (Tier 2) or intensive

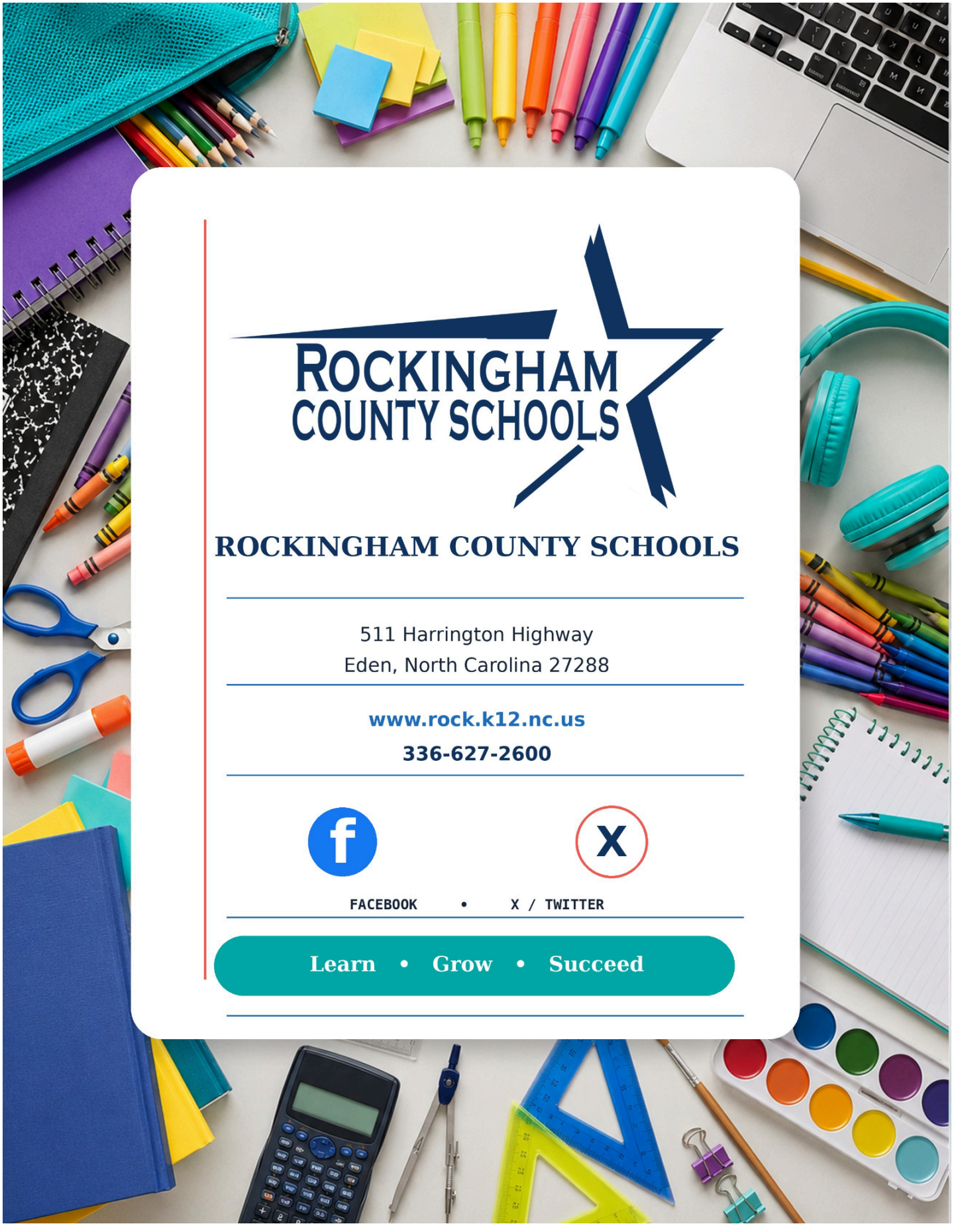
(Tier 3) support will be provided with notification and opportunities for collaboration interventions are developed and implemented. If you have specific questions regarding MTSS in your child's school, please reach out to the school administrator, MTSS/PBIS coach, instructional coach, or school counselor for additional information.

10.16 – Title IX Information

Through the U.S. Department of Education new information around Title IX has been provided to assist school districts in working with students or parents/guardians in the area of sexual harassment. A new definition of sexual harassment has been defined and broadened.

Additionally, a person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or email address or the postal mail service address for the Title IX Coordinator. If an incident involving sexual harassment cannot be resolved at the school level, a parent or student may contact the Title XI Coordinator by phone at 336-627-2688 or in person at 511 Harrington Hwy., Eden, NC 27288. For information go to https://www.rock.k12.nc.us/services.

Rockingham County Schools
2026–2027 Student Handbook



ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

511 Harrington Highway
Eden, North Carolina 27288

www.rock.k12.nc.us

336-627-2600

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