

# STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK



**2016-2017**

**RIDGEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL  
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Updates to this handbook will be published on the Ridgefield High School website.

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# **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Ridgefield High School is to enable all students to become self-directed and self-reflective learners. We engage all students in opportunities to improve their academic performance, develop their interpersonal skills, and achieve an understanding of their roles and responsibilities as citizens of our democratic society. We create a climate of trust, security, and pride to encourage a lifestyle that nourishes our minds, bodies, and spirits. To that end, Ridgefield High School collaborates with parents and the community to provide a variety of educational experiences which support academic, social, and civic growth in an environment which promotes a respect for diversity.

## **Social Expectations**

The student will:

- Develop positive relationships with peers and adults
- Develop an understanding of himself or herself and the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve wellness

## **Academic Expectations**

The student will:

- Communicate effectively
- Identify, define, and solve problems within and among the disciplines

## **Civic Expectations**

The student will:

- Perform school, family, community and/or global service and evaluate the impact of that service
- Behave in an ethical and responsible manner in our democratic society

# **CAMPUS INFORMATION**

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# CALENDARS AND IMPORTANT DATES

## DISTRICT CALENDAR

The district calendar is available on the district website at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) → District Information → District Calendar.

## MARKING PERIOD AND GRADE REPORTING DATES

Please consult the RHS homepage at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) for marking period closing dates and dates for access to mid-quarter comments and report card grades through the PowerSchool Portal.

## IMPORTANT TESTING DATES – SCHOOL CODE (070640)

CAPT/SBA	Spring 2017	
PSAT	Wednesday, October 19, 2016	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, October 8, 2016	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, November 5, 2016	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, December 3, 2016	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, January 28, 2017	
SAT only	Saturday, March 4, 2017	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, May 6, 2017	
SAT/SAT Subject Tests	Saturday, June 3, 2017	
ACT	Saturday, September 10, 2016	
ACT	Saturday, October 22, 2016	
ACT	Saturday, December 10, 2016	
ACT	Saturday, February 11, 2017	
ACT	Saturday, April 8, 2017	
ACT	Saturday, June 10, 2017	
AP TEST DATES	<b>MORNING SESSION</b>	<b>AFTERNOON SESSION</b>
Monday, May 1, 2017	Chemistry	Psychology
Tuesday, May 2, 2017	Environmental Science	Physics 1
Wednesday, May 3, 2017	Computer Science	Physics II
Thursday, May 4, 2017	Spanish Language	
Friday, May 5, 2017	English Literature	
	Government and Politics	
	US History	
Monday, May 8, 2017	German Language	
Tuesday, May 9, 2017	Biology	Physics B and C
	Calculus AB	French Language
	Calculus BC	
Wednesday, May 10, 2017	English Language	Macroeconomics
Thursday, May 11, 2017	World History	
Friday, May 12, 2017	Microeconomics	
	Human Geography	

AP Studio Art Portfolios are submitted prior to the AP testing period.

## EVENT DATES

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Please check the calendar section of the RHS website page for event dates and information.

## SCHEDULES

### BELL SCHEDULES

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The bell schedule can be found on the RHS website at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) → Schools → Ridgefield High School → School Information → RHS Schedules → RHS Daily Bell Schedules

### STAGGERED TESTING SCHEDULE

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To prevent students from having a large number of tests at one time before the end of the marking period, subject areas administer tests according to a staggered testing schedule which is published on our school website in the weeks leading up to the end of the quarter.

### MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAM SCHEDULES

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EXAM HOURS	1 <sup>ST</sup> DAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> DAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> DAY	4 <sup>TH</sup> DAY	5 <sup>TH</sup> DAY
7:25 – 9:25	←		Periods TBA	→	
9:30 – 9:45	←		Break	→	Final Exam Make-ups
9:50 – 12:00*	←		Periods TBA	→	

\* Includes announcements at 9:50 AM

The midyear exam schedule is identical to the final exam schedule except there is no make-up day. Students should contact their teacher to schedule a makeup of a midyear exam. Students may come to school on the final exam make-up day to consult with teachers concerning any questions on final exams or final grades. Buses leave school at 10:55 a.m. There are no late buses on the final exam make-up day. Seniors do not take final exams in June.

School is in session from 7:25 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with two exams given each day. Students should report to school only on the days and periods when they have exams. On exam days, buses will drop off students at the regular 7:25 a.m. time and leave school at 12:00 p.m. There is only one late bus at 2:30 p.m. during exam days. If school is closed for an emergency during the exams, the schedule will be adjusted so that the next day of school will have the exams that were missed, and the schedule will continue in the original sequence. If there is a delayed opening on an exam day, school will be extended to the regular dismissal time of 2:15 p.m. School cancellation days during the winter months may extend the date for the last day of school. Please consider the possibility that the school year may be extended to the last week in June when making summer plans.



## SECURITY

### SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

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The School Resource Officers are members of the Ridgefield Police Department assigned to Ridgefield Public Schools assisting administrators in their attempt to address situations in the lives of students through enforcement of school rules and state statutes. The SROs are involved in intervention and prevention programs. Besides being active high profile law enforcement officers, the School Resource Officers are resources for students, parents, and teachers, working hand in hand with the administration of the school. The School Resource Officer assists with finding solutions while maintaining a safe educational environment.

### SECURITY PERSONNEL

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Ridgefield Public Schools security personnel promote safety of the total school community. Members of the security team assist the administration and staff in providing a safe and controlled climate for our students by enforcing administrative guidelines for student conduct on the school premises.

## STUDENT AREAS AND ACCESS

### AREAS FOR UNSCHEDULED TIME

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The following areas are available for student use for eating and relaxing.

#### QUIET CONVERSATION AND PERSONAL MUSIC AREAS:

- **Student Center Courtyard** – located adjacent to the Student Center and across from the School Store.
- **Library Patio** – located adjacent to the library at the front of the building.

#### CASUAL CONVERSATION AND MUSIC AREAS:

- **Promenade** – located between the Student Center and staff parking lot.
- **Student Center Patio** – located outside the Student Center on the auditorium side.

#### SPORTS ACTIVITIES:

- Basketball may be played on the Tyler Ugolyn Memorial Basketball Court.

### ATHLETICS OFFICE

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The Athletics Department shares an office with Student Life, in a room located off the Student Center. It is a place where students may obtain information on teams, tryouts, practices and schedules. Practice and game changes are immediately updated on the RHS website. In addition, changes are announced when possible.

### ATTENDANCE OFFICE

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The Attendance Office is available for parents to excuse their children and for students who need passes to leave early or to leave for emergency appointments during the day. It is located in the Main Office (flagpole) Entrance hallway.

## **CAFETERIA ACCOUNTS**

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All students in the Ridgefield Public School system are automatically set up with an account in the district cafeteria payment system. Parents and guardians have a choice of payment options for depositing money into a student's individual account including secure online payment and personal check. Students may make purchases with cash at any time or use cash to add funds to their account. More information is available on the [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) website.

## **COPIER**

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A copier is available for student use in the library.

## **COUNSELING CENTER**

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The Counseling Center is located across from the library. Counselors, psychologists, and a social worker are available to students who may drop in or schedule an appointment in the appointment books located on each counselor's office door.

## **ELEVATOR**

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Elevators are located in the F Wing across from the restrooms and across from the library. Elevator use is for handicapped access and for students and staff with injuries or conditions that prevent them from using the stairs. Students who are not injured or who do not have a condition that prevents them from using the stairs are not permitted to use the elevators.

## **FITNESS CENTER**

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The Metzger Fitness Center has a variety of weight lifting and aerobic exercise machines for use during physical education class and under the supervision of a coach. The hours of 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. are supervised by a certified coach and reserved for the general student body. The Center is solely for the use of athletic teams under coach supervision beginning at 4:00 p.m.

## **HEALTH OFFICE**

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The Health Office is located between the Main Office and the Girls' locker room. The nursing staff is available for students who are ill, injured, or require medication.

## **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

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Any person on the school premises is required to show identification when requested to do so by any school authority. Students are issued ID cards every year and are required to carry their ID cards whenever they are on campus. All students are issued an ID card that acts as a library card, as well as an official identification card for special resources and programs. ID cards also carry stickers that identify early dismissal periods and Open Campus periods. Students must present their ID cards to reenter the building after 7:35 a.m. and anytime a staff member requests to view it. A student who does not show an ID card may be referred to the grade level dean. Students will be charged five dollars for a replacement ID.

## **LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS**

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The RHS Library Learning Commons (LLC) is a collaborative, collegial, multi-media research and school community space dedicated to helping all learners develop the skills necessary to meet ever increasing technological demands. The LLC has two certified teaching librarians trained in the instruction of critical thinking and research skills, as well as information and media literacy. Located in the Abe Lincoln Room, the LLC is also home to the RHS Reading Center.

The LLC is an evolving space where students can meet independently for study or with their class. The LLC has five Collaborative Learning Stations each of which can be outfitted with a 42" monitor and seating for five. This area can be reserved for group project work or as an alternative classroom.

A second alternative classroom can be configured on the floor of the LLC. Chromebooks are available for class use at each alternate site by prior reservation. The monitors can also be configured for collaborative work in the Toni Morrison Room by reservation.

The LLC has approximately 170 Chromebooks in its collection. Over 50 of these are dedicated for use in the traditional LLC teaching classrooms (Toni Morrison or Mark Twain). Others can be reserved for use in our flexible/alternative classroom areas or for individual student check-out. The entire LLC is BYOD capable. Multiple wireless access points enable Cloud Printing from Chromebooks. The LLC also has computer microphones, webcams, Flip, video and still cameras, as well as approximately 20 iPads, and a limited number of Kindle Fire HDs available for checkout. ***Students are reminded a current student ID, or a clear picture of their current ID, is necessary if they wish to check-out any technology.***

The LLC is divided into two general sections, Quiet Study and Group Study. Carrels for individual study and tables for groups of four students are available in the Quiet Study Area. Tables for up to six students are available in the Group Study Area. Additional counter-style seating where students can plug-in and recharge devices is available in the Quiet Study section. The LLC also has limited number of textbooks available for use in the LLC. A current ID is also necessary for textbook check-out.

The Learning Commons subscribes to a wide variety of databases covering all levels and learning disciplines. The Commons also houses over 35,000 texts in its periodical, reference, fiction, biography, art, DVD, audio and e-book collections. Students and staff can remotely search the general collection and access subscription databases at <http://ridgefieldps.follettdestiny.com> 24/7. Access to e-books and audiobooks is available through the OverDrive Download Library. Titles can be downloaded to any computer or personal device using a school ID at <http://rhs.lib.overdrive.com>.

Visitors to the LLC are expected to respect the rights of others to quiet independent study, as well as to demonstrate respect for the equipment and materials, and to maintain a level of quiet consistent with a serious academic atmosphere. Students are reminded to enjoy their food and drinks before entering the LLC and to set their cell phones to silent. Digital devices may be used but should not be disruptive to others using the LLC.

#### **Learning Commons Hours**

Monday – Friday	6:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Early Dismissal Days	6:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Delayed Opening Days	9:20 or 10:20 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The daily and weekly LLC reservation schedule is posted on the message monitor at the entrance to the LLC as well as on the LLC website, <https://sites.google.com/a/ridgefieldps.net/rhsllc/>. Items of general and curricular interest are available by following the LLC on social media. The LLC is on Twitter @RidgefieldHSLLC, on Facebook we are RHS Library Learning Commons, and RHSLLC on Instagram.

All LLC materials available to students have specific loan periods and check-out limits. A loan schedule for the various media follows.

Circulation Type	Check-Out Limit	Loan Period	Renewable	Fine
Chromebook* (*general circulation-- Chromes distributed during class due at end of class period)	1*	1 school day, no overnight	NO	\$5.00 per day Return by 7:25 A.M. = \$5, Return after 7:25 A.M. = \$10
iPads	1	1 school day, no overnight	NO	\$5.00 per day
Reference Books	1	1 Overnight only, end of day pickup	NO	\$1.00 per day
Book (print fiction, non-fiction, biography, etc.)	6	10 days	2 times	\$0.10 per day
Kindles	1	10 days	NO	\$5.00 per day
AV (projectors,screen, mics, etc.)	1	1 school day	NO	\$5.00 per day

## **LOCKERS AND PERSONAL ITEM STORAGE**

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**LOCKERS** - Students are assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year to provide a place to store clothing, books and other articles necessary for use during the school day. The student has no property interest in any locker. Lockers are subject to inspection by the administration to protect the health and welfare of the student body. Students are responsible for keeping the interior of their lockers clean and will be held financially liable for any damage to the locker's interior. Students should keep their lockers locked at all times and not share their combinations with other students. See an administrative assistant for any locker problems. **Students should not bring large amounts of cash or valuable personal items to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

**GYM LOCKERS** – Students are not assigned individual gym lockers, however, lockers are available in the locker room to store personal items. Students should provide their own locks to store items of value during gym class and practice. Locks should be removed at the end of class or practice.

**ATHLETICS LOCKERS** – Student athletes who participate in an RHS sport are assigned an athletics locker which is large enough to accommodate backpacks, sports bags and equipment. The student is responsible to ensure all their personal belongings are kept in the locker while they are participating in their sport. The school is not responsible for items left unattended in the locker room. At the end of the sports season athletes must remove all of their belongings from the lockers, at which time locker combinations are changed for security purposes.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

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Lost clothes and books are placed on the shelves adjacent to the Student Life Office and should be claimed within two weeks. All unclaimed items are donated to a charity at the end of each marking period.

## **PARKING LOT**

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Students with a parking sticker can park in one of two lots located on campus. Lot A is located on the Community entrance side. Lot B is located on the Promenade side.

## **STUDENT CENTER**

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The Student Center is available for all students and staff throughout the day. A light breakfast is served from 7:00 a.m. until 9:15 a.m. and lunch is available from 9:47 a.m. to 11:51 a.m. A la carte items are available after the lunch periods. Students are responsible for keeping the room in an orderly condition. Trash should be deposited in the containers provided so that students can enjoy a clean work, meeting, study and eating area.

## **STUDENT STORE**

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The Student Store is located between the Student Center and the Music wing and is open periods 6 and 7.

## **TELEPHONES**

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There are telephones available in the Student Life Office and the Main Office for local calls.

## **VISITORS**

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Only students who will be potentially enrolling at RHS or students visiting from another country are allowed to visit the school during the school day. Students must make arrangements in the Main Office at least 48 hours in advance and have a parent sign a request form. Qualified visitors, as described above, must report to the Main Office, sign in, and receive a visitor's pass signed by the Assistant Principal for their grade. A student may host a visitor for only one day unless prior approval is arranged through the grade level Assistant Principal. No visitors are allowed on school grounds during the midyear and final examination schedules, on the day prior to a school vacation, or on the last day of classes. At the discretion of an administrator, a student with disciplinary issues may be denied the privilege of hosting a visitor. The administration reserves the right to restrict visitors.

# COMMUNICATION

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# SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

## WEBSITE

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The school website has a variety of information about the school. It may be accessed from the district website [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org).

## POWERSCHOOL PORTAL

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The Ridgefield Public Schools use PowerSchool as their student data management system. The PowerSchool Portal provides students and parents timely and secure access to student information including attendance, grade and progress reporting, fees and obligations, schedules, unofficial transcripts and athletic information (athletic participants only). Parents have access to information for all family members while students may access only their own records.

The PowerSchool Portal may be accessed through the district website at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). To access the PowerSchool Portal you will need a login ID and password which you may also obtain on the district website at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). User accounts for new students and parents are created at the time of registration.

## SCHOOL CANCELLATION

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In the case of hazardous conditions, school may be delayed, dismissed early or cancelled for the day. This information will be communicated through the following media:

### RADIO

WLAD 98.3 FM 800 AM

WCBS 880 AM

WRCH 100.5 FM

### TV

WFSB TV Channel 3

WTNH TV Channel 8

WVIT TV Channel 30

### WEB

[www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org)

**EMAIL** – Superintendent's News  
Service at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org)

## EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

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The district uses an emergency phone notification system to notify students, parents and teachers of emergency information. The program uses phone numbers and email addresses on file in our school computer system. Please notify the school if there are any changes to your contact, email or phone information. Ridgefield High School uses an automated contact system that will send out important information via email and/or phone messages using the parent contact information on file. Ridgefield High School also shares information via Twitter, @RidgefieldHS.

## NOTIFICATION OF MISSED CLASSES

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RHS has an automatic dialing service that calls home when a student has an unexcused absence or tardy recorded for that day. Student attendance is also available on the PowerSchool Portal.

## SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGES

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The Superintendent communicates information pertaining to Ridgefield Schools, including Ridgefield High School, through various means. Email notifications, phone messages, and news agencies may be used to communicate important messages including weather related and emergency closings.

## PARENT MEETINGS

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**Open House** – Open House is an evening program held in early September and is an opportunity for parents to follow their child's schedule and receive information about each class from the teacher.

**Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences** – Students or parents may request a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year. Conferences may include the student, teacher, counselor and parent and are an opportunity for students, teachers and parents to review student progress and identify strengths, as well as areas of concern.

## PTSA BLAST

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The Parent Teacher Student Association at Ridgefield High School prepares an email newsletter that contains a variety of information on activities and events at the high school. Contact the PTSA to sign up to receive this information. The PTSA publishes a Student Directory for its members in addition to the newsletters.

## AWARDS CEREMONIES

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**Academics and Activities** – There will be a senior awards ceremony to recognize achievements of our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

**Athletics** – Awards are given at the close of each season and/or the end of the school year.

# ACADEMIC PROGRESS

## GRADE REPORTING

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Quarter grades are a reflection of student performance for a marking period. Midyear and final exam grades are reported during the quarter the exam is given. Parents and students can review grades on the portal at any time during the school year for up to date grade information. At the end of each marking period after quarter grades have been finalized, parents will be notified through a ConnectEd message/email.

# ONLINE GRADEBOOK - PORTAL

We are providing the following summary regarding the online gradebook access.

- Logging assignments  
Generally, teachers will post assignments in the gradebook after completing the grading task for the entire class. The assignment posting will offer specifics in terms of the assignment weight, due-date, and a title that informs parents/students of the assignment's general content.
- Grading  
Together with their departments, as is currently in place, teachers determine how assignments are weighted and calculated. Please refer to teachers' grading rationales for this information. Generally, teachers will post grades for a given assignment upon completing the evaluation of the assignment for the class. The time it takes a teacher to complete a grading task for a class will vary based on the type of assignment; long-term assignments may take longer for a teacher to assess.
- Concerns about assignments and scores  
We wish to underscore the importance of a student's self-advocacy skills. Students should communicate concerns directly to the teacher with regard to assignments or scoring. If proper resolution cannot be achieved, students or parents may elect to send a follow-up email to the teacher. We encourage students to be proactive as they work toward mastering skills and content.
- How to interpret the gradebook  
Please understand that the gradebook is a snapshot in time; one assignment or grades based on a limited number of assignments can misrepresent overall performance. We encourage parents and students not to focus on individual assignments but general trends and patterns in the submission and overall quality of work.

The information posted on a teacher's gradebook is subject to change. The information posted is not the official Student Transcript.

- Portal information

Please make sure that all student and parent contact information in the portal is correct, especially the email address, so all parties receive timely communications from teachers.

Please be mindful that online gradebook access is just one of the tools available for teachers, students, and parents to communicate regarding student progress. Other tools include teacher websites and the different means and modes of communication indicated above. Again, more than anything, we encourage teachers and students to have honest and ongoing conversation about the student's performance in the class.

## CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

### IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITE

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Phone: (203) 894-5750 Fax: (203) 431-2891  
Alternative HS (203) 431-2878  
Website: [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) Click on Our Schools → Ridgefield High School.  
District Office: (203) 894-5550

### CONTACTING TEACHERS

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Teachers may be contacted either through Voicemail or Email. A teacher's email address consists of the first initial of the first name, the last name and ridgefield.org. For example, if your teacher's name is Jane Doe, her email address will be [jdoe@ridgefield.org](mailto:jdoe@ridgefield.org). The Ridgefield voicemail system may be accessed 24 hours a day at (203) 894-5750. A staff directory is available on the RHS website. Teachers will discuss curriculum, instruction, and grading with parents.

### WHO TO SEE FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

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Our goal is to direct you to the person closest to a need or concern.

CONCERN	CONTACT
Student performance	Teacher, Counselor
Curriculum/instruction/grading	Teacher first, then Department Chair/Senior Teacher
Requests for homework	Grade level Administrative Assistant
Counseling-related issues	Counselor
Discipline	Dean first, then grade level Assistant Principal
Attendance	Attendance Office
Medical issues	Nurse
Clubs	Student Life Office
Athletics	Coach first, then Athletics Director
Adult personnel	Assistant Principal first, then Principal
Stolen items	Teacher, Coach, Dean, then Assistant Principal
Locker problems	Administrative Assistant
Sexual Harassment	Teacher, Counselor, Dean, Assistant Principal

If your question does not fall in any of the above categories, the first point of contact should be an administrative assistant. These staff members can either help you or direct you to a person who can assist you. If a student needs to discuss an issue and does not know where to start, we suggest starting with the counselor. A parent's initial contact for any academic issue should be the teacher.



## **MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

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Students can be informed of a personal message during morning announcements at approximately 9:00 a.m. The student will be asked to stop by the Student Life Office or the Main Office to receive their message. We do not interrupt classes to deliver messages.

When dropping off items for students please do not leave any items of value such as cell phones or money.

# ACADEMICS

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# GRADUATION/GRADE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – RHS CLASS OF 2017

Course Clusters Defined		
Cluster	Subject(s)	Credits
<b>CLS</b> <i>Career &amp; Life Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Career &amp; Life Skills (1.5)</b> <i>Business, Family &amp; Consumer Science, Technology Ed, World Language</i></li> <li>• <b>Health (0.5)</b></li> <li>• <b>Physical Education (1.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Wellness (0.5)</b></li> </ul>	3.5
<b>HUM</b> <i>Humanities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English (4.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Humanities (1.5)</b> <i>English, Social Studies, Visual &amp; Performing Arts, World Language</i></li> <li>• <b>Social Studies (2.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>US History (1.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Government and Politics (0.5)</b></li> </ul>	9.0
<b>STEM</b> <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mathematics (4.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Science with lab (3.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>STEM (1.0)</b> <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</i></li> </ul>	8.0
<b>WL</b> <i>World Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two levels of a single language (2.0), OR</b></li> <li>• <b>Single level of two languages (2.0)</b> <i>French, German, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish</i></li> </ul>	❖
<b>FA/Voc Ed</b> <i>Fine Arts/Vocational Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fine Arts or Vocational Education(1.0)</b> <i>Business, Family &amp; Consumer Science, Technology Ed, Visual &amp; Performing Arts,</i></li> </ul>	◆
<b>OPEN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Courses from any department (4.5)</b></li> </ul>	4.5
❖ <i>The two World Language credits will be applied to any of the following clusters: Career &amp; Life Skills, Humanities, Open</i> ◆ <i>The one Fine Arts or Vocational Education credit will be applied, based on the course, to one of the following clusters: Career &amp; Life Skills, Humanities, or Open</i>		
<b>TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED TO GRADUATE</b>		<b>25.0</b>

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – RHS CLASS OF 2018 AND BEYOND

Course Clusters Defined		
Cluster	Subject(s)	Credits
<b>CLS</b> <i>Career &amp; Life Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Career &amp; Life Skills (1.5)</b> <i>Business, Family &amp; Consumer Science, Technology Ed, World Language</i></li> <li>• <b>Health (0.5)</b></li> <li>• <b>Physical Education (1.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Wellness (0.5)</b></li> </ul>	3.5
<b>HUM</b> <i>Humanities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English (4.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Fine Arts (1.0)</b> <i>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</i></li> <li>• <b>Humanities (0.5)</b> <i>English, Social Studies, Visual &amp; Performing Arts, World Language</i></li> <li>• <b>Social Studies (2.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>US History (1.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Government and Politics (0.5)</b></li> </ul>	9.0
<b>STEM</b> <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mathematics (4.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>Science with lab (3.0)</b></li> <li>• <b>STEM (1.0)</b> <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</i></li> </ul>	8.0
<b>WL</b> <i>World Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two levels of a single language (2.0), OR</b></li> <li>• <b>Single level of two languages (2.0)</b> <i>French, German, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish</i></li> </ul>	❖
<b>OPEN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Courses from any department (4.5)</b></li> </ul>	4.5
❖ <i>The two World Language credits will be applied to any of the following clusters: Career &amp; Life Skills, Humanities, Open</i>		
<b>TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED TO GRADUATE</b>		<b>25.0</b>

**Grade Level Assignment:** To advance to the next grade level at the conclusion of an academic year, a student must successfully complete the following credit requirements:

- Complete 6 credits - Advance to Grade 10
- Complete 12 credits – Advance to Grade 11
- Complete 18 credits – Advance to Grade 12

## ALL STUDENTS

Subjects taken in grades 7 and 8 are not counted toward the requirements for graduation. These include subjects such as Algebra I, Earth Science, Spanish I, or French I.

Participation in the Commencement is contingent upon fulfilling all graduation requirements prior to the ceremony.

# ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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Students must take a minimum number of courses each semester as follows:

Freshman and Sophomores	7 courses
Juniors	6 courses
Seniors	6 courses

Alternative course schedules are permitted with approval of the administration.

## COURSE CHANGES

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A student's course schedule is the result of careful planning involving students, parents, counselors, and staff. Course offerings and staffing are planned based on student course requests; therefore, we do not permit courses to be arbitrarily dropped or changed. While the school discourages program changes, it recognizes that under special circumstances changes must be made. In order to make a change in the program of studies, students must

- discuss the concerns with the teacher of the course in question, the counselor, and with parents;
- initiate the formal course change request with the counselors;
- continue to attend the class originally assigned until all transfer paperwork is formally completed; and
- make every effort to be enrolled in another course.

Note: A student who stops attending class before the class is officially dropped may receive disciplinary action for cutting class and academic consequences for missed work.

In addition to the above information, students and parents should be aware of grade reporting for a course that is dropped. Full year courses dropped with school approval will be treated as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Before the midpoint of the first marking period          | Omitted from the official transcript                                |
| • Between the midpoint and end of the first marking period | Final Grade of "W" for Withdrawn                                    |
| • After the end of the first quarter                       | Final Grade of "WF" for Withdrawn Fail, included in GPA calculation |

In the case of half-year courses, the specified time spans shall be half that of a full-year course.

## HOMEWORK

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Homework is considered an integral part of an academic program. While there are a number of variables associated with the amount of homework a student receives, please consult the Program of Studies for approximate guidelines.

# GRADING

## GRADES/GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Students earn grades based on a number of factors. These factors include individual student performance, curriculum demands, efforts of a student in class, standards of the school, and requirements of the teacher and the department. Teachers establish the criteria for the grading of student work and grades are earned through student efforts and success in meeting those criteria.

GRADE	RANGE	GPA
A+	95-100	4.5
A	90-94	4.0
B+	85-89	3.5
B	80-84	3.0
C+	75-79	2.5
C	70-74	2.0
D	65-69	1.0
F	0-64	0

An unweighted Grade Point Average (GPA) is included on the report card for each marking period. All courses that give letter grades are included in the GPA calculation.

### Final Grade Calculation

Final Grades are calculated according to the formula below. Only the final grade in a course appears on a student's transcript.  
MP= Marking Period

	MP1	MP2	MIDYEAR EXAM	MP3	MP4	FINAL EXAM	FINAL GRADE
Full Year Course	20%	20%	10%	20%	20%	10%	= 100%
	MP1	MP2	EXAM	FINAL GRADE			
Half-Year Course	45%	45%	10%	= 100%			

### Weighted GPA

A weighted GPA is calculated upon a student attaining senior status and is reported to colleges on the transcript. All courses taken at RHS are included in the weighted GPA. Core courses in the following areas receive bonus weight:

- honors courses in English, social studies, math and science (0.5 bonus)
- the fourth and fifth years of a world language (0.5 bonus)
- AP courses (1.0 bonus)

The transcript is the official record of a student's academic life. If circumstances arise in a student's life that affect a student's grades, such as illness or a personal crisis, the staff may use a number of options to communicate this to college admissions officers.

## HONOR ROLL CRITERIA

Honor Roll designation is based on an unweighted GPA and is awarded for each marking period.

DESIGNATION	ACADEMIC AVERAGE
High Honors	3.9 or higher
Honors	3.4 to 3.89

A student is not listed on the honor roll if an “Incomplete” grade has been given in any course. In addition, a student with any grade lower than a “C” will not be considered eligible for the honor roll.

## **INCOMPLETES**

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Certain circumstances in a student’s life, such as illness, may necessitate that work be completed after the end of the marking period. In this case the student will receive an “I” (Incomplete) on his/her report card to indicate this. All marks of “I” for a marking period or for an exam must be resolved by the midpoint of the following marking period. Any incomplete not resolved by the midpoint of the next marking period will be converted to a grade of “F”. The deadline for fourth quarter incompletes is August 1. A student receiving an incomplete is not eligible for honor roll designations.

## **VALEDICTORIAN**

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The valedictorian is selected based on the following: The student has the highest Weighted Grade Point Average calculated after the 7<sup>th</sup> semester and the student has been in attendance at Ridgefield High School for his/her entire junior year.

## **ONLINE LEARNING**

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### **RHS Online Courses-Options, Guidelines, and Department Criteria**

#### **Academic Enrichment - Online Courses**

Juniors and seniors have the option to complete some coursework toward graduation requirements online. Having access to online courses will provide students with additional scheduling flexibility, greater opportunity to take RHS electives, and access to additional courses not offered at RHS.

- Juniors and Seniors may take online courses (2 credit maximum, one per school year)
  - Applications must be completed by students and approved by the Online Course Committee
  - Certain RHS courses are not eligible for this online option (see Department Criteria for Academic Enrichment - Online Courses)
  - Courses not offered at RHS but offered at the pre-approved Online Schools may be taken with approval by the Online Course Committee
- Junior Year (1 credit maximum):
  - May take one 1 credit course or two .5 credit courses
  - An online course taken during Junior Year will not count toward the six required courses per semester
- Senior Year (1 credit maximum):
  - May take one 1 credit course or two .5 credit courses
  - An online course taken during Senior Year may count toward the six required courses per semester

#### **Credit Recovery and Course Foundation Improvement - Online Courses**

Students in grades 9 – 12 may take up to a total of two credits of coursework online – per school year – in place of courses they did not pass (and therefore did not earn credit) or received a grade of D in order to strengthen foundational skills before progressing to the next course level.

#### **Guidelines - Online Courses**

- Courses taken are at the expense of the student.
- An online course may be chosen from the following pre-approved online schools:
  - Apex Learning Center ([apexlearningvs.com/courses](http://apexlearningvs.com/courses))
  - Florida Virtual School ([flvsglobal.net](http://flvsglobal.net))
  - K12 ([K12.com](http://K12.com))
  - The Keystone School ([keystoneschoolonline.com](http://keystoneschoolonline.com))
  - Penn Foster High School ([pennfostervirtualhighschool.com](http://pennfostervirtualhighschool.com))
  - Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative ([vtvlc.org](http://vtvlc.org))
- Applications for online course(s) must be completed by students and approved by Administration during the regular course registration timeline.
- Students are responsible for checking NCAA requirements for online course acceptance.
- Online courses do not count toward athletic eligibility for GPA or passing course requirements.
- Students are responsible for completing assignments by guidelines established by the online institution. RHS Staff do not provide supplemental support for online courses.

- To receive credit for an approved online course:
  - RHS must receive an official transcript from the online school no later than the last instructional day (prior to exams) of the current school year
  - Online school transcripts are considered part of the RHS official transcript and will be included with any mailings (for example, copy(ies) of online school transcript(s) will be sent with RHS Transcripts for college applications)
  - Online course(s) will appear on the RHS transcript and receive a grade of Transfer (T)
  - Online course(s) will receive RHS credit toward graduation requirements
  - Online course(s) will not count toward the GPA
- In the event that the student withdraws from, does not complete, or does not pass an online course:
  - The online course will appear on the RHS transcript with a grade of Transfer (T)
  - No credit will be issued for the online course
  - The online school transcript will be included with any official RHS transcript mailings

### **Department Criteria for Academic Enrichment - Online Courses**

#### **Business:**

- Accounting 1 & 2, Marketing 1 & 2, Business Concepts, Business Law and Business Management are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses may be taken online

#### **English:**

- Junior level required full year courses are not eligible to be taken online
- Senior level required full year courses may be taken online if student received a B or higher in full year Junior level English course (not summer school)
- All other Junior/Senior level courses, including APs, may be taken online

#### **Family & Consumer Science:**

- Culinary, Baking and International Food courses are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses may be taken online

#### **Health/Wellness:**

- 9<sup>th</sup> grade Health requirement is not eligible to be taken online
- All Junior and Senior level courses can be taken online

#### **Mathematics**

- Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2 are not eligible to be taken online
- One Computer Science course may be taken online (Intro to Computer Science OR AP Computer Science)
- All other courses taken during Junior/Senior year, including APs, may be taken online

#### **Physical Education:**

- 9th and 10th grade requirements are not eligible to be taken online

#### **Project Lead the Way:**

- Project Lead the Way courses are not eligible to be taken online

#### **Reading**

- Reading courses are not eligible to be taken online

#### **Science:**

- Three RHS required lab sciences and Science Research are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses taken during Junior/Senior year, including APs, may be taken online

#### **Social Studies:**

- US History/American Studies/Advanced Placement American History courses are not eligible to be taken online
- All other Junior/Senior level courses, including APs, may be taken online

#### **Technology Education:**

- Material Science 1 and 2, Automotive Technology 1 and 2 and Robotics are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses may be taken online

#### **Visual and Performing Arts:**

- Performance and Product Based courses are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses may be taken online

#### **World Language:**

- The required 2.0 World Language credits are not eligible to be taken online
- All other courses taken during Junior/Senior year, including APs, may be taken online



# ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

## **ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT, ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT, AND CREDIT RECOVERY**

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Ridgefield High School offers many opportunities for students to complete graduation requirements and explore additional areas of interest throughout their high school years.

### **Academic Enrichment**

Students may elect to take select summer or online courses for Academic Enrichment. For more information on Academic Enrichment options, see [Ridgefield Summer Learning Program](#) and [RHS Online Courses-Options, Guidelines, and Department Criteria](#).

### **Academic Improvement**

Students wishing to improve their understanding of a core graduation requirement in which they earned a passing grade of “D” may do so by repeating the course during the regular academic year or over the summer at the Ridgefield Summer Learning Program. For more information on Academic Improvement options, see [Ridgefield Summer Learning Program](#).

### **Credit Recovery**

Students needing to re-take a failed graduation requirement may qualify for summer or online Credit Recovery courses. For more information on Credit Recovery options, see [Ridgefield Summer Learning Program](#) and [RHS Online Courses-Options, Guidelines, and Department Criteria](#).

## **EXTRA HELP**

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Teachers are available for extra help for students at a variety of times depending on the teacher and his/her schedules. At a minimum, teachers are available by appointment at least one day after school for extra help. Students wishing to receive extra help should speak in advance with their teacher to arrange for a mutually agreed upon time for additional help. The need for extra help takes precedence over all co-curricular and athletic activities.

## **RIDGEFIELD SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM**

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The Ridgefield Summer Learning Program is open to all public, private, and parochial school students entering grades 9 – 12 and provides opportunities for credit recovery, academic improvement, and academic enrichment in various subjects.

### **Academic Enrichment (RSLP)**

Select courses may be offered over the summer to all students to obtain additional credit. A course successfully completed for Academic Enrichment over the summer through the RSLP will be awarded credit and will be included on the transcript with the grade earned. The summer grade will count toward the student’s GPA calculation.

### **Academic Improvement (RSLP)**

Students wishing to improve their understanding of a core graduation requirement in which they earned a passing grade of “D” may do so by repeating the course through the Ridgefield Summer Learning Program or during the regular academic year. Both the original course and the repeated course will appear on the student’s official transcript as follows:

- Final Grade of D: Both courses will appear on the student’s transcript; Both grades will count toward the GPA; Credit will be awarded for the first course taken only
- Final grade of C or better: Both courses will appear on the student’s transcript; only the original C will count toward the GPA; Credit will be awarded for the first course taken only; The repeated course will appear on the transcript with a grade of “AU” (Audit)

### **Credit Recovery (RSLP)**

A course required for graduation in which a student earns a grade of “F” may be repeated over the summer for credit recovery. To qualify for credit recovery the student must have attended more than 75% of the course during the school year, have earned a grade of 55 or higher, and be recommended by the classroom teacher. Both the failed course and the summer course will appear on the student’s transcript. Both grades will count toward the GPA. Credit will be awarded for the summer course if successfully completed.

## PEER TUTORING

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The Ridgefield Chapter of the National Honor Society provides peer tutoring to any Ridgefield High School student. The arrangements for tutoring should be made through the student's counselor who will contact the Tutoring Chairperson. If a tutor is available, he/she will be assigned to the student.

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

## PROCEDURE

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Ridgefield High School promotes integrity and good citizenship through its programs and policies. The school cultivates a sense of honor both in and out of the classroom. Our procedure with respect to dishonesty in any form encourages both personal and civic virtue. Cheating and plagiarizing are not only academically dishonest but also a violation of ethical behavior and, as such, will not be tolerated.

### Cheating

Cheating is either giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on any type of school related work. In specific classroom or homework situations, individual teachers will determine what is or is not authorized as legitimate assistance.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- copying or allowing someone to copy homework, a report, quiz, test, or any other assignment;
- asking someone else to write or rewrite an essay, do part or all of an assignment or report, or do research for a paper;
- using cheat sheets on a test or quiz, or inappropriately using any electronic device (e.g., storing unauthorized information in a retrievable form);
- using either printed or electronic sources as substitutes for completing an assignment, (e.g., watching a video, reading Cliff Notes®, Spark Notes®, Pink Monkey® or any similar source instead of the literary work; reading an English translation of a work assigned to be read in a world language; etc.);
- illicitly acquiring the answers to a quiz or test, or the quiz or test itself before taking it; and
- taking credit for group work without making the assigned contribution to that group's work.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is against the law. Plagiarism consists of copying or paraphrasing the words or ideas of others without proper formal acknowledgement. No student may legitimately submit work as his or her own if it is the work of another or other persons. To help combat plagiarism, teachers may utilize turnitin.com to check on originality in assignments. Parents are encouraged to join us in supporting students to develop paraphrasing skills.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- "Cuts and pastes" printed or electronic text (**from the Internet or elsewhere**) into his or her paper and presents it as his or her own
- Consults an Internet or print source to "get ideas" that he or she then incorporates into a paper, without proper attribution
- Submits a paper written by someone else, including a tutor, while claiming to be the author
- Puts another person's ideas "in his or her own words," without documenting the source

### Consequences for cheating or plagiarizing:

Whenever a teacher determines that cheating or plagiarizing has taken place the following will occur:

- The teacher will meet in private with the student or students. At such a meeting the teacher will reinforce expectations as well as the values of honesty and student responsibility.
- The teacher will assign a grade of zero to the assignment on which the student has cheated or plagiarized.
- At a teacher's discretion, the work may be resubmitted for credit, or an alternative assignment be undertaken in place of the originally submitted work, in order to compensate for the grade of zero. The zero remains part of their academic record.
- The teacher will notify the parent and grade level dean to maintain a record.

# **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

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# COUNSELING SERVICES

## COUNSELING

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The Ridgefield High School Counseling Program, in the spirit of wellness, supports the academic, social and civic endeavors of all students. Our goal is for students to develop the following skills:

### Personal/Social

- problem-solving, decision-making, communication and self-advocacy skills
- resiliency
- responsibility for oneself and others
- awareness and respect for differences
- awareness of developmental and emotional growth

### Academic

- an awareness of academic strengths and learning style
- a positive sense of self through the exploration and pursuit of interests and talents
- a balance among home, school and community responsibilities

### Career

- career awareness and post high school planning

As professional school counselors, we are committed to supporting our students in developing behaviors that promote and maintain lifelong physical, emotional and social wellness.

Counselors are available for drop-in conversations and by appointment. For appointments, students may sign up in the appointment books located on each counselor's office door. Students should meet with their counselor during their open periods or before or after school. Parents are encouraged to call the counselor if home life conditions are affecting schoolwork or performance. The services of a school psychologist, social worker, and Teen Talk counselor are also available when needed.

## POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING

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Although graduation seems a long way off for freshmen and sophomores, it is important to realize that future opportunities depend on a student's entire high school career. Formal planning usually begins in the junior year but it is important to get an early start planning an appropriate high school program and preparing for the future. Freshmen and sophomores are encouraged to discuss future planning with their counselor often during their four years of high school. The counselor can assist in exploring the issues, information and essential skills which affect the student's post-high school choices. In the junior and senior years the student and family work with their counselor to research and apply for admission to colleges or to other programs which meet identified needs.

The RHS counseling program assumes that emphasis on balanced and challenging educational experiences affords students the greatest satisfaction and preserves the greatest numbers of options after graduation. The program recognizes that college admission officers and employers consider a wide range of items when evaluating candidates, such as:

### Importance of the High School Curriculum

The courses a student takes and the grades he or she achieves represent the most important criteria considered by admissions personnel. Colleges want to see that students have taken advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them and have applied themselves consistently. Therefore, students and parents need to select courses carefully.

**Involvement in Activities**

Engagement in co-curricular activities in both school and community enhances the high school experience and broadens a student's knowledge. Colleges want students who will be involved on campus so they look for students who have contributed to their school or community. Many colleges see the quality and depth of a candidate's commitment to athletics, clubs and organizations, and worthy causes to be significant to the admission decision. Community service activities show responsibility to the world beyond home and high school. Colleges prefer students who are significantly involved in a small number of activities rather than a minor participant in a long list of clubs.

**Character**

Colleges, as well as future employers, want responsible, trustworthy individuals with positive attitudes. It is important to have a high school record that demonstrates integrity and respect for community rules. A student will request letters of recommendation from his/her counselor and at least two teachers to include with the college applications.

**SAT/ACT**

College entrance exams measuring critical reading, math aptitude and writing are typically taken toward the end of the junior year. The best preparation for these exams is consistent attention and effort in classroom studies. A practice SAT (PSAT) for juniors is given in October at the high school. Sophomores who would like extra test-taking experience and have completed a year of geometry may also take the test.

**Other Factors**

Special talents, skills and interests; alumni relationship; geographic location; and intended major are some of the other factors relevant to admission decisions.

**Graduation Survey**

In order to comply with state reporting requirements, all graduating seniors must complete a short graduation survey.

**RESOURCES**

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The Counseling Center has a variety of resources including the following:

- college catalogs, applications, and reference books
- web based programs for college and scholarship searches and career exploration (e.g., Naviance)
- career interest inventories that can be administered on an individual basis
- SAT and ACT information
- scholarship applications and information
- internship and summer enrichment opportunities
- financial aid materials (e.g., FAFSA, CSS Profile)

**College Planning** - The Counseling Center section of the RHS website offers comprehensive information on post high school planning to assist students with their career and college needs. Students are able to complete college and career searches, personality inventories, research financial aid and scholarships and a variety of other tasks to assist with their college and career planning through Naviance.

**College Representative Visits** – Many college representatives host information sessions at RHS, especially in the fall. Interested students and parents may attend. Students should check with their teachers for permission to miss class at least one day in advance of the session. The schedule of college representative visits can be found on Naviance. Interested students are encouraged to register on Naviance to attend a college representative visit.

**College Fair** – The Ridgefield-Wilton High School College Fair Partnership is held each October at the Wilton High School Field House. Approximately 300 college representatives gather to answer questions and provide students and parents with information about their schools. Students in all grade levels will find this helpful, but it is a must for college-bound juniors and seniors.

**Financial Planning Workshop** – In late fall there is an evening meeting for seniors and their parents to familiarize them with the process for financing an education.

## **PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

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The school's psycho-educational services provide intervention and support for students, families and staff. These include consultation, assessment, counseling and liaison with community professionals to design appropriate educational and social interventions.

The school psychologist aids in the assessment of a student's educational and/or behavioral needs. The continuum of services available to students can include observation in the classroom; consultation with students, families and outside professionals; and interpretation of comprehensive psychological evaluations. The school psychologist formally reviews and reassesses students placed in special education programs and services.

## **SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

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The social worker provides a broad range of services. Resources include case management; crisis intervention; group work; faculty, staff and parent consultation; and community collaboration. The focus of counseling is upon those issues which have had an adverse effect upon the student's academic performance and current school adjustment. Some issues may include the transition of students returning to the campus from hospitalization; freshmen entering the high school; and seniors preparing to leave. The social worker also provides prevention programs for mainstream students as well as for those in special education. School personnel, students themselves, peers or parents may initiate a request for services.

## **PROGRAMS**

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### **LIFE Program**

The LIFE program is for students who have one or more of a variety of emotional needs that require extra support in the school setting. Students or parents may contact a counselor or the social worker for a description of the program and an application.

### **Student Success Team**

The Child Study Team is a group of staff members that meets monthly to identify strategies to help students who are having difficulty in school, whether the concerns are academic, social, or emotional.

### **Senior Internship Program**

The Senior Internship Program is held during the last six weeks of the senior year. It is an opportunity for seniors to work full time in a career setting to learn more about an area they are interested in and to obtain valuable full time work experiences.

### **Grief/Loss Group (as needed)**

The Grief/Loss group deals with issues of grief and loss due to the death of an immediate family member at any time in a student's life. It is an opportunity for students to support each other, and to develop and use coping skills in a group facilitated by a counselor.

### **Math/Literacy Assistance**

There will be times throughout the day when assistance in math, reading, and writing support will be available. Interested students should see their counselor for more information.

## **TESTING PROGRAMS**

Dates for these testing programs are found in the Calendar section.

### **CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT)**

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The Connecticut Academic Performance Test is given in March and is required for all tenth grade students. Students are tested in Science.

## **PSAT**

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The PSAT is available at RHS for juniors. The PSAT is a test in preparation for the SAT test and serves as a qualifier for National Merit Scholarships. Sophomores who would like extra test-taking experience and have completed a year of geometry may take the test. More information about the PSAT can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## **SAT/SAT SCHOOL DAY TESTING**

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SAT School Day testing replaces the Smarter Balanced Assessment and is a requirement for all grade eleven students. This SAT includes a math component and a critical reading component.

The SAT is also administered at various times during the year and includes a math component, critical reading component and an optional writing component. More information about the SAT, including registration, can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and in the Counseling Center.

## **SAT SUBJECT TESTS**

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SAT Subject Tests (formerly SAT II tests) are subject specific. College requirements regarding SAT Subject Tests vary with the institution. Students should speak to their counselor or teacher concerning the best time to take a specific Subject Test. Some students find it helpful to take these tests at the end of the year in which they have taken the subject area course. For example, a student taking Physics in the freshman year may want to take the Physics Subject Area test immediately after completing the course. If the student will complete a more advanced course in the same subject prior to the senior year, for example AP Physics, it is recommended that the student wait until completing the advanced course before taking the test. More information about the SAT Subject Tests including registration can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## **ACT**

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The American College Testing program (ACT) is a three-hour examination which measures the student's ability in English, reading, mathematics, natural science and an optional writing component. More information about the ACT, including registration, can be found at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) and in the Counseling Center.

## **ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)**

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Advanced Placement tests are given in May to those students who have been enrolled in AP courses throughout the school year. Colleges may grant credits and/or advanced standing on an individual basis as a result of AP test scores. More information about the AP test can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## **IMPORTANT TEST NUMBERS**

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RHS SAT Test Center Code Number: 07-505  
RHS Code Number: 070640

The College Board and American College Testing program must receive registration materials one month prior to the scheduled test date.

# HEALTH SERVICES

## CARE OF STUDENTS

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Ridgefield has a health care team of three nurses. Health services are provided for students that require daily medical and emergency care by Registered Nurses. Individualized health services are provided for students who have acute, chronic health and mental health conditions. School nurses collaborate with students, family and staff regarding student health concerns. Nurses work closely with the guidance department and participate in Planning and Placement Teams, Section 504 Teams and School Crisis Teams to support student learning and success.

## SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS

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A student with a medical/psychological condition or daily medication should be known to school Health Services *prior* to the student entering school. Ridgefield Public Schools are committed to ensuring that students who have special health care needs due to acute and chronic health conditions receive the supports and services necessary to remain safe. Students with special health care needs refers to those students who have a medically diagnosed chronic health condition. Parents who have a child with special health care needs are encouraged to speak with the school nurse. Routine and emergency health care records will be sensitively shared with faculty and staff members on a need to know basis.

## STUDENT MEDICATION

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For students who must take medication during school hours the nurse must have written authorization from both a health care provider and parent. A completed “Medication Authorization Form” signed by the student’s physician and parent is required for any medication. If your student requires an Epipen an “Emergency Health Care Plan” form will also need to be completed. “Authorization for the Administration of Medicine by School Personnel” forms are available in the nurse’s office and on the school website. The medication must be in its original container, clearly labeled with the student’s name, authorized prescriber’s name, date it was ordered, name of the medication, dosage, and directions for administering the prescription. Parents should notify the nurse concerning any changes in the prescribed dosage. A new form is required annually. The medication form must include:

- Name, strength, and dosage of the prescribed medication;
- Reason for the medication (medical diagnosis);
- Directions for administering the medication;
- Time the medication is to be administered;
- Duration of the order;
- Potential side and untoward effect;
- Authorization for self-administration, if appropriate.

Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen may be administered by the school nurse with completion of the parental consent form found on the parent portal. Students are not permitted to carry any medication during the school day without a completed medication authorization form on file in the Health Office. The parent or a responsible adult must pick up unused medication within one week of its completion or by the last day of school, or it will be disposed of by the school nurse.

## MEDICATION ON FIELD TRIPS

The same state regulations and school policies apply to medication on field trips as in school during the day. Students who have a self-administration plan must carry their own medication on a field trip, just as they do during the school day. These requirements include over-the-counter medications. It is best to speak with the school nurse well in advance of a field trip to make sure that your child will have access to appropriate medication and assistance, if needed, during a field trip.



## **ILL OR INJURED STUDENTS**

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Students exhibiting signs of illness or contagious disease are best cared for at home to facilitate their own recovery and to prevent the spread of illness to other students. The school nurse will ask a parent/guardian to pick up any student who becomes ill during school hours or who has an illness or injury that, in the professional judgment of the school nurse, needs to be observed at home or assessed by a medical doctor.

9-1-1 will be called in a health or mental health emergency for immediate transportation of a student to the hospital.

## **HEALTH ASSESSMENTS/PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

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In accordance with the Ridgefield Board of Education each ninth grade student is required to have a health assessment before entering the ninth-grade year. This mandated health assessment must be completed and performed by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine who is licensed in this or another state. The results of this exam must be recorded on the blue State of Connecticut Health Assessment Record (HAR-3) and returned to the school nurse. A physical exam is considered current if it has been completed within 12 months of the date the student enters school.

New students are also required by Connecticut State Law to have a physical examination. The blue State of Connecticut Health Assessment Record (HAR-3) must be completed and submitted to the school nurse.

All students participating in interscholastic sports are required to have an annual physical examination. The blue (HAR-3) form can be used as the required sports physical. Only one physical exam per year is required for tryout and participation in interscholastic sports. It is the parent's/student's responsibility to inform the nurse /coach of any medical conditions.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

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New students must provide proof of immunizations before entering Ridgefield High School. Students cannot begin classes without proper immunizations. Please refer to the blue State of Connecticut Health Assessment Record or contact the Health Office with any questions regarding immunization requirements.

## **EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL**

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Board of Education policy requires that a record of immunizations and Health Assessment Physical be provided prior to the student's first day at Ridgefield High School to assure that all students are adequately protected from preventable communicable diseases. Connecticut law states that students who are not in compliance with these health requirements must be excluded from school until the immunizations and health records are presented and/or updated.

## **MEDICAL EXCUSE – PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

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If a student is to be medically excused from physical education parents should notify the school nurse and the student's guidance counselor. A medical note must be provided to the school nurse from the treating physician with a specific start and end date, as no open-ended exclusions are permitted.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

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Emergency contacts and contact phone numbers are important when a student is injured or becomes ill. It is the family's responsibility to provide up-to-date medical information, emergency contacts and telephone numbers. Please contact the Ridgefield Board of Education to make changes to information.

# **ATTENDANCE**

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# ABSENCES

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure compliance with the State of Connecticut's compulsory school attendance requirements (Connecticut General Statute 10-184). Students are required to attend class on a regular basis and be on time for class. Regular class attendance increases the student's probability for a successful performance and fosters the development of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility.

If a student is absent, he or she may not participate in any athletic team or school activities scheduled on the day of that absence. Students excused from school are responsible for contacting the teachers of any classes missed and making up any outstanding assignments within the time frame designated by the teacher.

Individual student attendance information may be accessed through the PowerSchool Portal.

## NOTIFYING THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE

In order to excuse an absence, parents/guardians need to call the attendance office, at (203) 894-5750 (then press 2), within 48 hours of the absence. Students must sign in at the Attendance Office if they arrive late to school. For dismissal during the day, parents/guardians are required to call the attendance office by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the dismissal. Notes (and possibly additional documentation) are required for students with total absences (unexcused and excused) in excess of nine.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

The State Board of Education definitions establish two levels of criteria for an absence to be considered an excused absence (see table below).

Level	Total # of Days Absent*	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to Be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 Days
1	One through nine	Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves.	Parent or guardian phone call is required.
2	Ten and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student illness (Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence's length).</li> <li>- Student's observance of a religious holiday.</li> <li>- Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.</li> <li>- Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).</li> <li>- The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not needed for this reason).</li> <li>- Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators. (additional documentation required).</li> </ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation (see details of specific reason).

\* Note: The total number of days absent includes both excused and unexcused absences.

Students may be asked to provide documentation explaining the reason for any absence. In these cases, please provide a medical professional's note; if the student was not seen by a medical professional, a note from a parent/guardian or age of majority student will suffice.

Parents must provide a medical professional's note for excused absences in excess of 10 days. Documentation must be submitted to the Attendance Office upon the return to school.

Parents may not excuse students from any class if the student remains in the building. Any student found on campus during the time in which he or she has been excused will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL**

In order to dismiss a student from school during the school day, please follow the procedures as outlined below:

- Call the Attendance Office before 10:00 a.m. stating the time and reason for dismissal.
- The student should report to the Attendance Office to receive a pass for the specified early dismissal time.
- The student should give the pass to the security officer upon leaving campus.

A parent must call the school before the student can be excused. The school nurse may dismiss a student early in the event of illness, with parental notification. If a student leaves school due to illness, he/she may not return to school later in the day to participate in any co-curricular activity.

Students who have completed their scheduled classes for the day may leave school grounds early with the appropriate sticker on their ID card and a signed release form, which can be obtained from Attendance or an administrative assistant. They may not return to school until after the school day has been completed at 2:15 p.m. with the exception of students with Open Campus privilege. The ID sticker serves as their pass and is shown to the security officer upon leaving the campus.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

All absences for reasons other than legally excusable reasons are considered unexcused absences. Students with unexcused absences will receive a zero for any work to be completed during that class period. The following constitute unexcused absences:

- truancy
- leaving class before being officially dismissed
- three (3) tardies of under 10 minutes
- one tardy of over 10 minutes

Students must report to all classes and remain there until a supervising teacher arrives or until an administrator dismisses them. If a teacher is late to class, students are expected to wait until the teacher, administrator or a staff member arrives. If a teacher or substitute does not arrive within five minutes, one student in the class should report this to the office.

The Attendance Office will notify the parent or guardian of the unexcused absence or tardy by phone. Automated phone calls are placed at 6:00 p.m. daily for unexcused absences or tardies occurring on that day. Absences and tardies can also always be viewed on the portal. The teacher will notify the student of the unexcused absence when the student returns. The student will be subject to disciplinary action if a pattern of three or more unexcused absences occurs.

## **TARDINESS**

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A student is considered tardy if they arrive to class after class has started, but less than ten minutes into the period. A student who is tardy three times within a marking period is considered to have an unexcused absence.

## **LONG TERM ABSENCES**

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Parents should notify the Attendance Office and counselor in the event of a long-term absence. Counselors can arrange for alternate instruction or tutoring if the situation requires it.

## **TRUANCY**

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Students are required by Connecticut State Law to attend school until the age of 18 inclusive. A student is considered truant if he/she accrues four days of unexcused absences in a month or ten days of unexcused days of absences in a school year. Students who are truant will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

## **VACATIONS WHILE SCHOOL IS IN SESSION**

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It is the responsibility of parents and students to make arrangements for loss of instruction caused by absences due to a family vacation. Parents are urged to schedule family vacations during the regular school vacation time. Families should be aware that school cancellation days during the winter months may extend the date for the last day of school. Please consider the possibility that the school year may be extended through the last week of June when making summer plans.

# DISCIPLINE

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# PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The discipline policy at Ridgefield High School applies to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or any place interferes with or obstructs the missions or operations of the school district or the safety or the welfare of students or employees.

All persons associated with Ridgefield High School – students, parents, staff and board members – are working together toward fulfilling the educational goals and objectives of the school system. All students have the right to pursue these goals and objectives unhindered by disruptions or other infractions. All students also have the responsibility to abide by rules and regulations established and maintained for the general welfare of students. The individual student must understand that these rules and regulations are intended to benefit the school as a whole and that membership in a group usually requires a reasonable degree of personal sacrifice. When anyone's rights are violated or when someone is not acting according to the rules and regulations, we must all be concerned; and appropriate action must be taken.

The student who is accused of committing an infraction has the following rights under Conn. Gen. State Statutes, Sec. 10-233c: to be informed of the specific nature of the infraction, to present the facts before any disciplinary action is taken, and to be disciplined fairly.

Disciplinary procedures used at Ridgefield High School range from an informal conference to expulsion from school. The procedure to be used depends upon the seriousness of the infraction, the specific circumstances of the situation, and the individual's overall pattern of behavior. Possession, use or distribution of alcohol or drugs, false fire drills, weapons, assault, and other major disruptions are considered serious infractions. A series of minor infractions committed by the same student can also constitute a major infraction. This is proper since the student who repeatedly commits infractions has a demoralizing effect on the general student body and staff. In addition to the usual school procedures, criminal infractions must also be reported by school personnel to the police and other officials.

## DISTRICT DISCIPLINE POLICY

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The Ridgefield Board of Education recognizes that order in the classroom, school and school functions is a necessary prerequisite for learning. If pupils unreasonably disrupt this order, it may be necessary to exclude them from the classroom and/or school setting. Ridgefield Board of Education policy allows students to be searched, and school desk and lockers to be searched.

Any pupil whose conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity violates a publicized policy of the Board, or seriously disrupts the educational process or endangers persons or property may be expelled. Expulsion proceedings are required (Conn. Gen. State Statutes, Sec. 10-233d) when there is reason to believe that a pupil 1) was in possession of a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; 2) off school grounds did possess a firearm or did possess and use such a firearm, instrument or weapon in the commission of a crime; or 3) on or off school grounds offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance. Any such exclusion shall take place in accordance with Section 10-233a through 10-233h of the Conn. Gen. State Statutes. Cases of possession of controlled substances shall be brought to the Superintendent for consideration of additional action including the initiation of expulsion proceedings. Habitual or repeated suspensions may be grounds for expulsion.

Disciplinary procedures at Ridgefield High School range from an informal conference to a recommendation for expulsion. For all infractions, the school reserves the right to impose more serious discipline including suspension and/or expulsion in cases where the conduct is seriously disruptive of the school process.

Students are subject to discipline, including suspension and expulsion from school for misconduct even if such misconduct occurs off school property and during non-school time. Under Board policy a student may be suspended or expelled from school for conduct off school property that violates a publicized policy of the Board, a policy in this handbook, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or endangers person or property.

Video surveillance cameras are used in public areas and school buses for security and to assist in maintaining student safety.(see Security section)

## **EXPECTATIONS**

### **ACTIVITIES**

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School rules apply at all school sponsored activities, on or off campus, including, but not limited to, athletic events, field trips, club activities and dances. Participation in any school activity is considered a privilege. Students in violation of school rules at these events may be suspended from participation in future events in addition to disciplinary action.

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

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Drug and alcohol use is against the law. The Board of Education prohibits their possession, use or distribution on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school provided transportation. No alcoholic beverages or controlled drugs, as defined by Connecticut law, are permitted on school property. If a student must take medication during the school day, the medication must be left with the school nurse who will make arrangements for dispensing it. Since the use of alcohol presents several safety concerns, any student suspected of being under the influence of alcohol may be asked to take a breathalyzer test. If a student refuses to take a breathalyzer test, the student's parents will be called and asked to take the student home. Appropriate discipline action will be taken.

Disciplinary action will be taken when any of the following situations occur:

- a student is found in possession of alcoholic beverages, controlled drugs, performance enhancing substances, intoxicants, or drug paraphernalia on school premises or at a school activity conducted off campus;
- a student is under the influence of, sells, or provides to other students alcoholic beverages, controlled drugs, performance enhancing substances, or intoxicants on school premises or at a school activity conducted off campus;
- a student off school grounds offers for sale or distribution a controlled substance;
- a student possesses or transfers drug paraphernalia on school premises or at a school activity;
- a student possesses, sells, or provides prescription medication to other students on school premises or at a school activity conducted off campus;
- a student is under the influence of prescription medication that has not been prescribed to the student, on school premises or at a school activity conducted off campus;
- a student uses a legally prescribed drug or over the counter medication in any way other than in the manner it was originally prescribed;
- a student is knowingly in the presence of another person in possession of, using, or distributing controlled drugs, intoxicants, performance enhancing substances or alcoholic beverages; or
- the misrepresentation of a liquid or substance as a controlled substance.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- The parent, student, and counselor will be notified.
- The student will receive a ten-day suspension.
- The student will be referred to the social worker/school psychologist for a consultation.
- In the case of possession of alcohol, a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia, the police will be notified and the student will be referred to the superintendent for consideration of additional action including the initiation of expulsion proceedings.
- In the case of the sale or distribution of controlled substances, the police will be notified. In accordance with Conn. Gen. State Statutes (Sec. 10-233d) the school system is required to recommend for expulsion any student who, on or off school grounds, offers a controlled substance for sale or distribution.

The Ridgefield Canine Unit may be used on school grounds. Parents should note that under Connecticut law they can be held legally responsible for providing minors with alcoholic beverages or drugs.



## **ANIMALS AND PETS**

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Animals and pets are not permitted on school property during school hours without permission. In addition to any consequences for disrupting the school day, students who bring animals onto school grounds and involve them in activities that are harmful will be subject to the cruelty to animals provision of civil law.

## **BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING**

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Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, at any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device. Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline up to and including expulsion. Acts of bullying that constitute criminal conduct will be referred to the police.

Any student who engages in a repeated act against another that causes physical or emotional harm to a student or such student's property, places a student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the educational process.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- physical violence and attacks;
- taunts, name-calling, put-downs, or discriminatory slurs;
- targeting of a student based upon that person's actual or perceived "differentiating characteristics" such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national or ethnic background, disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, or a student's association with a person or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics;
- threats and intimidation, and extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions;
- extortion or stealing of money and possessions;
- cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is the use of technology, including the internet or any computer network, to harass another person, and/or to carry out deliberately hostile and hurtful attacks for the purpose of intimidating, humiliating or excluding another person or group of people. Cyberbullying can be carried out through such methods as instant messages, chat rooms, text messages, digital photography or video, websites and blogs, or any other social networking sites, such as Facebook or MySpace. Examples of Cyberbullying include, but not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, hate mail, discriminatory remarks, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or videos, or website postings.

Cyberbullying is unacceptable and viewed as a violation of this policy and the district's computer use policy and procedures. The district's computer network and the internet, whether accessed at school or off school grounds, during or after school hours, may not be used to harass other individuals. Users of the district's computer network are responsible for the appropriateness of the material they transmit over the system. Malicious use of the district's computer system to institute a practice that harasses other users is prohibited.

Students and/or community members who believe they have been the victim of Cyberbullying as described in this policy are advised to not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the materials should be maintained on the computer and printed out and brought to the attention of the school principal or the Director of Technology.

Students are permitted to make anonymous oral or written reports of bullying to any school employee. Parents or guardians are permitted to file written reports of suspected bullying. No anonymous parent or guardian reports will be accepted. A form to report bullying is available on the Ridgefield Public Schools website.

Reports of suspected bullying behavior will be reviewed and investigated. The parents or guardians of the students who engaged in acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed will be notified of the results of the investigation. Disciplinary action will be taken which may include counseling.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

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Students are expected to behave in safe manner and follow all school rules while riding the bus. Inappropriate behavior may result in the suspension of bus privileges in addition to disciplinary action.

## **CELL PHONES**

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See Technology.

## **CLASS DISMISSAL**

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All classes meet for the full period. If circumstances necessitate a change in this policy, only an administrator may dismiss the class. Students who dismiss themselves from class before a teacher arrives in class will be considered as cutting that class. In situations where a teacher or substitute does not arrive for a class, one student from the class should report the situation to the Main Office. The remaining students should wait for direction from an administrator.

## **CORRIDORS AND OUTDOOR AREAS**

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Because of the physical characteristics of the school, certain regulations are necessary to promote a good educational atmosphere:

- Noise and loud talking near the building are not permitted because it disturbs nearby classrooms.
- Gathering in corridors and noise in corridors must be avoided for the same reason. Classroom corridors should be clear during class periods. Students should go to lockers between periods rather than during a lunch period. In certain cases, if a student must go to his or her locker for necessary materials while classes are in session, he or she should do so as quickly and quietly as possible. The student must leave the corridor immediately after obtaining needed materials.

## **DANCES/PROMS**

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Students will not be allowed to attend a dance unless their Signature Packet has been e-signed and all of their obligations have been cleared. All students must take a Breathalyzer test before entering the dance. All students must bring and present their student ID's before entering the dance. Guests may be brought to the Junior and Senior proms. Guests must not be older than 21 years of age. Students' guests at proms must submit a S.O.B.E.R. form, obtained from the Student Life Office, prior to purchasing a ticket. Students' guests at proms must take a Breathalyzer test. No guests are permitted at any other school dances, including homecoming.

## **DRESS**

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Any school dress which impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g., uncleanliness, odor, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption of the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, is libelous or revealing, or contains the potential to upset and hurt others is prohibited.

## **ELECTRONIC AND RECORDING DEVICES**

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See Technology.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

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Students are not allowed to drive to field trips. A parent may drive his/her child to or from a field trip with the permission of the teacher if extenuating circumstances exist that necessitate this action.

## **FOOD AND FOOD SERVING AREAS**

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Students need to leave any areas where they consume food or beverages clean and free of debris or garbage. Students should not return to the serving area beyond the cash registers with food they have already purchased.

## **GAMBLING**

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Gambling in any form is not permitted in school or on school grounds.

## **HARASSMENT**

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Students are prohibited from harassing other students. Harassment includes any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, contact or communication that is motivated by or related to individual characteristics that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Although harassment that creates a hostile environment may take many different forms, some examples include name calling and other derogatory comments, jokes, gestures or looks, posting or distribution of derogatory pictures, notes or graffiti, blocking, pushing, hitting or other forms of physical aggression. Students who feel they are victims of harassment should speak with a dean or counselor.

## **HAZING**

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Students are prohibited from participating in any hazing activities. Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student organization. Hazing by any student, athlete, or club member is strictly prohibited. No student shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, engage in, permit, condone or tolerate hazing. Any student involved in hazing, or any other conduct associated with a hazing incident such as assault, verbal threat, disruption of the school day, stealing, vandalism, indecent behavior or any other conduct prohibited by Board Policy will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension and possible expulsion from school (see Appendix A).

## **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

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Any person on the school premises is required to show identification when requested to do so by any school authority. Students are issued ID cards every year and are required to carry their ID cards whenever they are on campus. All students are issued an ID card that acts as a library card, as well as an official identification card for special resources and programs. ID cards also carry stickers that identify early dismissal periods and Open Campus periods. Students must present their ID cards to reenter the building after 7:35 a.m. and anytime a staff member requests to view it. A student who does not show an ID card may be referred to the grade level dean. Students will be charged five dollars for a replacement ID.

## **LASER POINTERS**

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Laser pointers are not permitted in school.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

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Care is expected for books, lockers, uniforms, Chrome books and other equipment that may be loaned for student use. Students are expected to reimburse the school for loss or damage to property loaned to them. If a student has an obligation to the school, e.g., library books, he/she will not be allowed to attend dances, obtain a parking sticker, to participate in graduation, or other activities until the obligation has been cleared.

Students are to keep the school building and the campus grounds free from litter.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

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Sexual harassment is illegal and is forbidden by Ridgefield Board of Education policy. Sexual harassment is generally defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the education setting.

Students are legally protected against sex discrimination and sexual harassment by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, a federal law prohibiting discrimination in schools on the basis of sex. Sex discrimination is also covered under Connecticut state law. Students have a right to participate in all school and classroom activities in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment, and they have a responsibility not to engage in sexual behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to others.

If a student believes that he or she is a victim of sexual harassment, the student should immediately inform a teacher, counselor, dean or administrator. The administrator will take action to investigate the allegations. Jarret Pepe, Assistant Principal, is the RHS Sexual Harassment Officer and can answer questions, concerns or hear complaints. A copy of the sexual harassment policy is contained in Appendix D, or can be obtained from a dean or administrator.

## **SKATEBOARDS**

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Skateboards are not permitted on campus due to damage caused to public property and the risk of injury.

## **SMOKING AND TOBACCO**

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Smoking and possession of tobacco in any form, including chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes and tobacco/nicotine delivery devices, is not permitted at any time on campus, on any school transportation vehicle, or off-campus school activity. Chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes and tobacco/nicotine delivery devices are not permitted anywhere on school grounds because of the hazard posed to health by both use and subsequent disposal. Students found with chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes or tobacco/nicotine delivery devices are subject to the same disciplinary action as smokers.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Any student in violation of this policy will be subject to the following consequences:

Level I	Five days of after-school detention
Level II	One day of in-school suspension
Level III	Three days of in-school suspension
Level IV	Five days of in-school suspension

Each violation for smoking or possession of tobacco or cigarettes will be referred to the Ridgefield Police Department for an infraction ticket. The Ridgefield Police Department will forward the referral to the courts for disposition.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

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### **Cellular Telephones**

It is recognized that cell phone technology can be a useful and convenient tool for communication. A number of Ridgefield teachers employ texting and email functions on cell phones to relay important school-related information to students.

It is also recognized that cell phones can detract from learning and cause disruptions if used in classrooms without permission from teachers.

At school, students should refrain from any inappropriate use of cell phones. Inappropriate use may include, but is not limited to:

- Use of cell phone in class for ANY PURPOSE without consent of the teacher
- Inappropriate calling / texting to others that may be lewd, threatening, intimidating, etc.
- Digital picture-taking
- Sharing of answers to assessments other use contrary to policies on academic honesty

## **Computer Network Code of Conduct**

Use of the network, which includes the Ridgefield Public Schools computer network as well as the internet, shall be in support of education and research that is consistent with the mission of the school. Internet use is limited to those students who have completed the appropriate agreement form and have received approval.

## **Computer Resources**

District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that all use of district computers, including email are not private and may be monitored by staff.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

## **Email**

The Ridgefield Public Schools' technology equipment and networks provide local and Internet email for both curricular and administrative purposes. Acceptable use of the network and Internet for email encourages communications that support teaching, learning, and other school-related activities.

Parents/guardians, teachers and administrators are encouraged to use **other** forms of communication for these areas:

1. Communication or questions related to a student's IEP documents.
2. Time-sensitive communications that may not be read or responded to immediately (i.e., "My child will be picked up by Mrs. Jones today).
3. Communications discussing any legal matter involving students, teachers or administrators.

The use is email for the following areas is prohibited:

1. Communications that harass or threaten any student, parent or employee of the Ridgefield Public Schools.
2. Frivolous communications (i.e., the latest jokes, etc. forwarded amongst friends).

The Ridgefield Public Schools ask parents/guardians to recognize that teacher/administrator assignments and schedules vary and that they may not be able to respond to email questions and communications immediately. Teachers will attempt to respond to emails in a timely manner and are encouraged to check email at least once per day.

Students, teachers, parents/guardians, and administrators should recognize that email is supported using equipment owned and maintained by the Ridgefield Public Schools. All email is subject to review and monitoring to address specific concerns or legal requirements.

## **Internet Safety/Filtering**

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The complete Computer Technology Acceptable Use Policy can be obtained from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools or through the Parent Portal.

### **Photographs/Filming Website Pictures**

On occasion, school administration, district administration or teachers shall choose to place student work or student photographs on the school district websites. The complete Board of Education policy and/or permission slip concerning the use of student work and photographs on the district website is available from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools or through the Parent Portal.

Complete Board of Education policy, and/or permission slips concerning the use of student work and photographs on the district website and photographs/filming by the media is available from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools through the Parent Portal.

### **Photos, Videotapes, Video Conferences**

Occasionally Ridgefield Public Schools photograph or videotape students involved in activities or projects for presentation at educational conventions and conferences. The picture and tapes are used to train other teachers' instructional assistants and administrators. Should you desire more information or if you wish that your child's likeness not be used for professional development activities or for publicity outside the school district, please notify the administration in writing.

On occasion, district administration, school administration or teachers may choose to place pictures of students on the district run websites for the purpose of highlighting activities done in our classes. The complete Board of Education Policy and/or permission slips concerning the use of student work and photographs on the district website is available from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools or through the Parent Portal. You will be presumed to have consented to the release of student photographs and student work on the website if you do not notify the school administration either in writing to the Principal or through the Parent Portal.

### **PowerSchool Parent Portal**

Access your child's academic, attendance, and demographic records through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

## **TECHNOLOGY – ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

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The Ridgefield Public Schools provides open and reliable digital infrastructure and resources for students and staff to be ethical and skilled learners and users of information, media, and technology. Therefore, Ridgefield Public School students and staff need digital resources to learn and apply skills in relevant and rigorous ways. Staff and students use technology anywhere and anytime, including through the use of district assigned devices that are educationally appropriate and aligned to student educational needs. The District's technology enables all students and staff to communicate, learn, share, collaborate and create, to think and solve problems, and to personalize their learning and teaching.

The Ridgefield Board of Education directs the Superintendent and his/her designees to create strong digital educational systems that support innovative teaching and learning, provide appropriate staff development opportunities, and develop procedures to support this policy.

Ridgefield Public Schools provides computers, computer systems, software and other digital resources as well as network access privileges for students and staff to carry out the mission of the District in an environment that ensures up-to-date information, management, and communication services. Responsible use of these resources, both in and out of school, is expected of all students and staff.

Students and staff use the property of Ridgefield Public Schools, including the computers, computer systems, software and other electronic resources for those activities directly related teaching, learning and/or management. The equipment, infrastructure, and software, other digital resources and the network are not to be used for personal gain or illicit/illegal activity by any user.

All users are hereby made aware that the Ridgefield Public Schools monitors and stores digital records of use of computers, computer systems, networks, and any other forms of digital resources unless specifically protected by the federal or state law. Therefore, Ridgefield Public Schools reserves the right to bypass any or all individual or group passwords to determine the activity on any or all district-owned computers, computer systems, software, online systems, and any other electronic resources.

Infringement upon, or disrespect of, the rights of other members or users or violation of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in the loss of network privileges and other disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, termination of employment and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

**Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes**

[1-19](#) (b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records.

[10-15b](#) Access of parent or guardians to student's records.

[10-209](#) Records not to be public

[11-8b](#) Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations. (46b-56 (e) ) Access to Records of Minors.

53a-18-2b Harassment in the first degree: Class D felony. (As amended by PA 95-143)  
Connecticut Public records Administration Schedule V - Disposition of Education Records  
(Revised 1983).

18 USC § 25 10-2522 electronic communication Privacy Act

20 U.S.C. Sections 6777, No Child Left Behind Act

20 U.S.C. 254 Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000

47 U.S.C. Children's online Protection Act of 1998

Federal Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of P. L. 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.)

Dept. of Educ. 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs.

Implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 General Educ. Provisions act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)- parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.

Public Law 94-553, the Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. Seq.

**Policy adopted: April 22, 2016**

## **TECHNOLOGY – ACCEPTABLE USE REGULATION**

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These procedures are written to support the Acceptable Technology Use Policy of the Ridgefield Public Schools and to promote positive and effective digital citizenship among students and staff.

The district retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, digital resources, and data owned, subscribed to, or leased by the district. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all technology resource activity by employees, students, and other system users. Employees and students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including e-mail messages and stored files.

Employees and students are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communication concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.

### **Terminology**

Technology Resources/Devices - Ridgefield Public School computers, tablets, e-mail, mobile devices, cell phones, networks, digital subscriptions, information/data systems, the Internet, peripherals, portal and any other technology-based tools.

Users – Anyone, including but not limited to staff, student, Board of Education, visitor/guest, consultant, or external vendor, that access the RPS technology resources.

### **Safety**

To the greatest extent possible, users of technology resources will be protected from harassment and unwanted contacts. Any user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications should bring them to the attention of a teacher or administrator.

Users must be aware that there are many services available on the Internet that could potentially be offensive to certain groups of users. The District cannot eliminate access to all such services, nor can they identify all of them. Individual users must take responsibility for their own actions when navigating the technology resources.

### **Security, Filtering and Monitoring**

Security on the technology resources is a high priority. If users of the technology resources of the Ridgefield Public Schools identify a security problem, the user must notify a teacher or administrator at once without discussing it or showing it to another user.

Users must not use another individual's account. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access to the technology resources of the Ridgefield Public Schools.

Filtering should be viewed as one of a number of techniques used to manage users' access to the Internet and encourage acceptable use. Internet filtering should not be viewed as a foolproof approach to preventing access to inappropriate material. Occasionally, students and/or staff may access websites that are objectionable. These should be reported to the superintendent/designee for consideration to be blocked by the filtering system.

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, filters will be maintained to block websites deemed to be obscene, pornographic, and/or harmful to minors.

### **No Expectation of Privacy**

The district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store, without prior notice, information or any other data communicated, created, or accessed using district digital resources. No user should have any expectation of privacy when using the district's network. The district reserves the right to disclose any electronic messages to law enforcement officials or third parties as appropriate. All documents are subject to state and federal public records disclosure laws.

### **User Levels**

In an environment where learning can take place anytime and anywhere, the Ridgefield Public Schools is committed to providing age-appropriate teaching and learning opportunities for students to use technology tools. To facilitate that five user levels are defined for the purposes of organizing supervision for group instruction and personal use of these information resources. All employees must receive training on acceptable use of RPS technology resources annually at the start of the school year or at the time of hire.

Digital Citizenship is a curriculum framework to teach students to be responsible, legal, ethical, and safe in their use of digital resources. The district provides ongoing Digital Citizenship lessons to students.

	<b>Level 1 (PreK-2)</b>	<b>Level 2 (3-5)</b>	<b>Level 3 (6-8)</b>	<b>Level 4 (9-12)</b>	<b>Level 5 Adults</b>
Use direct links off school/district website under adult supervision	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>			
Use district technology resources under adult supervision	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>			
Use links off teacher's online classroom management system (Google Classroom) under adult supervision		<b>X</b>			



Use guided internet searches using approved search engine under adult supervision		X			
Use assigned district personal learning device throughout school			X		
Use website links, teacher provided links, and internet search engines independently			X	X	X
Teacher reviews Acceptable Use Policy start of year with students prior to use of technology	X	X	X		
Student signs Acceptable Use Policy annually			X	X	
User signs Acceptable Use Policy annually					X

The Superintendent will establish guidelines and standards for teacher posting of assignments and class information (hours, frequency, etc.).

The Superintendent will establish the protocol for annual acceptance of the Acceptable Use Policy by parents, students, staff, visitors, guests, and all other users. Annual acceptance by parents may be done through implied consent (receipt of policy with opt out of acceptance) or required signature.

#### **District Provided Personal Learning Devices**

Students in grades 6-8 will receive a Personal Learning Device each fall. Parents and students must sign and agree to the student device sign out sheet and guidelines provided by their respective schools. Devices will be collected prior to summer break and issued at the start of the school year. Parents are financially responsible for damages, loss, or theft of the device. Students who withdraw, are expelled, or terminate enrollment for any other reason must return their devices along with accessories on the date of departure.

#### **Personal Learning Device Temporary Sign-out**

Ridgefield Public Schools students who have the option of borrowing technology equipment are responsible for its use and condition. Devices are only borrowed during the school day and must be returned the same day.

#### **Personal Technology**

Some users are permitted to use personal devices while connected to the RPS wireless network. At the elementary schools, student use of personal devices is approved by the teacher based on educational goals. Use of personal devices is governed by the BYOT policy 6141.328.

Connecting personal devices to district computers (scanners, printers, mobile phones/tablets, etc.) is not permitted unless provided authorization in advance by the Director of Technology or designee. Connecting external drives (USB flash drive or equivalent) is permitted. Connecting to personal cloud resources to access data for educational uses is permitted.

Users are strictly prohibited from installing personal software onto any RPS device or RPS software on personal devices at any time without the prior authorization of the Director of Technology or designee. The use of district resources that do not get installed on a local device is permitted on personal devices.

Due to the confidentiality of student data, assessment data, employee data, and confidential organizational data, the downloading and storing of confidential data on personal devices is not permitted.

### **Confidentiality and Data Guidelines**

The Ridgefield Public Schools abides by all state and federal laws with regard to student, staff, and organizational data. Guidelines, protocols, and service contracts are continually monitored and updated to ensure all data systems, cloud-based resources, locally installed applications, databases, and vendors protect and secure the confidentiality and privacy of student, employee and organizational data (Ridgefield Public Schools Data). This set of data includes, but is not limited to, student records, assessment data, family demographic data, employee data, and email.

Confidentiality and overall use of these online resources is protected by law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Ridgefield Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy.

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents the right to review student records. Under FERPA, the school district or institution or person acting on the behalf of the school district may maintain educational records, which includes records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student. School officials may only provide student records to third parties with the permission from the parent or eligible student. Directory information may be released if parents do not object to any disclosures.
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) applies to commercial companies and limits their ability to collect personal information from children under 13. No personal student information is collected for commercial purposes. The district will annually inform parents and collect permission that allows the school to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. Permission is granted by the acceptance of the annual Acceptable Use Policy. The school's use of student information is solely for education purposes. Student information that is "collected" is described as (projects, documents, email, files, username and password). Student information is solely for education purposes. Student information that is "collected" is described

### **District Guidelines and Expectations**

The Ridgefield Public Schools expects all employees and external service providers, acting on behalf of the Ridgefield Public Schools, to take all measures to protect student, employee, and organizational data. As such, the following guidelines and procedures are to be adhered to by employees, vendors, and service providers.

- All student, employee, and organization data (Ridgefield Public Schools data) is the property of the Ridgefield Public Schools
- All computers, tablets, smartphones, cloud-based resources, or servers that store and/or have access to Ridgefield Public Schools data must be password-protected at all times when not actively in use by the user.
- All cloud-based resources, software, mobile device apps and 3rd parties with access to data must be approved for use by the Director of Technology or assigned designee. Approval for installation or use of these resources is dependent on educational appropriateness, compatibility with resources, availability of support, organizational needs, and adherence to the Confidentiality and Data Guidelines. The procedures for approval of resources and 3rd parties will be reviewed and communicated annually to staff and publicly posted on the district website.
- Ridgefield Public Schools data may be accessed via cloud-based resources and apps while on mobile devices or personal (non-RPS) devices, however such data may not be downloaded for storage on personal (non-RPS) technology.
- Access to and/or storage of Ridgefield Public Schools data must be purged and permanently deleted at the termination of employment, service contract/subscription, or consulting.
- Access to Ridgefield Public Schools data will only be provided after acceptance and signature of the Acceptable Use Policy, which contains the Confidentiality and Privacy of Data guidelines.

- Ridgefield Public Schools data is not to be shared with a third party, including parents or community residents, unless permitted by FERPA, COPPA, CIPA PPRA, or FOI and within the parameters of the type of data that may be released.
- Email containing personally identifiable student information may constitute an educational record and thus be subject to disclosure under FERPA and may, under certain circumstances, be subject to FOI. Staff must comply with FERPA in all email communication with anyone other than the parent(s) of the student or the eligible student.

### **District Publishing Guidelines**

Any distribution of educational records, including digital records, must comply with FERPA, district policies, and professional standards. District, school, and individual use of digital resources to distribute intellectual property, images, videos and information shall be related to school curriculum and instruction, school- authorized activities, and other information relating to school and district goals and ensure the safety and security of all students and staff.

- All distributed content shall follow the standards for ethical behavior in regard to information and communication technologies by showing respect for the principles of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights, and the responsible use of the information and communication technologies.
- All distributed audio and video recordings of classroom activities shall follow ethical standards by posting content that has been recorded with the intent to be shared online and with permission by those being recorded.
- All content shall be age-appropriate to safeguard students by shielding the identification of students' identification and locations. Content may include names of individuals; however identifying information, such as names of family members, e-mail addresses, addresses and phone numbers will remain private.
- Content shall not contain objectionable material or point to objectionable material. The determination of what constitutes objectionable material shall be made on a case-by-case basis, as determined by the Director of Technology and a Building Administrator. The distribution of content shall follow district policy, copyright law, and fair use Guidelines.

### **Copyright**

Downloading, copying, duplicating and distributing software, music, sound files, movies, images or other copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is generally prohibited. However, the duplication and distribution of materials for educational purposes are permitted when such duplication and distribution fall within the fair Use Doctrine of the United States Copyright Law (Title 17, USC) and content is cited appropriately.

### **Responsibilities**

Users need to become familiar with their responsibilities while using the Ridgefield Public Schools technology resources.

**Users agree to always adhere to the following standards and expectations for conduct.**

- 1. Behave ethically, safely, legally, and responsibly when using technology resources**
  - a. Refrain from utilizing proxy gateways, or similar technologies, to bypass technology monitoring and filtering.
  - b. Handle technology devices with care. Refrain from deleting, destroying, modifying, abusing, moving resources without permission, and/or accessing unauthorized technology resources.
  - c. Do not breach or disable network security mechanisms, or compromise network stability or security in any way. or download/ modify computer software in violation of the district's license agreement(s) without authorization from the Technology Department.
  - d. Acceptable use of technology defined within the Acceptable Use Policy covers use of all Ridgefield Public Schools technology resources assigned to and used within schools and off-site.
- 2. Use technology resources to transmit communications or access information only for legitimate educationally relevant purposes and to access educationally appropriate content.**
  - a. Refrain from sending any form of communication that breaches the district's confidentiality and data privacy requirements, or the confidentiality of students.
  - b. Refrain from sending any form of communication that harasses, threatens or is discriminatory.
  - c. Refrain from accessing any material that is obscene, harmful to minors or prohibited by law.
  - d. Refrain from using social network tools for personal use. Professional use and a student academic use is defined in RPS policies 4118.51 (4218.51) and 6141.322.

- e. Use communication and collaboration tools (email, voicemail, blogs, etc.) respectfully and professionally.

**3. Respect the privacy of others and treat information created by others as the private property of the creator.**

- a. Maintain confidentiality of your username and password by not sharing it with others and not using another person's username and password.
- b. Maintain the integrity of files and data by not trespassing, modifying, copying or deleting files of other users without their consent.
- c. Protect the confidentiality and safety of others when sharing work and images.
- d. Protect the privacy and confidentiality of students, staff and Ridgefield Public Schools by adhering to the Confidentiality and Data Guidelines.
- e. Share, post and publish only within the context of the District Publishing Guidelines.
- f. Respect copyright and fair use laws; these policies and procedures apply in digital contexts, as well. Plagiarism is prohibited.

**4. All technology assigned to staff, students, or visitors are property of Ridgefield Public Schools and are to be kept secure and in working condition.**

- a. Any device provided to staff or students by the Ridgefield Public Schools is the property of Ridgefield Public Schools and therefore must be returned to appropriate administrators, teachers, or Technology Department staff upon request.
- b. Upon departure from the Ridgefield Public Schools assigned devices are to be returned promptly to the Technology Department.
- c. Damaged and non-functioning devices are to be returned immediately to the Technology Department for repair.
- d. Staff and students are financially responsible for theft and damage caused by neglect or improper use.

**Consequences**

The Ridgefield Public Schools will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from the use of, or access to, Ridgefield Public School's computer network or the Internet. Ridgefield Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any

Unauthorized charges made by employees including but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

Users of the technology resources of the Ridgefield Public Schools shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, system and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.

Illegal use of the technology resources of the Ridgefield Public Schools, intentional deletion or damage of files or data belonging to others, and copyright/fair use violations or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution and other consequences.

The employee or student shall be responsible for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the district related to violations of district policy or these regulations for which they are responsible.

Violation of the Acceptable Technology Use Policy and Regulation or in these procedures could be cause for disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of network and computer access privileges of employees and students as well as other permissible disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion or termination, as defined in other student and staff policies and administered by district administration.

**Regulation approved: April 12, 2016**

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Level I – 10 day suspension of network privileges

- Inappropriate use of technology

Level II – 1 day of In-School Suspension

- Material or software that is obscene or profane.
- Material or software that is inappropriate to the educational setting.
- Files that place large demands on network resources such as, but not limited to, unauthorized games, videos, music, downloads and images.
- Violation of copyright laws, usage and licensing agreements, stealing of intellectual property, and plagiarism.
- Operating a business or unauthorized commercial activity.
- Unauthorized transmittal of files (including FTP) or installation of software.

Level III – 5 days In-School Suspension

- Material that is discriminatory, threatening, harassing, or sexually explicit.
- Use of websites, proxies, software or other means that allow digital transmission or access in violation of firewall restrictions or legally mandated web-filtering systems.

Level IV – 10 days of Out-of-School Suspension, restitution, police referral, referral to the superintendent for possible expulsion

- Use of hardware, software or systems to gain unauthorized access to the district systems or another person's account, materials, information or files.
- Material or software that damages, or has the potential to damage, computer hardware or software, systems, or networks.
- Use of technology to disrupt the educational process.
- Use of the school district network to engage in illegal activities or to violate local, state or federal law.

As new technologies become available, the school reserves the right to designate appropriate disciplinary action as warranted.

Students who check out any technology individually, from the Library or other department, are responsible for its use and condition. (This does not apply to full class usage of Mobile Labs or Technology) Students will be charged repair costs or replacement costs if the technology device is not returned in working order. Technology devices are checked out during the school day only and are not available for home use. As such, late fees are automatically charged if not returned by the end of the school day.

## **UNAUTHORIZED AREAS**

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Students are not permitted in the parking lot, on the Tiger Hollow site, on the lower fields and in any areas identified by posted signs, during school hours.

## **UNAUTHORIZED OCCUPANCY**

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Intentional incitement of, or participation in, an unauthorized occupancy by any group of students or others of any part of the school or the school premises, and/or failure to leave such school premises or other facility promptly after having been directed to do so by an administrator or other person in charge of such building or facility is not permitted.

## **WEAPONS**

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The possession and/or use of any weapon or dangerous instrument in any school building, on student transportation vehicles or at a school-sponsored activity is prohibited. In accordance with Conn. Gen. State Statutes (Sec. 10-233d) the school system is required to recommend for expulsion any student in possession of a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, or martial arts weapon. For all of the previous infractions, the school reserves the right to impose more serious discipline including suspension and/or expulsion in cases where the conduct is seriously disruptive of the school process.

# DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

## AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

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After-school detention is held from 2:20 - 3:05 p.m.

## COUNSELING

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At the discretion of the dean or the administrator, counseling services provided by a counselor or school psychologist may be substituted for all or part of a disciplinary action.

## SCHOOL SERVICE

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At the discretion of the dean or the administrator, school community service may be substituted for certain disciplinary actions. Service opportunities are limited by their availability and supervision.

## SATURDAY DETENTION

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Saturday detention is held on designated Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Students must bring assignments to work on or reading material. Students may not have music players, playing cards, or other diversionary activities. Students will be sent home if they are not prepared to work and additional disciplinary action will be taken.

## IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

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In-school suspension is held in the in-school suspension room beginning at 7:25 a.m. It is a serious disciplinary action. Students should bring assignments to work on or reading material. Rules of the in-school suspension room are as follows:

- Students are to come prepared to work with books, pens, papers, etc. They are to remain seated and working throughout the time they are assigned to the suspension room.
- There is to be absolutely no eating, drinking, or talking.
- Students may not have music players, playing cards, or other diversionary activities in the suspension room.
- Students should bring a lunch with them to the suspension room.
- Students assigned to in-school suspension may use the restrooms designated by the staff member on duty.
- Students must remain in the suspension room until their day has officially ended. Students with shortened schedules may leave at their usual dismissal time, but they must leave campus.
- Students who misbehave during in-school suspension will be reported to the proper grade level dean for further action.

## OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

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Out-of-school suspension is a serious disciplinary action which removes the student from the academic setting. We at Ridgefield High School believe that in suspending a student from school, we are remanding the student to the custody of a parent or guardian for an appropriate period of time. We expect that it offers the student and parent an opportunity to reflect upon the nature of the infraction as well as on the student's responsibility regarding future behavior. A parent or guardian may be asked to accompany the student to school at the end of any suspension and meet either with the dean or with the assistant Principal. This meeting establishes both the tone of future behavior and the school's expectation regarding the student's re-entry into the academic setting. Students who have been assigned an out-of-school suspension are not allowed on school grounds or at school activities at any time during the period of the suspension.

## DISCIPLINARY REVIEW

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A student whose discipline record shows habitual and repeated behavior infractions of at least five (5) individual suspension actions or 15 total days of suspension within one year may be brought before the high school administration team for review.

The team may also consider for review any student who has accumulated eight suspension actions or a total of 24 total days of suspension within a two-year span.

The administrative team consists of the principal, assistant principals and class deans. For the review process, the principal acts as chairperson of the review team. The administrative team reviews the student's behavior record as to type and number of offenses, and length of suspensions. Any significant activity perpetrated by the student and deemed disruptive to the education of students or the school by the administrative team may also be referred to the principal. The principal will meet with the parent(s) and student to inform the student that in the event of continuing or additional behavioral problems, the principal may refer the student to the Superintendent of Schools for consideration for expulsion.

## **EXPULSION**

Any student whose conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity violates a publicized policy of the Board, or seriously disrupts the educational process or endangers persons or property may be expelled. Expulsion proceedings are required (Conn. Gen. State Statutes, Sec. 10-233d) when there is reason to believe that a pupil 1) possessed or used a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; 2) off school grounds possessed a firearm or used or possessed a firearm, instrument or weapon in the commission of a crime; or 3) on or off school grounds offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance. Any such exclusion shall take place in accordance with sections 10-233a to 10-233h of the Conn. Gen. State Statutes. Cases of possession of controlled substances shall be brought to the Superintendent for consideration of additional action including the initiation of expulsion proceedings. The Superintendent may also recommend expulsion proceedings for other serious violations of school policy or for any student referred by the principal through the Disciplinary Review process.

## **DISCIPLINARY SUMMARY**

A dean has been assigned to each grade level to review reports of misbehavior and administer discipline as needed. All disciplinary actions are taken at the discretion of the dean and/or administrator up to or including the maximum stated in the disciplinary summary table. School community service and counseling may be used in place of all or part of any disciplinary action.

### **LEVEL I**

#### **OFFENSE**

#### **POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Bus problem	Warning, and/or suspension of bus privileges
Missing detention	1 Saturday detention
Misrepresentation of the truth; false information/lying	3 Detentions
Panhandling	3 Detentions, referral to counselor
Parking violation	See Parking Policy in Transportation Section Possible loss of parking privileges
Unauthorized area	2 Detentions
Unexcused absences (three)	1 Saturday detention
Other inappropriate behavior (spitting, throwing snowballs, littering, etc.)	3 Detentions

ISS= In-School Suspension  
OSS = Out-of-School Suspension



## LEVEL II

### OFFENSE

### POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Inappropriate/disruptive behavior  
(assembly, athletic event, class, etc.)

2 day ISS

Food fight

3 days ISS; loss of Student Center privileges

Gambling

1 day ISS

Incitement of truancy

1 day ISS

Leaving school grounds without permission

1 day ISS

Missing ISS

2 days ISS

Missing Saturday detention

1 day ISS

Obscene language/profanity

1 day ISS

Trespassing

3 days ISS; police referral

Unauthorized occupancy

3 days ISS

ISS= In-School Suspension

OSS = Out-of-School Suspension

### **LEVEL III**

<b>OFFENSE</b>	<b>POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION</b>
Break-in or unauthorized entry	5 days ISS; police referral
Digital equipment or recording devices (inappropriate use of)	10 days ISS
Disruption of school day	5 days OSS; police referral
Endangering students or staff/ intent to cause injury	10 days OSS
Fighting/altercation/physical aggression	10 days OSS; possible police referral
Hazing	10 days OSS; referral to counselor; possible police referral
Obscene behavior/gestures; indecent behavior	5 day ISS, referral to counselor
Insubordination	3 days ISS
Irritant substances/mace/ laser pointer	(possession) 1 day ISS (use) 4 days OSS
Profanity toward staff member	3 days ISS
Theft/Stealing	5 days ISS; possible police referral
Threats/intimidation/bullying/harassment; verbal or physical/biased behavior	10 days OSS; referral to counselor; possible police referral
Tobacco/cigarettes/nicotine delivery devices (possession/use)	See Smoking policy; police referral
Trespassing	3 days ISS; police referral

ISS = In-School Suspension  
OSS = Out-of-School Suspension

## LEVEL IV

OFFENSE	POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION
Alcohol – Abuse/under the influence of	5 days OSS; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Alcohol – Possession	5 days OSS; police referral; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Arson	10 days OSS; police referral
Battery/assault – staff member/student	10 days OSS; possible police referral
Drugs – Abuse/under the influence of	5 days OSS; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Drugs/drug paraphernalia - Possession	5 days OSS; police referral; possible referral for expulsion; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Drugs – Sale or distribution/intent to sell	10 days OSS; police referral; mandatory referral for expulsion; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Drugs - In the presence of the use, sale, possession, or distribution	5 days OSS; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Prescription medication - sale/distribution/intent to sell/possession/use	10 days OSS; possible referral for expulsion; see Alcohol and Drug Policy
Endangering students or staff/intent to cause injury	10 days OSS, possible police referral
False fire alarm	10 days OSS; police referral; possible referral for expulsion
Fireworks/explosive devices/incendiary devices	10 days OSS; police referral; mandatory referral for expulsion
Technology - unauthorized use of/unauthorized access of school computer networks	10 days OSS; police referral; possible referral for expulsion; see Technology-Acceptable Use Policy
Vandalism	10 days OSS; police referral
Facsimile weapon	10 days OSS; police referral
Weapons - possession/use	10 days OSS; police referral; mandatory referral for expulsion

ISS = In-School Suspension

OSS = Out-of-School Suspension

For all offenses at all levels, additional disciplinary actions up to and including possible expulsion as indicated by Board policy, may be required depending on the nature, severity or frequency of the offense. Incidents involving police referral may result in arrest.

Incidents involving damages, theft, cleanup or other services require restitution.

# **STUDENT RIGHTS**

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# STUDENT RIGHTS

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

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The Ridgefield Public Schools are committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The District does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the District's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Karen Dewing, Title IX Coordinator  
Ridgefield Public Schools  
70 Prospect Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877  
203-431-2800   kdewing@ridgefield.org

Section 504 questions should be directed to:

Director of Pupil Personnel Services, (203) 894-5551

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

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We recognize and accept the need to prepare students to live and work productively in an increasingly diverse society. This is an integral part of our commitment to offer an educational program of excellence, which includes teaching our students awareness and understanding of the diverse cultures and heritages that form our society.

To this end, the school will not tolerate behavior by students which insults, degrades or stereotypes any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, handicap, physical or mental condition, or ethnic group. Students engaged in this type of behavior may be assigned to a counseling session in addition to any disciplinary action that may be taken.

## **FAMILY RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

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The Board of Education, in compliance with the requirement of federal law and regulations, shall inform parents annually of their rights in regard to their children's records. The Ridgefield Board of Education provides you with the following notice:

### **Notification of Rights Under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Institutions**

The Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the school principal that identifies the record(s) that they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parents or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Ridgefield Public Schools to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal (or director of Special Education in situations that involve special education records), and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student in writing of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist) or a parent or student serving on an official committee such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Ridgefield Schools will disclose educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirement of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

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Student records shall be maintained to record information about students and their families for legitimate educational purposes, including instruction, counseling, research and compliance with statutory requirements. The information gathered is intended to be useful in indicating the student's progress and achievement to those who must make judgments about a student's further education opportunities or employment. All such records shall be considered the confidential property of the school system.

All student records shall be stored and maintained in such a manner as to make them secure from inspection by unauthorized persons. Central to all procedures shall be the intention to protect the welfare of the individual within the constraints of the educational process. Within each student's folder there shall be a record of all individuals who have consulted the records, with the reason for inspection of the record and the date. Only those school personnel who are immediately responsible for the student's education will be exempt. Personally identifiable information from student records shall not be released without parental consent.

A frequently asked question about materials, files, and documents maintained by schools is: "What if parents want to see a teacher's grade book?" Answer: They have access only to the records of their own child. The teacher can transcribe grades onto a separate sheet of paper. Parents are not entitled to have access to other students' grades.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

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The Ridgefield Public Schools take every reasonable effort to protect the privacy rights of students and their families. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), allows directory information to be released unless the student or student's parent/guardian objects. Directory information means information contained in an education record which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

The Ridgefield Schools will disclose directory information unless the student or student's parent/guardian objects. Directory information includes such information as the student name, street address, email address, telephone number, grade and homeroom class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees and awards received, videotaping/broadcasting, photographs for local newspapers, school web pages and displays, and name of parent or guardian. Parents must indicate, in writing, their desire to have any or all of the directory information pertaining to their children withheld from being considered directory information.

Directory information will be released solely for the legitimate educational reasons at the discretion of the Superintendent or his designee.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2002 requires, upon a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings.

However, a parent of a secondary school student or the student himself/herself if he/she has reached the age of majority (“eligible student”) may object to the release of the student’s name, address or telephone listing to military recruiters or an institution of higher education without prior written parental consent. A parent or eligible student who objects to disclosure of such information without prior consent may file a notice in writing of said objection to the high school principal at any time.

Annually, the Ridgefield Schools shall notify parents of the district’s right to disclose directory information as defined herein. Parents shall be provided ten (10) school days to indicate in writing, their desire to have any and all of the directory information pertaining to their children withheld from being considered directory information.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

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Sexual harassment is illegal and is forbidden by Ridgefield Board of Education policy. Sexual harassment is generally defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the education setting.

Students are legally protected against sex discrimination and sexual harassment by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, a federal law prohibiting discrimination in schools on the basis of sex. Sex discrimination is also covered under Connecticut state law. Students have a right to participate in all school and classroom activities in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment, and they have a responsibility not to engage in sexual behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to others.

If a student believes that he or she is a victim of sexual harassment, the student should immediately inform a teacher, counselor, dean or administrator. The administrator will take action to investigate the allegations. Jarret Pepe, Assistant Principal, is the RHS Sexual Harassment Officer and can answer questions, concerns or hear complaints. A copy of the sexual harassment policy is contained in Appendix D, or can be obtained from a dean or administrator.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES**

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Periodically, social service agencies, law enforcement officials, courts, and state agencies providing human services ask us for assistance in the prevention, identification, and treatment of abuse. Section 17-106 of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes our cooperation with these agencies. Teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff are obligated by law (Conn. Gen. Stat. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect.

## **SURVEYS**

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Students will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents.

# **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**

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## BUS TRANSPORTATION

Buses are provided for transportation to and from school and specific bus stops are available online at the Ridgefield Public School website and in the Student Life Office. Each student riding a school bus must carry a student ID card, which must be presented if requested. Students are expected to conform to safety regulations and demonstrate courtesy and respect for the bus driver. Students who misbehave on buses will be subject to disciplinary action and suspension of bus privileges.

In the morning, students should arrive at school before the 7:20 a.m. warning bell is sounded. Buses will pick students up at the end of the school day at 2:15 p.m. The Student Life Office at the high school handles problems with bus transportation.

### LATE BUSES

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Late buses are provided for the convenience of students who receive extra help after school, are involved in a club or activity, participate in interscholastic sports, or must remain after school for any reason. Late buses are available at approximately 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. at the Community Entrance. Late buses are available at 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on scheduled early dismissal days. There is only one late bus at 2:30 during exams.

### PARENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP

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**DROP OFF** – is at the Main Entrance by the flagpole. For safety reasons please do not drop your child off at the other parking lots.

**PICK UP** – is by the curve at the Promenade Entrance in the Staff Parking Lot. Please exit by going around the Staff Lot through the lower tier. Buses have the right of way when leaving school, and they travel in a group. For safety and scheduling reasons buses will not stop to let cars into the traffic lane. Because of traffic congestion we encourage all students to ride the bus.

Be aware that cars parked in visitor parking spaces at the flagpole entrance are blocked by buses from 2:00 p.m. until the buses exit the campus.

## PARKING

### OBTAINING A PARKING PERMIT

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Parking privileges are contingent upon satisfactory attendance at school. **Even after a permit is awarded, excessive tardiness to school (more than 9 times) will result in the loss of parking privileges for the remainder of the school year.** Parking permit applications for seniors and juniors are available on the website. Students who are awarded a permit may register and obtain parking stickers for up to 2 vehicles.

A driver's license, a \$200 registration fee, and the registration of the car(s) (2 maximum), for which the parking sticker is being obtained are required. No parking permit will be issued to any student who has outstanding obligations or who has not completed the electronic signature for the Student Handbook. Lost parking stickers may be replaced for a \$25 fee. As the school year progresses and there are fewer spaces available, juniors will be issued parking permits on a first-come, first-served basis.

Freshmen and sophomores are not eligible for regular parking privileges, however, once seniors begin their internships, sophomores with a valid license may register for a parking permit at no charge for the balance of the year. Any 10<sup>th</sup> grade student who parks illegally will lose the privilege of parking during Senior Internships and additional infractions will lead to the loss of parking privileges in the student's junior year.

## **PARKING REGULATIONS**

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**PARKING STICKERS** —Parking stickers should be permanently affixed to the lower right side of the front window on the passenger's side. Parking stickers are only valid for the year in which they were issued. All previous years' parking stickers are to be scraped off the window. If a registration number changes or if plates are transferred to another vehicle, students must register the change with the Main Office.

Up to 2 parking stickers can be issued per student, provided the student registers both vehicles. Both vehicles must belong to the student or the student's family. Any student who wrongfully shares their parking sticker(s) will be subject to disciplinary action. (see Parking Violations)

**A legal parking sticker is one that has been purchased through the Main Office, is registered to a specific vehicle corresponding to that student and is properly adhered to the windshield of the registered vehicle. Parking without a valid sticker or in an unauthorized area will jeopardize the student's ability to obtain parking privileges during current and future school years and the student will be subject to disciplinary action.**

**PARKING LOTS** - The student parking lot (Lot A - Community Entrance side) and a designated section of the staff parking lot (Lot B) are the areas reserved for students with parking permits. Students may park in appropriate spots in Lot A or B. Students who drive motorcycles to school must also park in appropriate spots. Vehicles parked outside these areas are subject to disciplinary action. Parking spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**TEMPORARY PARKING PASSES** - If a student who has been issued a parking sticker(s) must drive another vehicle on a given day, that student may receive a temporary one-day pass from the Main Office. Temporary parking passes are based on space availability. Seniors who have not purchased a parking sticker may obtain a day parking pass in the Main Office for \$10 per day. Temporary passes must be placed in the lower right passenger side front window of the car by 8:00 a.m.

**DRIVING RESPONSIBILITIES** - Students must exercise caution and good judgment while operating vehicles, and are responsible for their vehicles at all times. Any infraction involving a motor vehicle may result in a withdrawal of parking privileges. The following are not permitted:

- blocking traffic, "standing" in roadways or parking lots, unsafe use of a vehicle, disruptive activity;
- loitering in cars or the parking lot area;
- excessive speed;
- reckless driving; and
- parking on the grass, in handicapped spaces or in other non-approved spaces.

All students leaving campus prior to the end of the school day must stop and show an appropriate pass to the security officer. **Any driver leaving campus who is not authorized to do so, or who transports someone off campus who is not authorized to leave, may have his/her campus parking privileges permanently withdrawn and is subject to disciplinary action.**

## PARKING VIOLATIONS

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The following disciplinary actions will apply for parking violations.

Violation	Level	Disciplinary Action
Parking w/o sticker or with illegally obtained sticker	1	Ineligible to apply for parking permit for one quarter and \$10 Day Fee per ticket.
	2	Saturday detention, \$10 Day Fee per ticket. Ineligible to apply for parking permit for remainder of semester. Vehicle tow warning and letter home.
	3	Two Saturday detentions/ \$10 Day Fee per ticket. Ineligible to apply for parking permit for full year. Vehicle towed and letter home
	4	In school suspension, \$10 Day Fee per ticket. Vehicle towed. Ineligible to apply for parking privileges at any time and letter home.
Violation	Level	Disciplinary Action
Parking illegally w/sticker registered to student	1	Verbal warning
	2	Saturday detention. Loss of parking privileges for one quarter, letter home, and removal of sticker.
	3	Two Saturday detentions. Letter home. Loss of parking privileges for one semester, and removal of sticker.
	4	In School Suspension. No longer eligible for parking privileges. Letter home and removal of sticker.

NOTE: All Level 2, 3 and 4 parking infractions are subject to police ticketing.

Any 10th grade student who parks illegally will lose the privilege of parking during Senior Internships and the loss of parking privileges will apply to the student's junior year.

Illegally parked cars will be ticketed subject to disciplinary action. Students are not to park in the Scott's Ridge Middle school lots at any time.

The administration may have vehicles towed away at the owner's expense if any of the above procedures are violated. The registered owner of the car is responsible for all towing and storage charges, and the school is not responsible for any damage incurred should towing be deemed necessary.

## OPEN CAMPUS

### OPEN CAMPUS

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#### Open Campus Procedures

Open Campus (OC) is a privilege that supports the growth of independence in our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Please note that RHS will be reviewing students' attendance, grades and behavior in consideration of granting and maintaining OC eligibility. RHS does not bear responsibility to supervise students during the periods that they are permitted to leave campus under the OC policy. The student and his/her parent(s) are responsible for the student's behavior while he/she is off-campus. Parents are better equipped to assess their child's driving ability and/or level of independent responsibility than school personnel. Thus, it is essential that RHS and parents work in partnership to determine if Open Campus is an appropriate option for your child.

A. Application.

Students, together with their parents, are required to apply for the open campus privilege by completing and signing the application form (see Appendix 1 on the RHS website). Once completed and submitted, this form will remain in effect for the entire school year and applies to the student's active schedule each day. Should you wish to cancel your son or daughter's Open Campus privileges, submit a written request to the Attendance Office.

B. Application review.

The Deans will be responsible for evaluating applications. To qualify for OC, a student must have:

- Minimum GPA of 2.5 for the preceding marking period
- Five or fewer tardies (excused or unexcused) during the preceding marking period
- No more than two unexcused absences during the preceding marking period
- Completed Signature Packet on file

The student's disciplinary history will also be reviewed. Any student who has been suspended for any offense during their junior year will come under administrative review to determine eligibility for their OC application. Deans will inform students of their status. Students rejected for excessive tardies and/or unexcused absences may reapply the following marking period.

C. Approved applications.

A student who is OC-eligible will receive a sticker to attach to his/her ID card that identifies when he/she may leave campus. As is current practice, in order to leave, students will be required to sign in/out and show their ID cards (with sticker) to the Security Guards.

D. Ongoing Review

We would like to underscore the concept that OC is a privilege, not a right. It will be incumbent upon students to maintain OC privileges. The following requirements will be reviewed for students participating in Open Campus:

- Attendance will be reviewed at the time of Report Cards
- GPA will be reviewed at the time of Report Cards
- Any senior suspended during the school year will lose OC privileges pending administrative review

**REVOCATION OF OPEN CAMPUS PRIVILEGES** - If a student does not continue to meet the Open Campus eligibility requirements, his/her OC privileges will be revoked. In that case, the sticker will be removed and replaced with one showing no OC permission. The OC Loss of Privilege letter (Appendix 2 on the RHS website) will be sent home to notify parents. Students will lose their privilege for the remainder of the marking period, after which they may reapply for OC using the standard application. The RHS Administration and/or parents have the right to rescind OC at any time.

**STUDENT ID** – Any student returning to school from an Open Campus must show their ID upon reentering the school.

# ATHLETICS

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# ATHLETICS PHILOSOPHY

## ATHLETICS PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

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The Ridgefield High School Interscholastic Athletics Program is comprised of student athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers striving for excellence in sportsmanship, leadership, and success in competition. We are united through our commitment to developing skilled student athletes and teams. We promote honor, dedication, and respect for ourselves, teammates, and opponents.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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A comprehensive and balanced Interscholastic Athletics Program is an integral part of the total educational process. While the high school athletics program serves as an arena for the student athlete to develop and display his/her talents, student athletes must, in turn, be willing to accept the responsibility to self, to team and to school. The value of athletics as an educational tool provides opportunities for mastery of foundational learning expectations and exiting competencies. The student athlete will demonstrate self-discipline, emotional control, and the ideals of good sportsmanship.

The student athlete will be given opportunities and experiences to develop healthy self-esteem. Through group participation, the student athlete will demonstrate integrity and leadership and be capable of contributing to society. Participation in Interscholastic Athletics is a privilege, not a right.

The Interscholastic Athletics Program is designed to promote the following Core Values:

- Academics first
- Sportsmanship and teamwork
- Character development
- Leadership
- Development of athletic skills and healthy life style
- Health and safety of student athletes

## STUDENT ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITY

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A student athlete assumes a leadership role when they are on an athletics team. As a member of a team, a student athlete serves as a role model. They are admired and respected by many, including younger athletes and their behavior and actions often have a significant impact on others. The student athlete plays an essential role in the promotion of sportsmanship and must accept the responsibility to always display high standards of sportsmanship. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by the conduct and attitudes of student athletes both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, student athletes can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride by consistent demonstration of the following ideals:

*A model student athlete will:*

- Accept the responsibility and privilege the student athlete has in representing their school and community by learning and showing teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline in all aspects of the game.

- Demonstrate respect for self, coach, teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators by exhibiting good character and conducting themselves as a positive role model.
- **Follow all aspects of the Athletics Training Expectations and RHS Rules.**
- Work to get into top notch physical condition.
- Try to be the best they can be, in every athletic practice/contest.
- Have a thorough knowledge of, and abide by, all rules of the game and CIAC.
- Work for the good of the team at all times.
- Cheer for your team, not against your opponent.
- Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- Refrain from the use of illegal or unhealthy substances to gain an unfair advantage.
- Never promote or participate in hazing or initiations.

*Greatness is not a function of circumstance.  
Greatness is largely a matter of conscious choice.*

**Jim Collins**  
“Good to be Great”

## PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY

### LEAGUE AFFILIATION

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Ridgefield is a member of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC), which is affiliated with the National Federations of State High School Associations and the Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference (FCIAC). Ridgefield athletes are governed by the rules, regulations and requirements of the CIAC and FCIAC. The following schools are also members of the FCIAC: Bridgeport Central, Danbury, Darien, Fairfield Ludlowe, Fairfield Warde, Greenwich, Brien McMahon, New Canaan, Norwalk, St. Joseph, Stamford, Staples, Trinity Catholic, Trumbull, Westhill, and Wilton.

### ELIGIBILITY

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Student eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics is decided in accordance with Board of Education policy, and Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) and Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference (FCIAC) rules. A copy of the CIAC by-laws is available for reference in the Athletics Office or online at [www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org).

To be eligible to participate in the RHS Interscholastic Athletic Program, the following rules apply:

- A student must be officially registered as a student at RHS.
- Student athletes at all levels of play, including freshman, junior varsity and varsity, must conform to all Ridgefield Board of Education academic requirements and all CIAC eligibility requirements.
- Eligibility for fall sports is determined by the number of credits received toward graduation at the close of the previous school year, not the fourth marking period grades. Credit must have been received in at least four courses for which credit was not previously received to be eligible for fall sports participation. This may include credits earned during the summer. Thereafter, marking period grades, not semester grades, are used to determine eligibility. A student athlete must take a minimum of five (5) courses and earn passing grades in four (4) courses, in addition to meeting the academic requirements of RHS, to achieve eligibility. For additional information on academic eligibility, speak to the athletics director.
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0. Students may appeal to the Principal and Athletics Director if their GPA is between 1.5 and 2.0. If the appeal is approved, an academic agreement will be established and academic monitoring will follow. The administration reserves the right to repeal an agreement if the student does not complete the agreement requirements. Students will be allowed to appeal one time in their high school career.
- First time ninth grade students are automatically eligible for the first marking period.
- Student eligibility is determined on the date that report cards are distributed.
- Course failures may not be made up for eligibility purposes in any manner until the next report period grades are distributed. Course incompletes must be made up within ten (10) school days following the date that student eligibility was determined for that marking period. Year end failures may be made up through successful completion of RHS approved summer school courses in the courses failed.
- A student has eight consecutive semesters, or four consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into ninth grade, to be eligible for interscholastic competition. No student athlete shall participate in the same sport more than four (4) seasons in grades 9-12, at any school. Date of entry is defined as the first date of enrollment as a grade nine student taking four (4) or more high school subjects.
- A student will not be allowed to start a season or compete during a season in which his/her twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) birthday falls.

Students who fail to meet the eligibility requirements in any marking period will be immediately excluded from participation in interscholastic athletics until the completion of the next marking period when grades are reevaluated.

## **IN-SEASON REQUIREMENTS**

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The following requirements apply to all student athletes.

- Student athletes may not switch from one school team to another after the first scheduled contest in that sport.
- Athletes may not practice or play with an outside team in the same sport. Participation on an organized non-school team in a sports competition, practice, or try-outs, during the high school contest season –including CIAC tournaments – in the same sport will result in suspension from all interscholastic sports until the athlete is reinstated by the CIAC Board of Control.



- A student athlete may participate in golf, gymnastics, indoor track, outdoor track, swimming and tennis as an individual (unattached) and not as a member of a team during the high school contest season without loss of interscholastic eligibility provided the following criteria are met:
  1. Participation may not go beyond the number of practices and contests allowed per week for that sport.
  2. In golf, gymnastics, swimming, and tennis, no more than four (4) unattached outside meets per season are permitted. Athletes in these sports may practice, but not compete with a non-CIAC team during the season. These practices may not interfere with, or replace, school practices. Track athletes should contact the athletics director for the specific requirements for their sport.
  3. Prior approval of the coach, athletics director, principal and parent.
  4. Prior arrangements are made to complete academic lessons, assignments, tests, etc.
  5. Students and parents agree to not accept, directly or indirectly, any awards, gifts, trips, merchandise, etc., which would be in violation of CIAC regulations.
  6. Athletes may not miss any CIAC sponsored tournament contest for which he/she is eligible.
- Participation in Olympic or college tryouts, college showcases, college auditions or student clinics during the authorized contest season, including CIAC tournaments, in the same sport, is permissible provided all the following are met:
  1. each student is limited to two (2) events per season;
  2. each event is limited to one (1) day in duration;
  3. the school must grant permission if there is any loss of school time;
  4. the coach determines that the event does not interfere with any functions of the in-season school program; and
  5. written consent is given by the school principal and athletics director prior to the student attending such activities.
- Student athletes are permitted to receive individual lessons in their sport during the season.
- Student athletes may not attend camps during the high school contest season.

Participation in non-school athletic contests, practices, camps, etc., may affect eligibility. Speak with the athletics director before participating in these events to avoid violation of CIAC rules and to discuss any questions or concerns.

## **OUT-OF-SEASON REQUIREMENTS**

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Generally, student athletes are permitted to participate in any activity or sport they wish to during the off-season without being in violation of CIAC rules. There are limitations for participation in camps, clinics or other organized activities which the coach or school is involved in. A full copy of the CIAC rules is available for reference in the Athletics Office or at the CIAC website at [www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org).

## **RESIDENCY**

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Student athletes under the age of eighteen (18) must reside with their parent or legal guardian (as determined by the Probate Court) to be eligible to participate in interscholastic sports. Residence with and support by any individual other than the parent or legal guardian, for a period of one year or more, establishes residency of the student for athletic purposes.

## **TRANSFER RULE**

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Transferring from one CIAC school to another may have implications for athletic eligibility. Students who plan to transfer to RHS need to make an appointment with the athletics director to discuss the effects of the transfer on their eligibility. The following apply:

- Students who transfer from one CIAC school to another at the end of grade nine (9) will be immediately eligible at their new school providing they are otherwise eligible.
- Students who transfer in grades 10-12 with a corresponding change of legal address and are residing with their parent(s) or legal guardian will be immediately eligible providing they are otherwise eligible.
- Students who transfer from one CIAC school to another in grades 10-12 without a corresponding change of legal address may be subject to a 50% sit-out in the first varsity sport played at their previous school and the sport they wish to play at their new school. Check with the athletics director to see if this rule will apply.
- Transfers for athletic reasons are not allowed. Students who transfer from one CIAC school to another for athletic reasons will be subject to a one year restriction on playing in the sport they played the previous year.

# **EXPECTATIONS OF ATHLETES**

## **STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS**

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Participation in the Ridgefield Interscholastic Athletics Program is a privilege granted to individuals who possess the ability, attitude and desire to represent the student body, the school district, and the Ridgefield community in a manner we can all be proud of. Therefore, athletes are held to higher standards and expectations and student athletes must, in turn, be willing to assume certain responsibilities that accompany this privilege.

There are standards and expectations in the areas of academics, citizenship, training expectations and sportsmanship that must be met by participants, and it is essential that student athletes and parents be thoroughly familiar with all rules and regulations governing athletic participation in Ridgefield. The student athlete serves as a reflection of his/her coach, team, family, school, and community. Students are expected to display high standards of behavior, remain chemical free, exemplify good sportsmanship, show respect for others, dress with care by keeping neat and well groomed at all times, and meet all CIAC and Ridgefield High School eligibility requirements. Furthermore, as with all privileges, it is important to remember that the school reserves the right to revoke the privilege of participation if the participant does not comply with these rules, regulations and expectations. Students are expected to behave with respect and concern for the rights, safety and welfare of all individuals while participating in the athletics program.

Ridgefield High School students who wish to participate in the athletics program must set priorities and make wise choices. Academic performance takes precedence over participation in athletics. Students who must receive extra help after school or make up academic work should bring a note from the faculty member to their coach upon arriving at practice. Any disciplinary action, including detentions, takes precedence over athletic practices. Suspensions take precedence over both athletic practices and contests. The following rules, in addition to disciplinary action as outlined in the Discipline Procedures section of this handbook, will apply to all athletes participating in interscholastic athletics at Ridgefield High School.

## **TEAM SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

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Coaches will provide to all student athletes, in writing, any additional rules and regulations specific to that sport and his/her coach, not covered in this handbook. These rules will be provided in writing at the team orientation meeting which is held at the beginning of each season and will be explained fully with all team members and parents. These rules adopted by the head coach for a particular team will be approved by the athletics director and kept on file in the Athletics Office.

## **ATHLETICS TRAINING EXPECTATIONS**

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All athletes participating in any sport at Ridgefield High School are to be chemical free. Participation in high school athletics is a privilege. The following Athletics Training Expectations are in effect during an athlete's season of play beginning with the first day of practice. Student athletes will be held accountable for these expectations on or off campus, 24/7. The school reserves the right to invoke team discipline for violation of these expectations that occur off campus and out of season.

### **An athlete is prohibited from the possession, use, distribution or sale of the following:**

1. Alcohol, stimulants, controlled substances and drug paraphernalia.
2. Performance enhancing substances (e.g., anabolic agents, diuretics, peptide hormones, analogues and any other substances identified as banned by the NCAA and the USOC).

Additionally, the use of tobacco (in any form including chewing tobacco and tobacco/nicotine delivery devices) by an athlete is prohibited.

**Violations:** Violations will be reported by the coach, dean, assistant principal or athlete to the Athletics Director. The Athletics Director/grade level Assistant Principal will be responsible for the administration, enforcement, and monitoring of the policy. Parents of athletes will be notified in writing of any offense requiring disciplinary action.

All coaches at the beginning of their seasons will review these expectations with team members. Parents and athletes are required to sign a release stating they have read the regulations and agree to abide by them.

**Disciplinary action for violations:** Violations are cumulative for all sports played during a school year, carrying over into subsequent seasons.

#### **ALCOHOL, STIMULANTS, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DRUG PARAPHERNALIA PENALTY:**

Athletes found in violation of a training expectation will be suspended as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** - 20% of regular season games (*no suspension will be less than two games*).

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** - An athlete will be suspended from the team for the entire season.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** - An athlete will be suspended from participating on any team for the remainder of the school year.

**Performance enhancing drugs penalty:** The CIAC Board of Control requires that member schools report any student athlete use of performance enhancing substances. A student athlete who has been determined to have used, in or out of season, androgenic/anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances shall be declared ineligible for all CIAC controlled activities for one hundred eighty (180) school days on each occurrence. The one hundred eighty (180) school day period of ineligibility commences on the day the CIAC Board of Control makes such determination.

**Distribution or Sale of a Controlled Substance penalty:** An athlete will not be permitted to participate in the athletics program for one hundred eighty (180) school days following the violation commencing with the imposition of the penalty.

#### **TOBACCO USE PENALTY:**

Athletes found in violation of the tobacco use training expectation will receive the following consequences:

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – written warning

**2<sup>nd</sup> and Subsequent Offenses** – 1 game suspension for each offense.

#### **While serving an athletic suspension the student athlete:**

- Cannot attend or participate in any athletic contests.
- Must complete a re-entry interview with the Athletics Director and coach.

Note: While serving a school suspension, athletes may not attend or participate in any practices or contests.

**Athletes who violate athletics training expectations are not eligible to receive RHS post-season Athletics Awards, Scholarships and other school/community awards involving character and leadership.**

**Captains found guilty of violating athletics training expectations will lose their position as captain and will not be eligible to be named captain of a team until three seasons of play have passed from the date of the violation (including the season in which the violation occurred).**

### **VIOLATIONS OF STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Violations of standards and expectations include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors. **Hazing/Initiation** – Hazing and/or initiation activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the Ridgefield Board of Education and Connecticut State Law and are prohibited at all times. A copy of the Ridgefield Public Schools Hazing Policy can be found in Appendix A. Team members are responsible to report any hazing or harassment incidents to their coach and/or the Athletics Director immediately.

*Student Athletes/Team Captains that organize and/or participate in any hazing/initiation activities will be immediately dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season. In addition captains will lose their position as team captain. The school reserves the right to invoke discipline for incidents of serious misconduct that occur off campus and off-season.*

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fighting/Taunting** – Any athlete ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior or fighting is ineligible to participate in the next contest at the same level of play (even if the next contest does not occur until league or CIAC tournament play or next year). Unsportsmanlike behavior includes taunting, which is defined as, but is not limited to, any actions or comments by coaches or players which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean other players, coaches or game officials.

Upon the second disqualification, if that violation is for initiating a fight or retaliating in a fight, that student athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season.

Any student athlete or coach who physically assaults an official, coach, opposing player or spectator will be immediately dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season. A copy of the CIAC Unsportsmanlike Conduct Policy can be found in Appendix C.

**Unacceptable Behavior** — It is the athlete's responsibility to be aware of and to conform to the expectations rules and regulations that comprise responsible and successful student/athlete behavior. Student involvement in unacceptable behavior is considered to be a serious violation of the athletics code and school policy. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- theft and assault
- malicious destruction of individual, private or school property
- infraction of school rules requiring administrative action
- misconduct by an athlete that is potentially detrimental to the school or athletic program or school district
- hosting or attending any event where under-age drinking or the use of illegal drugs is occurring

#### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

For behavior that violates school rules, school disciplinary action will apply. In addition, there may be athletic discipline.

**Examples of athletic discipline include, but are not limited to:** loss of a starting position, loss of captaincy, game suspension, team suspension, or community service.

Violation of athletics behavioral standards and expectations may also jeopardize a student's eligibility to receive post-season athletics awards, scholarships and other school/community awards.

*Students are reminded that participation in athletics is a privilege and expectations for acceptable behavior applies at all times. The school reserves the right to invoke discipline for incidents of serious misconduct that occur off campus and off-season.*

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE AND GAMES**

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Participation on an athletic team is a privilege granted after a student's academic responsibilities are met. Attendance in the classroom is an important requirement for a good education as is attendance at team activities.

Students participating in athletic practices and games are expected to attend **all of their classes** that day. Students exhibiting a pattern of tardies or absences (both excused and unexcused), as determined by the athletics director, may be prevented from participating in an athletic contest

### **PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

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No athlete may participate in team activities if he/she has a medical excuse for physical education class. Athletes who do not participate in their physical education class on the day of a practice or contest are not eligible to take part in that day's practice/contest.

# PRACTICE AND GAME SCHEDULES

## PRACTICE/GAME SCHEDULE CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS

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The schedule for all team practices and games is available on our website at [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) →Our Schools →Ridgefield High School→Athletics. Click on the “*TODAY’S EVENTS*” link at the top of the page to see the current day’s schedule or select the desired seasonal practice/game schedule to view an entire season.

Students are advised to check for schedule changes after 12:30 pm, as everything possible is done to go ahead with scheduled competitions and practices. Please be aware that weather will, most likely, not be a factor for games scheduled to play on a turf field. We ask that students not stop by the Athletics office and parents not call for scheduling updates, so that we may focus on getting timely information out to the entire school.

In the event of an official school closing or weather related early dismissal, all scheduled contests and practices are automatically cancelled.

## SUNDAY/HOLIDAY/DAYS OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

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Consistent with Board of Education Policy on recognition of religious holidays, it is the practice of the Athletics Department not to schedule games on religious holidays. In planning both FCIAC and CIAC League activities, the executive board attempts to avoid conflicts with major religious observances. Absence from practice to celebrate a religious holiday shall be an **excused absence**. Coaches **will not** penalize athletes observing religious holidays. Athletes/parents need not be concerned that your standing/position on the team will be affected by observing religious holidays. It is the responsibility of the athlete/family to inform the coaching staff of an intended absence due to a religious observance. Further:

- No Sunday game/practices may start before 1:00 p.m.
- Scheduling of practices, including Sunday and school holidays, is at the discretion of the coach with the approval of the athletics director.
- Practices and games are not scheduled on days of important religious holidays.
- Athletes will not be penalized for absences due to religious observances.

The Ridgefield Board of Education has adopted the following policy in accordance with the CIAC Sunday Football rule. A regular season postponed game is permitted on Sunday under these conditions:

- the postponement of a scheduled Saturday game
- agreement of the two competing schools to play on Sunday
- a postponed Friday night game may be played on Sunday only if a site is not available on Saturday, or if severely adverse weather conditions exist on Saturday
- the CIAC may grant permission for other sports to play on Sunday afternoons due to unforeseen circumstances and with mutual consent of both schools

## ATHLETICS VACATION POLICY

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Vacations and other out of school activities, without prior approval from the coach, are not valid reasons for missing practices and contests. Family vacations that interfere with organized practice and/or games should be discussed with the coach prior to the season in a timely manner. The following regulations have been developed to be fair to all, especially to the athlete who may have no choice but to go with the family, and to the athlete who has to take the absent athlete’s place during practice and contests that occur during the vacation period. If an athlete is on vacation during the season he/she should be prepared to sit out a certain number of games depending on the level of the sport (Freshman, JV or Varsity).

Due to weekly game limitations set by the CIAC and length of schedule, conflicts during vacation period cannot be avoided. The FCIAC and CIAC do not schedule around vacations. This is impossible to do because there is no one standard vacation week for all Connecticut Public Schools. Athletes and parents need to be aware that games over vacations will be played and/or forfeited and not changed. This is a League as well as State policy. Please refer to Appendix B for the complete Athletics Vacation policy.

## TEAMS

### TEAMS OFFERED

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Ridgefield High School offers a wide variety of opportunities for students wishing to participate in athletics.

#### FALL PROGRAMS

Cheerleading/Dance (V)  
 Cross Country (V) – Boys/Girls  
 Field Hockey (V, JV, FR) – Girls  
 (V, JV, FR) – Boys  
 Soccer (V, JV, FR) – Boys/Girls  
 Swim/Dive (V, JV) – Girls  
 Volleyball (V, JV, FR) – Girls

#### WINTER PROGRAMS

Cheerleading/Dance (V)  
 Basketball (V, JV, FR) – Boys/Girls  
 Ice Hockey (V, JV) – Boys  
 Ice Hockey (V) – Girls  
 Indoor Track (V) – Boys/Girls  
 Ski (V, JV)  
 Swim/Dive (V) – Boys  
 Wrestling (V, JV)

#### SPRING PROGRAMS

Baseball (V, JV, FR) – Boys  
 Golf Boys (V, JV) – Girls (V)  
 Lacrosse (V, JV, FR) – Boys/Girls      Football  
 Outdoor Track (V) – Boys/Girls  
 Softball (V, JV) – Girls  
 Tennis (V, JV) – Boys/Girls  
 Volleyball (V, JV) – Boys

**V = Varsity, JV = Junior Varsity, FR = Freshman**

### TRYING OUT FOR A TEAM

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Information concerning tryouts for the fall, winter and spring seasons is available on the RHS Athletics Webpage at: [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). Coaches will hold pre-season meetings for students interested in trying out for a sport.

Students may try out for any sport while at Ridgefield High School as long as they remain eligible and are in good standing with Athletics Department policies. A student athlete should select his/her sport carefully for the following reasons:

- A student athlete will not be allowed to drop one sport for another in the same season except with permission of the coach prior to the first game and before the official roster has been given to the Athletics Department for grades and eligibility verification.
- If a student athlete is cut from one sport, he/she may try out for another sport in the same season.
- An athlete will not be allowed to drop one sport for another except with the permission of the coach prior to the first game of the team they want to transfer to. If the athlete is cut from one sport he/she may try out for another sport in the same season, providing that the first contest in the receiving sport has not been played. An athlete removed from a sport for disciplinary reasons will not be allowed to join another team in the same season.

### TEAM SELECTION

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The coaching staff makes team selections after a tryout period at the start of the season. In certain sports no cuts are made. In others, cuts may be necessary due to safety (facility or player/coach ratio), time limitations (reasonable opportunity for active participation in practice and/or games) or budget constraints.

Individuals selected as team members shall be considered as members of the team through the completion of that regular sports season unless they are removed for disciplinary reasons, academic ineligibility or mutual agreement between player and coach.

## **CLUB SPORT PROCEDURE**

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In order for a sports team to be considered for approval by the Board of Education as a Club Sport, the organizers must submit a written request to the Athletics Director/Principal. Following review and preliminary approval of the proposal by the Athletics Director/Principal, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools for submission to the Board of Education. Only after the Board of Education approves the request will the Club Sport be allowed to operate.

Parties submitting the request to form a Club Sport must provide the following information:

- Documentation of student interest adequate to support a viable competitive team.
- The qualified coach(es) who will coach the Club Sport. Coaches must have a coaching permit issued by State of Connecticut standards and must attend pre-season athletic department meetings conducted by the RHS AD.
- Proven and sustained availability of appropriate competition within reasonable distance from the school by submitting a copy of the Club's proposed athletic schedule to the AD. The AD will provide scheduling support to the Club.

Parties submitting the request to form a Club Sport must agree to the following:

- The Club Sport will be formed in compliance with non-discrimination regulations of Title IX.
- It will arrange for adequate and appropriate facilities for practices and games.
- All costs of funding the program will be absorbed by the participants. (salaries, supplies, equipment, entry fees, facilities, officials and transportation).
- All athletes will comply with the rules and regulations set forth by all governing agencies: Ridgefield Board of Education, Ridgefield High School, FCIAC and CIAC. Club Sport members will comply with all eligibility requirements of RHS and CIAC.
- Submission of a team roster within one week of the start of the season to the Athletics Director.
- Submission of all required forms (parent consent, emergency consent to treat, current physical) to the athletics office.
- The RHS Athletics Training Expectations must be followed by all participants. All athletes participating in any sport at Ridgefield High School are to be chemical free.
- Club Sport program will be supervised by the Athletics Director.
- Transportation will be provided by bus to and from all competitions for teams, not individual competitors. Individual competitors may not drive themselves to competitions.

The Board of Education will consider applications that meet the requirements above. In acting on applications, the Board of Education will consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to (1) the content of the application, (2) overall athletic opportunities already provided to students in the Ridgefield Public School, (3) the impact of the proposed Club Sport on school district compliance with Title IX, (4) financial constraints the Board of Education may confront in the future, (5) the likelihood that the organizers will be able to raise adequate funding to sustain the team as a Club Sport for at least three years, (6) the long-term sustainability of the activity as a varsity sport.

If the Board of Education approves the activity as a Club Sport, it will assume responsibility for liability insurance. Participants will be eligible for athletic honors and awards if granted Club Sport status. The Club Sport will be reviewed annually by the AD/Principal. If the Club Sport continues to grow and develop as a program over a minimum three-year period with positive annual reviews, the AD/Principal may recommend the Club Sport be granted Varsity status with Board of Education funding after considering all relevant factors, including those listed above. A Club Sport, that has fulfilled the abovementioned requirements and has had positive annual reviews, may request that the AD/Principal recommend to the Board of Education



that Varsity status be granted after two years. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education may grant final approval to the Club Sport transitioning to a varsity team in the athletics program. In such case, the Board of Education will provide the funds to cover team costs in the athletics' budget.

The Board of Education reserves the right to accept or reject an activity as a Club Sport and/or financially supported athletic program.

## **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS AND FEES**

To participate on a Ridgefield High School Interscholastic Team at the Varsity, Junior Varsity or Freshman level, the following forms are required. Please be aware that students may not participate in any tryouts, practices or contests unless these forms filled out completely and correctly, and submitted to the Athletics office—**NO EXCEPTIONS OR SUBSTITUTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED**. Forms can be downloaded from the RHS Athletics website or are available in the Athletics Office. They are not mailed home.

Six forms are required for athletics registrations. Three are forms that are available on the Parent Portal. These forms must be read and digitally signed by the Parent/Guardian and the Student. The other three are “hard copy” forms that must be completed and submitted to the Athletics office. All forms must be completed before a student can participate in the athletics program. It is highly recommended that all forms be submitted 2 weeks prior to the season start date.

### **REQUIRED ATHLETICS REGISTRATION FORMS ON THE PARENT PORTAL**

Parents and students should log on to the Parent Portal to read and sign the forms referenced below. Log on to [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). Click on the Parents & Students tab and then log in to the Power School Parent Portal. There is a navigation bar on the left side of the screen. The forms are located in the Athletic Consent tab.

These forms are required once per school year and must be signed before a student's first sport season of the school year. Parents and students are required to read and digitally sign the following forms:

#### **STUDENT AND PARENT CONCUSSION INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

This consent form was developed to provide students and parents with current and relevant information regarding concussions and to comply with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Chapter 163, Section 149b: *Concussions*.

#### **STUDENT AND PARENT SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

This document was developed to provide student-athletes and parents/guardians with current and relevant information regarding sudden cardiac arrest to comply with Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 163, Section 10-149f: SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS EDUCATION PROGRAM.

#### **STUDENT-PARENT AGREEMENT**

The Student-Parent Agreement must be submitted once each school year in which an athlete participates. The purpose of this form is for the student and parent/guardian to acknowledge they have read the Student-Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Athletics Department. Also, the parent/guardian is granting their permission for the student athlete to participate in that sport.

### **ATHLETICS REQUIRED ATHLETICS REGISTRATION FORMS THAT MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OFFICE:**

These forms can be downloaded and printed from the RPS website. Go to [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). Navigate to Ridgefield High School in the Schools tab, click on the Student Tab on the top of the page and then click on Athletics. The following forms are located in the Athletics Registration Forms resource folder. They are also available on the Parent Portal in the Athletics Forms tab.

## SPORTS PHYSICAL EXAMS

All student athletes are required to have a physical exam on record which has been completed by their health care provider. **This physical is only valid for thirteen (13) months from the date of the exam**, at which time a new physical is required to continue sports participation. This thirteen (13) month rule includes a 30 day grace period to accommodate policies which do not allow for exams to take place before one year has passed. ***This form must be signed and stamped by the health care provider.***

It is highly recommended that incoming freshman submit the State of CT Health Assessment form as it is required for admittance into 9th grade.

### **Please note the following:**

- Students cannot tryout for a sport unless the Health Office has an up-to-date sports physical exam form on file.
- Students/parents/guardians are responsible for keeping track of when the student athlete is due for a new exam.
- The physical exam dates are not checked by the Athletics Office until seasonal tryouts take place. To avoid interruption in play during the school year, it is recommended that physical exams be scheduled during summer recess.

## EMERGENCY TREATMENT CONSENT

This consent form must be completed each sports season by the student athlete's parent/guardian. The purpose of this form is to provide emergency contact and medical information (e.g., conditions, allergies), as well as grant permission to treat the student athlete in case of emergency. ***This form must be completed and signed by the student athlete's parent or guardian.***

## ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FEES

In accordance with Ridgefield Board of Education policy, all student athletes trying out for or practicing with an athletic team at Ridgefield High School are required to pay a participation fee prior to the first day of tryouts or practice. This fee will be \$225.00 per sport, per season for all grade levels (9 – 12). Checks are not deposited until team selection has been finalized.

### **REFUND POLICY:**

- If a student is not selected for an athletic team, their check will not be deposited and will automatically be returned to them, by mail, after the start of the season.
- The fee for a student athlete who withdraws prior to the first official game of the season may be refunded upon receipt of a written request to the department of athletics.
- The fee for a student athlete who is injured and unable to compete during the entire contest season may be refunded upon receipt of a written request to the department of athletics.

**FEE WAIVERS:** Students who qualify under the District's "Free Lunch and Reduced Lunch Program" will have their participation fee waived. To request an Athletics Fee hardship waiver, families must complete the Hardship Waiver request form in its entirety and submit it, and all required documentation, directly to the Ridgefield Public Schools Business Office. The form can be downloaded from the RHS Athletics website.

## EQUIPMENT / UNIFORMS

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Each student is responsible for and must wear the equipment and uniforms that are issued. The students must pay for any lost or damaged equipment or uniforms. Any student in possession of school equipment not directly issued will face disciplinary action which may jeopardize further participation in the athletics program.

### **Responsibility for Equipment / Uniforms:**

- All school issued equipment will remain the property of the school and must be properly cared for by the student/athlete to whom it is issued.

- It is the responsibility of the student athlete to ensure that the equipment is returned at the end of the season or departure from the team.
- Any student athlete failing to return a uniform or obligation payment (at the rate of the replacement cost) at the end of a season is ineligible for play in the next sport season until the account is cleared.
- Game uniforms should only be worn on the day of the contest upon approval from the coach.

## **ATHLETIC LOCKERS AND PERSONAL ITEM STORAGE**

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Student athletes who participate in an RHS sport will be assigned an athletics locker which is large enough to accommodate backpacks, sports bags and equipment.

### **Responsibility Regarding Locker Rooms:**

- Student athletes should not bring valuable items to school.
- The school is not responsible for, nor is it liable for a student athlete's personal property.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure all their personal belongings are kept in the locker while they are participating in their sport.
- Lockers should be locked at all times and combinations not shared with anyone.
- Lockers will be cleaned out at the conclusion of each sport season, at which time locker combinations are changed for security purposes.

## **TEAM CAPTAINS**

All Ridgefield High School team captains are expected to be leaders on their teams and in the school community, foster team and athletic program spirit and pride, set examples of academic integrity in the classroom, and follow the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. In addition, they must serve as positive role models to the youth of Ridgefield.

The role of a team captain for a Ridgefield High School athletic team is a key leadership position and carries with it a tremendous responsibility. The captain is viewed as a mature leader who is looked upon by students, athletes, coaches and administrators to set a positive example for team pride, fair play, dedication and school spirit. Ridgefield High School captains are expected to have the following attributes: honesty, leadership, compassion, and integrity. Captains who are unwilling or unable to meet these requirements will be relieved of their position.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

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At the conclusion of each school year, captains will be selected for athletic teams for the upcoming school year. Seniors will be given first opportunity to be selected as Team Captain, provided they are qualified. To be eligible for selection as a Captain, an athlete must meet the criteria stated the *Captains' Expectations*. Both in and out of season, team captains are expected to be appropriate role models in the school community. A captain who, in or out of season, commits a violation of the *Captains' Expectations* will risk his/her position as a team captain. Captains in season who violate the *Captains' Expectations* will lose their captaincy. The RHS Administration reserves the right to reject a nomination for captaincy based on a student's prior record at RHS and revoke any captaincy if there is a violation of the *Captains' Expectations*.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

Students interested in being a Captain are encouraged to demonstrate their leadership skills and abilities to teammates and coaching staff during the off-season prior to the selection process.

## EXCEPTION

Selection of a junior could occur if there are no qualified seniors available to assume captaincy. In this situation, the head coach will exercise good judgment, common sense and the advice of the athletics director in selecting a junior candidate. All captain nominees will be submitted to the athletics director/administration for final approval. Students accepting the responsibility and honor of a captaincy must adhere to the *Captains' Expectations* and sign the *Captain's Pledge*, as must their parents/guardian.

Under unusual circumstances, and with approval of the athletics director, the selection process may be delayed if it is in the best interest of the team.

## CAPTAINS' EXPECTATIONS

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Selection to the position of team captain carries with it tremendous responsibility. Before accepting this key leadership position, student must weigh the responsibilities that come with it. Students accepting the role of captain will be expected to:

- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Ridgefield High School expectations for acceptable behavior and citizenship.
- Follow the *Athletic Training Expectations* in and out of season.
- Follow the Ridgefield Public schools *Hazing Policy*.
- Follow the Code of Conduct stated in the *Captain's Pledge* in and out of season. Failure to meet these expectations will risk a student's position as a team captain.

Captains are expected to be major contributors to the tone and direction of a team both on and off the field. Personal qualities coaches look for in captains include:

- Role model - hard working, committed, dedicated, humble, leader by example, integrity, dependable, unwavering convictions, and positive attitude.
- Well respected by teammates and the school community.
- Good citizenship - respectful, loyal, cooperative, trustworthy, unselfish, honest, caring, with a great deal of pride in the school and its positive reputation.
- Committed to being chemical free - will not use tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Good school behavior - punctual, acceptable academic progress, and abides by school rules.
- Athletic qualities - well skilled, dedicated, committed to the sport, displays good sportsmanship, hard- working, and has good communication skills.
- Willing to act as the liaison between teammates, coaches, director of athletics, and other appropriate school personnel.

### Coaches should expect that Captains will:

- Live up to the expectations of the position.
- Lead by example on and off the field.
- Not be afraid to step out of the crowd, that is; to speak to teammates making poor or inappropriate choices.
- Be a motivator (encouraging, modeling).
- Be a role model for good sportsmanship.

Captains can be of great assistance in actively working to encourage teammates to follow the athletic training expectations during the sports season and in preventing the use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, or any other inappropriate substances.

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### **ATHLETICS DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Both in and out of season, team captains are expected to be appropriate role models in the school community. A captain who, in or out of season, commits a violation of the *Captains' Expectations* as stated in the *Captains' Pledge* and the *Athletics Training Expectations* will risk his/her position as a team captain. Captains in season who violate the *Captains' Expectations* will lose their captaincy. The RHS Administration also reserves the right to revoke any captaincy if there is a violation of the *Captains' Expectations* out of season. Any captain who violated the *Captains' Expectations* will not be eligible to receive post season RHS Athletic Awards/Scholarships involving character and leadership.

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### **CAPTAIN'S PLEDGE**

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The following pledge is required of all Team Captains. Failure to meet these expectations will risk a student's position as a team captain.

*"I realize being selected to the position of team captain carries with it more responsibility than being just a team member; others in the school and greater community look up to me as a leader and role model. I will do my best to exemplify the qualities that the Administration, Athletics Department, Head Coach and school community expect of me. I pledge to adhere to the Captains' Expectations in and out of season.*

*I pledge to:*

- *Conduct myself in a manner consistent with the Ridgefield High School expectations for acceptable behavior and citizenship as outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook.*
- *Adhere to the guidelines stated in the Captains' Expectations in and out of season.*
- *Follow the Athletics Training Expectations by remaining chemical free. I will not use tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.*
- *Follow the Ridgefield Public Schools Hazing Policy.*
- *Complete the Captains' Online Leadership Training Program.*
- *Earn the respect of my teammates, the school community and the larger Ridgefield community.*
- *Be a good citizen. I will demonstrate respect, loyalty, cooperation, trustworthiness, selflessness, honesty, compassion and pride in my school and its positive reputation.*
- *Demonstrate good school behavior. I will be punctual and abide by school rules.*
- *Demonstrate positive Academic Qualities. I commit to academic progress and my best effort.*
- *Demonstrate positive Athletic Qualities. I commit myself to good skills, dedication to the sport, good sportsmanship, hard work, teamwork and communication skills.*
- *Be willing to act as the liaison between teammates, coaches, director of athletics, and other appropriate school personnel."*

*"The higher the level of competition – the higher the expected dedication."*

## **CAPTAIN'S PRACTICE**

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"Captain's practice," no matter how well intentioned on the part of the team captains, violates CIAC policy and jeopardizes eligibility. The Ridgefield High School Athletics Department fully supports the CIAC position on captain's practices for safety and liability reasons, and captain's practices are expressly forbidden. An adult presence (parent or volunteer) does not make a captain's practice legal.

## **CAPTAINS' COUNCIL**

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Captains' Council is a leadership program designed specifically for the high school athlete/leader. In addition to developing leadership skills, Captains' Council will promote sportsmanship, school spirit and community service. The council also acts as a means of communication among the school athletes and the school administration. All varsity team captains for the current school year are members and are expected to attend all meetings and leadership training programs. The RHS Administration reserves the right to revoke any captaincy for students who do not attend the scheduled leadership training sessions.

## **CAPTAINS' PASSES**

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Upon successful completion of the Captains Leadership training program, all captains are eligible to receive a RHS Sports Pass allowing them to attend home athletic contests at no charge. Passes are issued at the beginning of the school year and captains use their Student ID for admittance, in lieu of a separate card. Captains are expected to display a high standard of conduct and sportsmanship when they are spectators at athletic contests. Pass privileges will be lost if a captain displays inappropriate behavior as a spectator or loses his/her captainship. The Captain's Pass may not be used for FCIAC/CIAC post-season games.

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **ATHLETICS SPORTS PASSES**

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The Ridgefield High School Athletics Department offers Athletics Sports Passes which provide general admission to RHS home contests. This pass is offered to individuals at a substantial savings and allows parents and their children admission into all regular athletic contests held at Ridgefield High School throughout the school year (fall, winter, spring) except for ice hockey and any FCIAC and CIAC tournament events.

## **PARTICIPATION IN CAPTAIN'S PRACTICES**

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Captain's practices are expressly forbidden for safety, liability and eligibility reasons. Student athletes are not to participate in a captain's practice. Student athletes with questions or concerns regarding practices outside the normally scheduled team practices should speak with their coach or the athletics director. An adult presence (parent or volunteer) does not make a practice legal.

## **DRESS ON GAME DAYS**

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The RHS Athletics Department understands and appreciates the team spirit and pride that our student athletes demonstrate. However, "dress up" days, the practice of "kidnapping" students, and any other inappropriate spirit activities ARE NOT PERMITTED. What appears to be harmless fun to some almost always leads to some students feeling humiliated and distraught, is a distraction to the school day and is in violation of the Ridgefield Board of Education Hazing policy (Appendix C).

Team spirit must be shown in an appropriate and respectful manner. The following are examples of appropriate dress: wearing team uniforms, warm-ups, shirts/ties, dresses, etc. The following are examples of inappropriate dress: wearing beachwear, togas, wearing undergarments (spandex) as outer-garments, etc. Additionally, total face and body painting at school is not allowed.

Any questions regarding this policy should be discussed with the RHS Athletics Director.

## **POSTERS AND PROMOTIONS**

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The Athletics Department supports promoting team activities through any upbeat and appropriate means that reflect good taste and an appropriate message. Please be sure that any game announcement/flyers have been approved by the athletics department, and are posted in appropriate locations within the school property. Students found guilty of offensive or unauthorized promotions face possible disciplinary action.

## **ATHLETICS TRAINER**

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Ridgefield High School employs the services of a full time and part time Certified Athletics Trainer (ATC) in order to provide immediate care in the event of injury. The ATC is scheduled to be in the training room every day before practice for taping, treatment and consultation. When requested, the ATC will supervise rehabilitation in order to minimize the risk of re-injury. The trainer, however, is not here to replace the family's own medical specialist. The trainer provides immediate emergency first aid. The ATC works in conjunction with the athletics director, coaches, orthopedic physicians and other health care professionals to create a teamwork approach when caring for the athlete.

The ATC circulates the campus during practice hours and most game days.

## **INJURIES, CONCUSSION AND SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS**

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All injuries incurred while participating in the Ridgefield High School Interscholastic Athletics Program must be reported to the athletics trainer and coach. The trainer and/or coach will administer first aid at the time of the injury. Should additional medical attention be required, the athletic trainer/coach will arrange to have the athlete transported to the hospital and parents will be notified immediately.

### **RETURN TO PLAY**

When an athlete has been injured while participating in an interscholastic sport, before his/her return to the activity, he/she must present a written release from the doctor so that he/she can resume participation in the sport. This release must be given to the athletics trainer, school nurse and coach, and a copy of the release will be forwarded to the athletics director. This form may be downloaded from the RHS Athletics Webpage.

### **CONCUSSION AWARENESS INFORMATION**

The State of Connecticut has followed the enacted concussion legislation requiring all schools provide concussion education to Student Athletes and Parents. The Connecticut Association of Schools - Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference(CAS-CIAC) strongly recommends that all Student Athletes and Parents view the CAS-CIAC video on concussions and concussion management. Please navigate to [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org) and then click on RHS, then Athletics and then the Concussion Awareness Information page for the CIAC videos, concussion informational publications and information regarding the ImPACT program.

### **CONCUSSION AWARENESS INFORMATION ON PARENT PORTAL**

This consent form was developed to provide students and parents with current and relevant information regarding concussions and to comply with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Chapter 163, Section 149b: *Concussions*.

### **STUDENT AND PARENT SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST INFORMED CONSENT FORM ON PARENT PORTAL**

This document was developed to provide student-athletes and parents/guardians with current and relevant information regarding sudden cardiac arrest to comply with Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 163, Section 10-149f: SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Parents are required to log on to the Parent Portal to read and sign the Concussion Awareness and Sudden Cardiac Arrest information. Log on to [www.ridgefield.org](http://www.ridgefield.org). Click on the Parents & Students tab and then log in to the Power School Parent Portal. There is a navigation bar on the left side of the screen. Look for and click on **Athletic Consent** to find the concussion awareness as well as the sudden cardiac arrest informed consent forms.

## INSURANCE

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The athlete's family insurance policy is the primary carrier for any medical costs incurred as a result of sports injuries. The Board of Education requires all students participating in athletics to enroll in the group accident insurance policy covering all interscholastic sports. The policy is an "Excess Coverage" policy, which is a form of insurance which reimburses for medical expenses, within the policy limits, only to the extent that basic family medical insurance does not. If there is no family insurance in effect at the time of an injury, the sports insurance will cover the claim to the extent of the policy provisions.

In submitting a claim, the steps outlined below must be followed:

- The family insurance is the primary carrier and all bills must first be submitted to the family insurance company.
- All bills unpaid by the primary insurance company can then be submitted to the Ridgefield Public School's Athletics Department insurance company after the completion of the required claim form. Claim forms will be completed by the athletic trainer and sent home to the parents/guardian of the injured athlete. The claim form and bills must be mailed to the insurance company within 90 days of the date the injury occurred. Do not submit bills to the RHS Athletics Department. They will not be paid by the school system.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

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### BUS TRAVEL AND TRIPS

It is the policy of the Ridgefield Board of Education to provide transportation to/from all "away" contests. In addition:

- **ALL student athletes are expected to ride the team bus to/from all contests.**
- If a student athlete is not going to travel on the bus with their team to/from an event, the parent/guardian must complete the *Request for Alternate Transportation* form which may be downloaded from the RHS Athletics Webpage. **This form must be signed by the parent/guardian, indicating the name of the adult who will be transporting the student. Completed forms must be submitted to the student's coach prior to the day being requested.**
- **Student athletes are not permitted to drive themselves to or from athletic contests at any time, for any reason regardless of their age.**
- Student athletes will be expected to follow all rules and regulations governing how students behave on the school bus to ensure a safe trip.
- **Exception:** Parents and/or guardians are to be aware that golf and ice hockey practices are not held on the school campus. Therefore, athletes' families are to provide their own transportation to and from practice.

### FOOD

Due to student food allergies, no food is to be consumed on buses transporting students to and from athletic events. All bus drivers have been provided with training on the effects of food allergies and emergency actions to be taken, if necessary. Only food that is pre-packaged may be brought on the bus. Water is the only beverage that may be consumed on the bus.

### PARKING ON CAMPUS PROPERTY

During athletic practices and contests on days when school is in session, student athletes are expected to park in the Community Entrance parking lot at Ridgefield High School. Student athletes are not allowed to park their vehicles at either Scotts Ridge Middle School or Tiger Hollow Stadium. Parking at Tiger Hollow is reserved for the handicapped and athletic staff working the games. The Ridgefield Police Department monitors parking and will issue tickets to illegally parked vehicles.

## LEAVING MESSAGES FOR COACHES

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**Each coach will communicate to their team the best method to contact them.** Coaches do not stop at the Athletics Office on a daily basis so parents and students are encouraged to communicate with coaches per the coach's instructions. Please do not contact coaches at home.



Messages and question regarding tardiness, absences, practice game schedules, team sports questions, etc., should all be directed to the coach in the manner specified at the Team Orientation meeting and **not be called into the RHS Athletics office.**

## PARENT INFORMATION

### PARENTAL SUPPORT IS KEY TO AN ATHLETE'S SUCCESS

Parents can be a tremendous asset to the attainment of the Athletic Department's goals and the goals of your child. Ridgefield parents have traditionally provided support, loyalty and encouragement to the teams and the school staff. The school system believes that only through a close level of cooperation and communication between the parents and the school, can the necessary guidance, leadership, concern, and encouragement, so important during your son/daughter's teenage years, be provided. All parents are encouraged to support our teams by attending as many athletic contests as possible.

When a child becomes involved in our program, parents have a right to understand what expectations are placed upon their child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the child's program. It is essential that parents and athletes demonstrate respect for coaches. The coach has been appointed to a leadership and decision making position. His/her responsibility is to the individual participant, the team, and the school system. As a result, all coaches have been instructed to make the best decisions they can and not to bow to parent or fan pressure relative to athletics and/or coaching decisions. In all instances, an environment of mutual respect and civility should prevail and the appropriate steps for a solution should be followed.

#### COMMUNICATION YOUR CHILD SHOULD EXPECT FROM HIS/HER COACH

- Philosophy of the coach
- Team rules and expectations for all players on the team
- Team requirements; i.e., level of commitment, fees, equipment, off- season conditioning
- Procedure should your child be injured during participation
- Location and times of all practices and contests
- Team communications
- Discipline that results in denial of your child's participation

#### COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM STUDENT ATHLETES

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Absences due to illness
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance (planned vacations)
- Specific concerns with regards to a coach's philosophy and or expectations

### APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

It is difficult to accept a child's not playing as much as it may hoped. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. Based on the list above, certain things can be, and should be, discussed with a child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

### ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- playing time (playing time issues should be discussed between athlete and coach first)
- team strategy
- calling plays

- other student athletes
- selection of captains
- special awards

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, please follow the steps outlined in the Chain of Communication, to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

## **SOLVING CONFLICTS – CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION**

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We understand that parents have great interest in the welfare of their child and that it is possible that, from time to time, disagreements between the coach and the parents may occur.

All issues between an athlete and a coach should **FIRST** be dealt with between each other. If the conflict cannot be resolved between the coach and athlete, then the athlete should make an appointment with the athletics director to inform him/her of the problem. At this time parents are urged to make appointments with the coach to share their concerns. In the event that acceptable solutions cannot be secured the parent should then contact the athletics director. If additional discussions are required to resolve the problem, the parent has the right to appeal decisions through the administration.

*These are the steps that should be followed until there is a resolution to the problem:*

- athlete and coach
- athlete and athletics director
- parent and coach
- parent and athletics director
- parent and principal

The correct procedure to contact a coach is not to leave a message in the Athletics Office. Parents may to contact the coach directly at the phone number or email address distributed at the pre-season orientation meeting. Please do not contact the coach at home unless requested to do so. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest, a practice, or event. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. If the coach does not respond to your message, email the athletics director, Dane Street, at [dstreet@ridgefield.org](mailto:dstreet@ridgefield.org) or telephone at (203) 894-5750 and he will contact the coach on your behalf.

### **What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?**

1. Call and set up an appointment with the athletics director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Parent spectators have made significant contributions to the fine reputation Ridgefield has earned in the display of good sportsmanship. Serving as positive role models for our student body, they have exhibited the highest ideals of good sportsmanship.

Together, parents and coaches can provide the necessary guidance, leadership, concern, and encouragement, which are so important during the high school years.

## INFORMATION FOR THE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENT ATHLETE

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Many college sports are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) an organization founded in 1906 that has established rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid. The NCAA has three membership divisions: Division I, Division II, and Division III. Institutions are members of one or another division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs, and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

The NCAA Eligibility Center has launched a new website NCAA Eligibility Center to help high school student-athletes successfully transition to college. The online content gives student-athletes and counselors a broad look at the initial-eligibility process and detailed information about common eligibility situations.

Right Click (open hyperlink) on the following link for NCAA eligibility information:

[NCAA Eligibility Center](#)

Helpful resources in the eligibility center include the following documents:

Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete

Initial Eligibility Brochure

Division I New Initial-Eligibility Requirements

For the large number of student/athletes at the high school level, athletic scholarships will not be offered. Therefore, the following recommendations may be used in pursuing financial aid and/or acceptance to the college or university which best matches the athlete's abilities and interests.

- Discuss with your counselor the range of colleges for which you are academically qualified.
- Talk with your coach about the level of competition he/she feels you might be best suited to participate in (i.e. Division I, II, III, or Junior College).
- Narrow your college selection list to a reasonable size, taking into consideration the quality of academic and athletic programs, determining whether they are right for you. Be realistic about your choice.
- Find the name of the coach in your sport at each college on your list. (Use the National Directory of College Athletics in the guidance office).
- Request your high school coach to write a personal letter to the college coach highlighting your transcript, academic achievements, and interests as well as a thorough and detailed discussion of your athletic accomplishments (statistics, clippings, letters earned, records set, honors). A videotape should be made during the season for availability to college coaches.
- Decide where you wish to apply. Few college coaches will take an interest in you unless you formally apply. Initiate, don't react.
- Remain in touch with the coaches after applying. Inquire about the status of your application and financial aid. If possible, visit the college and the coach - sell yourself as a person and a student athlete.
- A letter from a college coach is an overture, NOT an offer.
- Be familiar with NCAA visitation rules (check with your coach).
- Financial Aid is based on need. Applications for financial aid as well as other scholarships are available in the counseling office.

- You may choose to continue your sports career even though you are not involved in intercollegiate competition. Most colleges and universities have extensive, competitive intramural programs for men and women.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

### **SPECTATOR SPORTSMANSHIP**

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Ridgefield High School expects a high standard of conduct from all players, parents, and spectators at athletic contests. Inappropriate spectator behavior reflects poorly on Ridgefield High School and may result in the loss of spectator privileges, and disciplinary action. We need to be positive role models for other spectators.

#### **WE WILL:**

- Be in control at all times; taunting, baiting, physical retaliation will not be tolerated.
- Be considerate of opposing players and coaches.
- Be gracious in victory and sportsmanlike in defeat.
- Respect the judgment of and accept the decisions made by the officials and/or coaches.
- Treat officials and opponents with the respect due them as fellow human beings.
- Show respect for the facilities – both at home and at our opponents.
- Support our cheerleaders in a positive manner.

#### **WE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN:**

- The booing or taunting of anyone or cheering an injury to an opponent.
- The use of profanity or any abusive language and/or inappropriate gestures of any kind.
- The throwing of objects.
- Use of noisemakers of any kind.
- Negative comments.
- Targeting a player/coach/spectator from the opposing team.

#### **ATHLETIC EVENT PROCEDURES:**

When attending athletic events at Tiger Hollow and the RHS Gymnasium

- No bags or backpacks will be permitted into the game.
- Outside food or beverages are not permitted.

***Sportsmanship is Everyone's Responsibility!***

# ATHLETIC AWARDS

All athletes will be eligible to receive the following awards upon completion of the season, if they are recommended by their coach, approved by the athletics director and meet all criteria listed.

## REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

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Varsity letters in all sports shall be awarded by the school upon the recommendation of the head coach who shall consider the following as requirements for an award:

- A player must have been regular in attendance at all practices/games.
- A player shall have observed all *Athletics Training Expectations*.
- A player shall have conducted him/herself in a most exemplary manner both on and off the field, exhibiting good sportsmanship to his/her coach, teammates and opponents.
- A player shall have successfully completed the season in good standing.
- The head coach may award Varsity letters at his/her discretion. The head coach will provide his/her criteria for earning a varsity letter in writing to all athletes at the beginning of each season.
- All award policies must be approved by the athletics director.

## LETTERS

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### VARSITY

A Varsity letter will be given when the athlete earns Varsity credit by satisfactory participation at the Varsity level in any sport during a particular year. A pin designating the sport and certificate of participation will be included. If an athlete letters in more than one sport, they will be given an additional pin and certificate to designate the sport, but not an additional letter. Only one varsity letter will be issued during an athlete's career at RHS.

### JUNIOR VARSITY

A Junior Varsity certificate will be given when the athlete earns Junior Varsity credit by satisfactory participation at the Junior Varsity level in any sport during a particular year. If an athlete participates in more than one Junior Varsity sport, he/she will receive a certificate for each additional sport.

### FRESHMAN

A Freshman certificate will be given when the athlete earns Freshman credit by satisfactory participation at the Freshman level in any sport during a particular year. If a freshman athlete participates in more than one Freshman sport, he/she will receive a certificate for each additional sport.

**Please note:** If an athlete is brought up to participate at a higher level for the last couple of games (e.g., Junior Varsity player brought up to play Varsity), they will receive credit for their regular season play, not the higher level.

## CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

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A certificate of participation will be awarded to each athlete who finishes an athletic sport season and is on the final athletic award program roster.

## FCIAC SCHOLAR ATHLETE

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This honor is awarded to an athlete on a varsity team who has high academic achievement for the marking period associated with his or her season. The guidelines for this award will be based on the student's GPA for the corresponding marking period, while also taking into consideration attitude and sportsmanship on the court or field. The minimum GPA to warrant consideration for this award is a 3.5 cumulative average.

## AAC SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD

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The scholar athlete award is given to senior student athletes who balance hard work both in the classroom and on the playing field.

### NOMINATION

*To be nominated a student/athlete will have all of the following criteria:*

- 15 participation points (6-points varsity, 3 points JV and Freshman) *NOTE: for students who have transferred to RHS during their high school career they will need to provide signed documentation from their previous school confirming participation at that school so they can be considered for the award.*
- A 3.7 GPA, weighted or un-weighted. *For the purpose of this nomination the GPA at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> semester will be used.*
- Citizenship, sportsmanship behavior and adherence to team, Athletics Department and RHS rules and policies will also be considered. *Students must have no incidence of serious infraction of school/athletics rules.*
- Athletic Participation each year during high school.

A letter is sent out in the early fall which expresses congratulations to the student and reiterates the requirements for the full award. The student is able to use “nomination” on a college application.

### AWARD

*To receive this award a student/athlete nominee will have at least:*

- A 3.7 weighted or un-weighted GPA – *for the purpose of this award the final GPA will be determined at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester.*
- 21 or greater participation points (6 points varsity, 3 points JV and Freshman);
- Active participation in the RHS Athletics Program all 4 years.
- Athletes must earn Varsity status in at least one sport.
- Citizenship, sportsmanship behavior and adherence to team, Athletics Department and RHS rules and policies will also be considered. *Students must have no incidence of serious infraction of school/athletics rules during their 4 years at RHS.*

The Scholar Athlete award also includes all sports offered by high schools in the State of Connecticut (e.g. crew, gymnastics and sailing) based on the following requirements:

- Outside sport programs under consideration for inclusion must be reviewed and approved by the athletics director.
- Outside programs must be in compliance with all RHS athletic programs and guidelines.
- Credit may not be given to outside programs for which there is a corresponding program at Ridgefield High School.
- At the conclusion of the season of play, student athletes must complete the forms: ‘Request for Athletic Participation Credit’ and submit it to the RHS Athletics Department for approval.

Sports participation credit is awarded at a maximum of one sport, per season (fall/winter/spring), each school year.

Each scholar athlete will be presented with a plaque at the Senior Awards Night from the Athletic Advisory Council and 2 seniors one female; one male will receive a monetary scholarship, in recognition of this achievement.

## RIDGEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Eligibility for membership on the Ridgefield High School Athletic Advisory Council is open to any resident of the town of Ridgefield, any parent of a student in the Ridgefield Schools, any faculty member of the Ridgefield Schools, and any athletic coach of a Ridgefield team who supports the goals of the Council and who desires to advance such goals. Members may attend all meetings and may vote at meetings of members.

**MISSION:** The Council is organized to:

- encourage, promote and recognize educational and athletic achievement of scholar athletes at Ridgefield High School;
- help develop an athletic environment that fosters the development of leadership, self-discipline, strength, courage, stamina, sound judgment and a sense of fair play at Ridgefield High School;

- provide a forum for the discussion of athletic issues in order to enhance and foster communication and cooperation among the Ridgefield High School athletic programs; and
- raise funds to achieve the goals of the Council and support athletics at Ridgefield High School.

**COMPOSITION:**

The Athletic Advisory Council is made up of the following:

- One representative from each Ridgefield High School chartered Booster club. In the absence of a booster club, the head coach or athletics director may designate a team representative.
- Two team captains from the Ridgefield High School Captains' Council – one representing boys sports, one representing girls sports.
- One representative from the PTSA.

No individual may represent more than one Booster Club or team.

# **STUDENT LIFE**

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# STUDENT LIFE OFFICE

## PURPOSE

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The purpose of the Student Life Office is to promote and coordinate student activities at RHS. The office seeks to encourage student involvement in the life of the school and to assist students in learning how to organize and work together to implement activities. Located adjacent to the Student Center, the Student Life Office is open during the school day from 7:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Often working in conjunction with the Student Government, the Student Life Office is responsible for coordinating these areas.

announcements	field trips
assemblies	graduation
awards ceremonies	identification cards
class activities	lost and found
club activities and charters	school calendar
facilities use	special program events
driver education	working papers

## ADVISORY PROGRAM

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Every student at Ridgefield High School belongs to an advisory group which is led by a faculty member. The group is small and whenever possible the members remain the same for a student's four years. The goal of the program is to promote students' social-emotional and academic well-being, and encourage students to be responsible members of the community. Advisory groups meet approximately once a month to review and talk about important topics pertaining to the school or to the students themselves. Conversations may be led by staff members or students. Topics can include information about new policies; handling stress; events that have occurred at school or in the students' lives; or grade level related topics such as the college application process.

## CLUBS

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Ridgefield High School encourages the formation of clubs representing a wide range of student interests. The Student Life Office assists students and advisors in forming and running clubs. In order to utilize school facilities and resources, each club must secure a faculty advisor and file a charter for approval with the Student Life Office at the beginning of the school year. See the Student Life Office website for details on club policies and procedures.

## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

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The purpose of the Ridgefield High School Chapter of the National Honor Society is to serve the school and the community. Member services include the Red Cross Blood Drives, the Peer Tutoring Program, Elementary School Homework Clubs and a hair donation fundraiser with Pantene.

The National Honor Society Faculty Council will convene to determine those students who meet the criteria for membership.

A review of student's application including service (35 hours) and leadership (2 citations) plus their records, including academic, attendance and discipline will be considered.

### Scholarship

- Have an overall weighted GPA of 3.7 based on five semesters of completed course work.
- Have been attending Ridgefield High School for a minimum of one semester.

### Leadership

- Exemplify leadership qualities and maintain a positive influence on his/her peers.

- Successfully hold a leadership position in a minimum of two school and/or community organizations (without pay or grade).
- Demonstrate initiative and dependability in school activities.
- The leadership component must be certified by an adult supervisor of the organization, other than the parent of the candidate.
- Contact information for two leadership references will be required. Students should let the references know that they will be contacted.

#### **Service**

- Actively participate in an organization, performing a minimum of 35 hours of volunteer service for the organization. A student must not receive either pay and/or grade for these services. The adult supervisor of the organization will certify these services. Contact information for service will be required. References should not be the parent of the candidate.
- Volunteer dependable and well-organized assistance.
- Readily render any requested service to school or community.

#### **Character**

- Uphold principles of morality and ethics.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and reliability.
- Comply with all school and civil rules and regulations.
- Show courtesy, concern and respect for others.
- Disciplinary records will be considered.

#### **Attendance:**

- Students will exhibit exemplary attendance in all classes.
- Disqualifiers for attendance:
  - 5 tardies total (excused or unexcused) per semester or
  - 3 full days of unexcused absences per semester or
  - 3 unexcused individual class absences per semester
  - Excessive absences for medical reasons will be reviewed on a case by case basis

Eligible juniors will have one opportunity to be selected during the second semester of the junior year.

Students who are academically eligible will be notified by letter. Applications for the Ridgefield High School National Honor Society will be available on the Student Life Office/National Honor Society website. Each student is responsible for completing the forms thoroughly and handing them in on or before the due date stated in the letter.

# STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT

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Student Government consists of an Executive Board and four Class Councils. The Executive Board provides leadership and representation for the entire student body and focuses on issues and projects affecting the entire RHS community. Major Student Government activities include: the Fall Homecoming Dance and Spirit Week, Maturity Matters visits by senior citizens, the annual Freshman Dance, and government elections. Executive Board positions include: President, Vice President of Rights and Responsibilities, Vice President of Activities, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, and four Class Council Vice Presidents.

## CLASS COUNCILS

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Class Councils provide leadership and representation for each of the four classes and focus on issues relating to their individual classes. Class Councils are responsible for planning and organizing their Junior and Senior Proms and graduation ceremonies. Major effort is dedicated toward fundraising for the prom and Senior Banquet with activities such as Mr. RHS and the Talent Show. Class Council positions include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and up to ten Senators.

## ELECTIONS AND MEETINGS

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Executive Board and Class Council elections are held each spring, and elected officers govern throughout the following year. Freshmen Class Council elections occur early in September each year. The entire Student Government, including all Class Councils, meet for one period each week on a rotating basis. The Executive Board meets after school once a week. Each Class Council meets once a week after school.

# STUDENT LIFE COMMUNICATION

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The Public Address system is available for daily announcements for school organizations. Permission to make announcements must be obtained through the Student Life Office. Announcement forms are available in the Student Life Office and should be submitted in advance. Forms must be signed by the appropriate supervising adult. Announcements are posted online at the RHS website.

## BULLETIN BOARDS

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School organizations may place notices on bulletin boards or designated areas in the Student Center. Announcements of events and activities taped to walls or doors will be removed. On occasion, outside organizations may be permitted to use school bulletin boards. Such use will be limited to recognized youth-serving organizations to publicize events of general interest and service to our students. Permission should be requested from the Student Life Coordinator. The principal has final approval for all postings.

# APPENDICES

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## **APPENDIX A – BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY ON HAZING**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing.

Hazing is defined as an activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education. Hazing activities are seriously disruptive of the educational process in that they involve students and violence or threats of violence.

No student, teacher, administrator, coach, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, engage in, permit, condone or tolerate hazing.

“Endanger the mental health” shall include any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, sexual harassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

“Endanger the physical health” shall include, but is not limited to any brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, beverage, drug, or controlled substance; or any other forced physical activity which would adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

Any hazing activity upon which the initiation for admission or affiliation with an organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education, directly or indirectly, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates in such activity.

The policy is not intended to deprive school district authorities from taking necessary and appropriate disciplinary action toward any student or employee. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy. Discipline of appropriate action may include but not be limited to suspension, expulsion for students and remediation or termination for employees.

This policy is not meant to exclude voluntary team spirit activities planned with prior approval of the team coach and athletic director.

A copy of this policy may be included but not limited to the student handbook and furnished to staff, coaches, and captains.

## APPENDIX B – ATHLETICS VACATION POLICY

Vacations and other out of school activities, without prior approval from the coach, are not valid reasons for missing practices and contests. Family vacations that interfere with organized practice and/or games should be discussed with the coach prior to the season in a timely manner. The following regulations have been developed to be fair to all, especially to the athlete who may have no choice but to go with the family, and to the athlete who has to take the absent athlete's place during practice and contests that occur during the vacation period. *If an athlete is on vacation during the season he/she should be prepared to sit out a certain number of games depending on the level of the sport (Freshman, JV, or Varsity). The higher level of competition the higher the expected dedication.*

### **Varsity**

Athletes are required to be at all practices/contests during vacation periods. ***Unexcused absences will affect their acceptance as a team member.*** If excused by the coach/Athletic Director, the number of contests the athlete misses during the family vacation will be the number of contests he/she misses upon returning to the team. In addition to missing contests, athletes must earn their positions back on the team.

### **JV / Freshman**

The number of contests the athlete misses during the family vacation will be the number of contests he/she misses upon returning to the team. In addition to missing contests, athletes must earn their positions back on the team.

- In the event of a family emergency, it is the coaches' discretion if there will be any missed game time.
- Additional rules or regulations adopted by the head coach for a particular team will be approved by the Athletic Director. Such additions will be in writing and on file in the office of the Athletic Director and will be provided in writing to all student/athletes on that team. Student/athletes are asked to establish priorities and then live by their decision regarding any personal conflicts.

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*Due to weekly game limitations set by CIAC and length of schedule, conflicts during vacation periods CANNOT be avoided. The FCIAC and CIAC do not schedule around vacations. This is impossible to do because there is no one standard vacation week for all Connecticut Public schools. Athletes and parents need to be aware that games over vacations will be played and/or forfeited and not changed. This is a League as well as a State policy.*

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## APPENDIX C – CIAC UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT POLICY

The CIAC establishes guidelines and tone for acceptable and appropriate behavior at all CIAC contests. Given this charge, it is CIAC's responsibility to be pro active and responsive to the growing issues of sportsmanship and violence in sports. A strong consistent statement reflecting zero tolerance for violence in sports must become standard operating procedure for all schools. (This is to be considered a minimum standard.) The following policies for disqualification shall apply in all sports:

1. Any student athlete who physically assaults an official, coach, opposing player or spectator will be immediately dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season.
2. When an athlete or coach is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior or fighting, including taunting, the athlete or coach is ineligible to participate in the next contest at the same level of play (even if the next contest does not occur until league or CIAC tournament play or next year). If one or more different level contests are scheduled prior to the next contest at the same level of play, the athlete or coach shall be ineligible to participate in the next (but no more than one) contest at all other levels of play.
3. Upon the second disqualification, if that violation is for initiating a fight or retaliating in a fight (as determined by the game official), that student athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season. (Otherwise #2 remains applicable.)
4. A school's first incidence of non-compliance will result in forfeiture and a \$250 fine; a school's second incidence of noncompliance will prohibit the school from entry in the next CIAC tournament for that sport, or from the remainder of the current tournament if the disqualification occurs during a CIAC tournament or during the last regular season contest / day of competition.
5. Any CIAC team that accumulates five (5) or more disqualifications for flagrant misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, including taunting, retaliating in a fight, or physically assaulting an official, coach, opposing player or spectator during the course of one season will be barred from CIAC post-season competition. The number of disqualifications must be completed on all tournament forms. Disqualification from the team under #1 constitutes one disqualification in team totals.
6. Disqualifications from the last contest of one season carry over to the next season in that sport for undergraduates and coaches, or the next season of participation in any sport for seniors.
7. If the playing rules for a sport specify an additional penalty, the additional penalty will apply. The CIAC disqualification rule applies to all disqualifications with the exception of reaching the limit of personal fouls in basketball and lacrosse; reaching the limit of technical violations in wrestling; or being disqualified by the rules in ice hockey and lacrosse, which does not require a next game disqualification.

Any misconduct or disqualification of a coach will count towards the team's total number of disqualifications.

8. Each game official will notify the Assigner for that game who will notify the CIAC office (203) 250-1111 immediately following the game of all disqualifications. It will also be the responsibility of the Assigner for that game to notify the athletic director of the offending school the morning of the next school day. The Athletic Director or Principal of the school having the disqualified player or coach must notify their next opponent.

### ***\*Definition of ASSAULT:***

An assault is defined as a violent attack which attempts to injure one physically. In the judgment of the game official it is more serious than a fight (usually towards another person and requires immediate removal of the athlete for the remainder of the year.)

### ***\* Definition of TAUNTING:***

Taunting includes, but is not limited to any actions or comments by coaches or players which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean other players, coaches, or game officials. Included in this is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on gender, ethnic origin or background and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters. Examples of taunting that would lead to ejection include, but are not limited to, physical and verbal intimidation outside the spirit of the game ("trash talk"), reference to sexual orientation, "in-the-face confrontation" by one player to another, standing over, straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

**\*PENALTY:**

In all sports, game officials are to consider taunting a flagrant, unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or athlete from that contest / day of competition and the player or coach from the following contest / day of competition, i.e. the CIAC player/coach ejection rule will be invoked. A warning may be given, but is not required before ejection. In Soccer, an accumulation of two yellow cards in one game against the coaching personnel or team bench will constitute a red card against the head coach and will restrict that coach from coaching his/her team in any contest until withheld from the next contest at that level of play. In Football, any head coach whose team beats an opponent by more than 50 points will be disqualified from coaching in the next contest at the same level of play. All conditions under the CIAC Disqualification/Ejection Rule will apply. The CIAC Disqualification/Ejection Rule is in effect for all contests including league playoffs that engage officials who have been assigned by Board Commissioners from CIAC registered officials organizations, or directly by the school or by the CIAC. There is NO appeal procedure that a school may use relative to disqualifications. Disqualification is a judgment call by an official and as such is not appealable. Once the game official(s) leaves the site the game official(s) is in charge and may take any action deemed to be appropriate, even to the extent of reversing an earlier decision to eject a player or coach. Both schools (coaches on site) must be made fully aware of all final decisions on game disqualifications.

**\*APPEALS:**

The CIAC will not honor appeals of a coach or player disqualification made by game officials. Those decisions are considered judgment calls made by a game official and will not be reviewed.

The CIAC will honor appeals of coach disqualifications only (not player disqualifications) when the nature of the disqualification under the CIAC Disqualification/Ejection Rule applies to circumstances other than game official judgments. For example, the ejection of a head coach for winning a football contest by more than 50 points when the circumstances warrant an exception.

Appeals will be heard by a committee consisting of the following: CIAC chairperson, CIAC committee chairperson of the sports committee involved, and the CIAC Executive Director or his/her designee. Appeals will be honored when received in the CIAC office within 48 hours of the conclusion of the contest.



## **APPENDIX D –SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is forbidden by federal and state law and by the Ridgefield Board of Education and in the Ridgefield Public Schools. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Employees and students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees of the Ridgefield Public Schools, students, and to the public. Students have the right to be in an education environment free of sexual harassment whether by employees of the Ridgefield Public Schools, by non-employees supplying contractual services, by other non-school personnel doing business with or volunteering in the Ridgefield Public Schools, or by other students.

It is the policy of this Board that all complaints of sexual harassment shall be thoroughly investigated, that there shall be no retaliation as a result of the good faith reporting of complaints of sexual harassment, and that the complaint shall be appropriately addressed.

### **Education**

Each year all students will be informed of their rights under this policy, which will be incorporated into the student handbook. Such education will include information regarding the procedure for making a complaint, and may also include discussions, films, or other activities deemed appropriate.

### **Definitions**

Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Connecticut General Statutes, S46a- 60(a)(8) and 10- 15c. Sexual harassment is generally defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the education setting. Sexual harassment occurs when:

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's participation in school programs, educational progress, or opportunity.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of educational or other decisions affecting the individual.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or educational opportunity or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational/learning environment.

### **Examples**

While an exhaustive list of sexual harassment examples is not possible, the following constitute examples of specific behaviors that, if unwelcome and if sexual in nature, could constitute sexual harassment:

### **Definitions (continued)**

1. Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, pictures, cartoons, sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions impeding or blocking movement, leering, threats.
2. Expressing sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome.
3. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the educational environment of a student, such as threats of reprisal; implying or withholding support for an appointment, promotion, transfer, or change of assignment, or suggesting a poor performance report will be prepared.

4. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or learning environment of a student, including promises or threats regarding grades, course admission, performance evaluations, or recommendations: enhancement or limitation of student benefits or services.
5. The deliberate or careless creation or maintenance of an atmosphere of sexual harassment or intimidation, or a hostile or offensive educational environment.
6. Inappropriate attention of a sexual nature or verbal or physical abuse from peer(s).

### **Complaint Procedure**

If a student believes that he/she is a victim of sexual harassment, the student should immediately inform a teacher, guidance counselor, or administrator, who will take action to investigate the allegations and resolve the complaint within ten (10) school days.

The right to confidentiality of both the complainant and of the accused will be respected consistent with the school district's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the initial complaint process, he or she may file a written appeal to the Title IX Coordinator. Complaint forms are available from the Title IX Coordinator and building Principal. The complaint should state the name of the complainant and the date of the complaint, the date of the alleged harassment, the name or names of the harasser or harassers, where such harassment occurred, and a statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment.

Within five (5) working days of receipt of a written complaint, the complainant shall be supplied with a copy of this policy, when necessary, in order that he or she will be made fully aware of this policy and his or her rights along with the Board's procedure for handling complaints.

### **Students**

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint. Throughout the investigative process the due rights process of the alleged harasser will be upheld. The Title IX Coordinator will report his/her findings to the Title IX Committee. The membership of said committee will be appointed by the Superintendent. After a hearing, and within ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint, the Title IX Committee, by majority vote, shall recommend a resolution to the matter. A written summary of the resolution will be made available to the complainant, the alleged harasser and, as appropriate, to all others directly concerned.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation, within ten (10) working days, he or she may file a written appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall review the investigator's written report, together with the recommended disposition of the complaint to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment. The Superintendent may also conduct a reasonable investigation, including interviewing the complainant and alleged harasser and any witnesses with relevant information. After completing this review, and within ten (10) working days, the Superintendent shall respond to the complainant, in writing.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools, within fifteen (15) days the complainant may appeal such decision in writing to the Board of Education. The Board of Education shall hold a hearing within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of such written request and shall decide if sexual harassment has occurred, and what, if any remedies are necessary. The Board shall notify the complainant in writing of its decision within ten (10) school days after such hearing.

### **Disciplinary Action**

If an investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, appropriate action will be taken to stop the harassment immediately and prevent its recurrence. Sexual harassment may result in disciplinary action against both students and employees.

Legal Reference: Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000-e2(a).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policy Guidance (N-915.035)

on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment, effective 10/15/88.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 CFR Section 106.