Research Triangle High School

RTHS Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday August 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM EDT

Location

Research Triangle High School
3106 East NC Highway 54
Durham, North Carolina 27709

or

https://rthighschool.zoom.us/j/93566460638
Meeting ID: 935 6646 0638

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
I.	**Opening Items**			**5:30 PM**
A.	Record Attendance		Ailette Tobien	2 m
B.	Call the Meeting to Order		Elizabeth Cunningham	5 m

Board Chair Elizabeth Cunningham will convene the meeting of the Board of Directors and share the following items:

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

- Welcome and Welcome Back
- Select Roles and Responsibilities of RTHS Board Members

II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes — 5:37 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Board Meeting Minutes	Approve Minutes	Ailette Tobien	2 m

The Board will review and approve the minutes from the June 18, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

Approve minutes for Board of Directors Meeting on June 18, 2025

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
B.	Approve Board Meeting Minutes	Approve Minutes	Ailette Tobien	2 m

The Board will review and approve the minutes from the July 13, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

Approve minutes for RTHS Board of Directors Meeting on July 13, 2025

III. Public Comments — 5:41 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Open to all community members (students, family members, faculty and staff, community members, and others)	FYI	Elizabeth Cunningham	5 m

The RTHS Board of Directors welcomes and values input from members of the public during its meetings. In compliance with Open Meetings Law, the public is invited to attend all open meetings of the RTHS Board.

To complete its planned agenda effectively and efficiently, the Board designates a specific time for public comment at each regular monthly meeting. Individuals seeking to address the board must:

1. *Sign up at least two (2) hours before the start of the meeting by contacting the Board Chair in writing.*
2. *Each written request to comment must include the speaker's name, their contact information, and the subject of the comment.*
3. *Each speaker will have no more than three (3) minutes to address the Board.*

The following guidelines are observed during the public comment session:

	Purpose	Presenter	Time

1. *Comments must be directed to the Board of Directors.*
2. *Profanity and personal attacks are not permitted.*
3. *Board members do not engage in dialogue or respond to speakers.*
4. *Per state law, any discussion of personnel matters or attorney-client privileged issues must occur in a closed session.*

Thank you for your cooperation and your continued commitment to RTHS.

IV. Chief School Officer Report — 5:46 PM

A. Executive Overview — Discuss — Akiba Griffin — 10 m

RTHS Chief School Officer (CSO) Akiba Griffin will highlight key events and activities.

V. Finance Committee Report — 5:56 PM

A. RTHS Monthly Financials and Other Business — Discuss — Carolyn Coia — 10 m

Committee Chair Carolyn Coia and Chief Operations Officer (COO) Alex Drake will present the following items for the Board's review:

- Committee introductions and 2025-26 meeting schedule *(2nd Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM)*
- **Monthly financials**: June and July 2025 budget reports
- Update on the recent audit visit
- **Student enrollment report**
- **Facility updates:** Update on preparation for school, and previously approved internal and external updates and repairs.

VI. Executive Session — 6:06 PM

A. Executive Session — Discuss — Elizabeth Cunningham — 10 m

The Board will meet in Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

VII. Governance Committee Report — 6:16 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Governance Committee Business	Vote	Michael Dwomoh	15 m

Committee Chair Michael Dwomoh will present the following items for Board review and approval:

- Committee introductions and 2025-26 meeting schedule *(2nd Thursday of the month at 5:30 PM)*
- **Review and approve the proposed slate of Board Officers for 2025-26**
- **Present the slate of Committee Vice Chairs for 2025-26**
- **Review and approve RTHS Standard Operating Procedures:**
  - Finance
  - School Safety
  - Exceptional Children

VIII. Academic Excellence Committee Report — 6:31 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Academic Excellence Business	Discuss	Steven Hunter	10 m

Board Vice Chair Steven Hunter and CSO Griffin will present the following items for Board review:

- Committee introductions and 2025-26 meeting schedule *(2nd Wednesday of the month at 12:00 PM)*
- **Data review**: Student enrollment trends
- Future committee agenda items:
  - Review of NC Educator Effectiveness Rubric
  - Partnerships to provide opportunities for student mentoring, internships, etc.
  - September data review: NC End-of-Course State Assessment Results

IX. Development Committee Report — 6:41 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Development Committee Business	Discuss	Dina Requena	5 m

Committee Chair Dina Requena will present the following items for Board review:

- Committee introductions and 2025-26 meeting schedule *(2nd Friday of the month at 12:00 PM)*

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

- Committee mission and purpose
- Committee focus and initial actions

X. Other Business Matters — 6:46 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	As needed	Discuss	Elizabeth Cunningham	5 m

- **Annual Board of Directors retreat**
  - September 23rd, 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM
  - The Frontier, Training Room, 600 Park Office Drive, Durham, NC 27709
  - Planning during September committee meetings
- **Additional items for discussion**

XI. Closing Items — 6:51 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Adjourn Meeting	Vote	Ailette Tobien	1 m

Coversheet

Call the Meeting to Order

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: B. Call the Meeting to Order
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material:
Board Introduction and Overview, 8-2025.pdf
RTHS Board of Directors, Select Roles and Responsibilities, 8-20-2025.pdf

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE RTHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Membership

The RTHS Board of Directors consists of five to fifteen members, each elected to a four-year term.

Our Board includes parents of current and former students, alumni, educators, and community leaders. Per our bylaws and the NC Office of Charter Schools, no more than three members—or 25 percent of the Board, whichever is less—may be parents of current RTHS students. The Board Directory is available on the RTHS website.

Board members volunteer their time and expertise to support the school's mission. They participate in Board meetings and committees, working collectively to ensure the effective governance of RTHS. Directors serve without compensation.

If you are interested in serving on the RTHS Board of Directors, please complete our Interest Form or contact the Board Chair at board@rthighschool.org.

Responsibilities of the Board

The Research Triangle High School (RTHS) Board of Directors works collaboratively to advance the school's mission, support student success, and ensure strong, effective leadership. The Board focuses on building strategic partnerships, implementing exemplary governance practices, managing financial resources responsibly, and maintaining full legal and regulatory compliance.

To carry out this work, the Board operates through five standing committees: Finance, Academic Excellence, Governance, Development, and CSO Evaluation. Additional committees may be established as needed.

RTHS Board DOES	RTHS Board DOES NOT
Work collaboratively to establish & implement the mission & vision.	Assume responsibility for day-to-day operations.
Set annual goals for the Board & each Board committee.	Select and evaluate the faculty and staff.
Hire, support, & evaluate the Chief School Officer.	Select instructional systems, programs, or methods.
Develop & monitor the budget.	Implement policies & procedures.
Adopt handbooks, policies, & charter amendments.	
Review data & assess academic progress.	
Analyze & evaluate all reports.	

Board Meetings

The Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 5:30 to 7:00 PM, except in December and July. All meetings are accessible via Zoom, and in-person meetings are held at RTHS every other month.

Meeting schedules, agendas, and materials for the Board and its committees are available on the RTHS website.

Engagement with the Board

All Board and committee meetings are open to the public, and the Board welcomes and encourages your participation.

Each Board meeting includes a designated public comment period. Individuals who wish to address the Board must sign up in advance by contacting the Board Chair in writing at board@rthighschool.org no later than two hours before the meeting begins.

RESEARCH TRIANGLE HIGH SCHOOL

SELECT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I. Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

II. Board Committee Structure

III. Board Member Attendance Policy

IV. Open Meetings Policy

V. Conflict of Interest Policy

VI. Board Member Agreement

I. Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors as they relate to those of the Research Triangle High School Leadership team. Additionally, this policy clearly defines the Board Committees as well as any School Committees on which the Board has representation.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Create and update the mission and vision statements
- Set the direction of Research Triangle High School by setting annual goals and benchmarks and by creating the 5- and 10-year strategic plans
- Hire, evaluate, and terminate the Chief School Officer
- Establish compensation for the Chief School Officer
- Approve all hiring for the staff of Research Triangle High School
- Review, develop, and adopt written Research Triangle High School policies
- Plan and approve committee structure and responsibilities
- Review the roles of the Board and each committee
- Recruit and train new Board members
- Maintain legal status by ensuring proper paperwork is submitted to governmental agencies
- Sign legal documents
- Approve contracts as per Research Triangle High School's financial control policies
- Plan agendas for meetings
- Complete annual review of the Board, including reviewing the alignment of all major decisions to the mission statement of Research Triangle High School
- Approve major programs for Research Triangle High School
- Finalize and approve the budget
- Approve and authorize expenditures outside of the approved budget
- Approve and monitor financial policies
- Review monthly financial reports
- Ensure that internal controls are in place and are being followed

- Review and approve all major grant proposals (greater than $50,000)
- Review annual audit
- Develop mechanisms for validating information provided by the Chief School Officer
- Assesses compliance of Research Triangle High School in achieving goals set in the charter, as well as any School Engagement Plan goals
- Sets and reviews personnel policies
- Promotes the charter School to the general public
- Hear grievances in accordance with the grievance policies
- Conduct student discipline hearings in accordance with North Carolina law
- Meet regularly in accordance with its publicly noticed meeting schedule

II. Board Committee Structure

Purpose: This policy is in place to describe the structures of the committees of the Board of Directors.

The Research Triangle High School bylaws permit the establishment of Committees. The Research Triangle High School Board of Directors has the following five (5) standing committees set forth in this policy. In addition to the standing committees, the Board may create ad hoc committees at its discretion. The standing committees are:

1. Finance Committee
2. Governance Committee
3. Development Committee
4. Academic Excellence Committee
5. CSO Evaluation Committee

The Finance committee shall be comprised of only current Board members. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Governance committee shall be comprised of only current Board members.

The Development Committee may be comprised of Board members as well as non-Board members.

The Academic Excellence Committee may be comprised of Board members as well as non-Board members.

The CSO Evaluation committee shall be comprised only of current Board members. The former Board Chair shall serve as the Chair of the CSO Evaluation Committee.

The Chair of each committee must be a Board member. Minutes must be taken at all committee meetings. The Chair or their designee shall report to the full Board at regularly scheduled Board meetings.

III. Board Member Attendance Policy

Purpose: To define the Board's attendance policy and the procedures to address situations where a Board member does not comply with the attendance policy.

Research Triangle High School Board members agree to serve a four-year term. Board members commit to attend monthly Board and committee meetings, the annual Board retreat, and all required training for the Board members. This commitment allows the Board of Directors to ensure consistency and commitment to its students, staff, and mission.

All Board members are required to attend a minimum of 75 percent of their regularly scheduled monthly Board and committee meetings. If a Board member has an unusual circumstance surrounding their absence, the Board member should contact the Chair of the Board at least 48 hours in advance. If a Board member attends less than 75 percent of meetings in one year, the Board Secretary shall bring the attendance issue to the attention of the Board Officers. A discussion and vote may occur regarding whether that Board member should retain their position on the Board or whether they will be asked to step down from their position.

If the Board member is asked to step down, the Board shall follow the Board of Directors' recruitment policy and the bylaws to replace that Board member.

IV. Open Meetings Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to comply with North Carolina's Open Meetings law.

It is the public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of public bodies be conducted publicly. An official meeting is a meeting, assembly, or gathering together of a majority of the members of the Board for the purpose of conducting hearings, participating in deliberations, voting upon public business, or otherwise transacting public business.

As a public body, Research Triangle High School is subject to North Carolina's Open Meeting laws, N. C. G.S. Section 143. It is the Board's policy to comply with those laws. To that end, except for closed sessions, Board meetings are open to the public. Notice of Board meeting will be publicly posted at the School and on its website in accordance with State law. The timing for meeting notice will be consistent with North Carolina law. Notice of the meeting will identify the date, time, and location, including the type of meeting to be held. If members of the Board deliberate, vote, or take other action on a matter at an official meeting, they must do so in a way that allows the public in attendance to understand what subject is being considered.

Research Triangle High School's Board may hold a closed session if it first begins an open official meeting after proper public notice. During the open part of the official meeting, the Board shall make and adopt a motion to hold a closed session. In making the motion to hold a closed session, the Board shall state which of the legally acceptable purposes it is relying upon to justify the closed session. As such, the Board may hold a closed session during one of its official meetings to prevent public disclosure of the following types of information: legally confidential information, honorary degrees, scholarships, prizes and awards, attorney-client discussions, location or expansion of business, contract negotiations, certain personnel matters, and criminal investigations (North Carolina General Statutes Section 143-318.11. Closed sessions)

The Board shall keep full and accurate minutes of all official meetings (including closed sessions). Such minutes may be in written form or, at the Board's option, may be in the form of sound or video and sound recordings. When the Board meets in closed session, it shall keep a general account of the closed session so that a person not in attendance would have a reasonable understanding of what transpired. Minutes of legitimate closed sessions are public records, but they may be withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of the closed session. The minutes of open sessions and accounts of closed sessions may be in written form or video and/or audio recordings.

V. Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose: The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Research Triangle High School from entering into a transaction or arrangement that may benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the School or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest relevant to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Definitions:

1. Interested Person: Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing Board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest: A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement,
b. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
d. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under this policy, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing Board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures:

1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing Board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, they shall leave the governing Board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

An interested person may make a presentation at the governing Board or committee meeting. After the presentation, they shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

VI. Board Member Agreement

Purpose: To ensure all members of the Board of Directors understand and have agreed to their role.

As a member of the Research Triangle High School Board of Directors, I will:

- Act with integrity and honesty
- Attempt to attend all Board meetings by phone, Zoom, or in person
- Review meeting agendas and materials and come prepared
- Serve on at least one Board committee
- Contribute to all meetings
- Take on any special tasks assigned to me by the Board of Directors
- Suggest nominees for the Board of Directors
- Participate in the creation of the annual goals and the School Engagement Plan
- Abide by RTHS' State Board of Education-approved charter agreement

As a Board member, I understand that I have the duty to do the following:

- Think about the mission of the School and my fiduciary duty before making any decision or voting on any policy
- Follow North Carolina charter school laws and policies
- Agree to Research Triangle High School's Conflict of Interest Policy
- Agree to the Research Triangle High School's Non-discrimination Policy and all other policies
- Maintain confidentiality
- Carry out the purpose of the organization while complying with the law
- Support the decisions of the Board of Directors in a positive manner, even if I was in a minority position on certain actions
- Participate in any Board training sessions and the annual Board retreat
- Participate in any evaluation process of the Board of Directors
- Always represent Research Triangle High School in a positive manner

Coversheet

Board Meeting Minutes

Section: II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes
Item: A. Board Meeting Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for Board of Directors Meeting on June 18, 2025

APPROVED

Research Triangle High School

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday June 18, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://rthighschool.zoom.us/j/93566460638
Meeting ID: 935 6646 0638

One tap mobile
+16694449171,,93566460638# US
+16699006833,,93566460638# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location
• +1 669 444 9171 US

Directors Present
A. Tobien (remote), C. Coia (remote), E. Cunningham (remote), J. Berla (remote), J. Corn (remote), M. Dwomoh (remote), P. Thermitus (remote), S. Hunter (remote), S. Rivers-Kobler (remote)

Directors Absent
D. Requena, M. Babb, S. Khaliq

Guests Present
A (remote), A. Drake (remote), A. Griffin (remote), A. Soulashinh (remote), Alan (remote), Ashar Nayyar (remote), Bekah (remote), Bianca Golden (remote), C. Klein-Gloria (remote), Christina Behringer (remote), D. Lewis (remote), D. Thompson (remote), Gawain Coombs (remote), Gus

McKay (remote), Janice Bowers (remote), John-Paul Schick (remote), Journigan (remote), K. Cook (remote), Kai Kimura (remote), Kaitlyn Harrigan (remote), Karen Huang (remote), Kristen D'Uva (remote), Latesha Jackson (remote), Mike S (remote), Miranda Terry (remote), Nick (remote), P. Rodriguez (remote), Reed Terry (remote), Robin Chasse (remote), Ryan Churchill (remote), Sara (remote), Sarah (remote), Sebastian Schick (remote), Shayan (remote), Simon Huang (remote), Stacy Schick (remote), Sue Guior (remote), Sukaina (remote), T. Mills-Silver (remote), Tea H (remote), Tess Huang (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Cunningham called a meeting of the board of directors of Research Triangle High School to order on Wednesday Jun 18, 2025 at 5:33 PM.

II. Approve Board Minutes

A. Board Meeting Minutes

S. Hunter made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Directors Meeting on 05-21-25.
M. Dwomoh seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Coia	Abstain
S. Hunter	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
S. Rivers-Kobler	Abstain
E. Cunningham	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Aye
J. Berla	Abstain
D. Requena	Absent
S. Khaliq	Absent
A. Tobien	Aye
M. Babb	Absent

B. Executive Session Meeting Minutes

J. Corn made a motion to approve the minutes from RTHS Board of Directors Meeting Executive Session on 05-21-25.
S. Hunter seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

P. Thermitus	Abstain
E. Cunningham	Aye
C. Coia	Abstain
D. Requena	Absent
M. Dwomoh	Aye
J. Berla	Abstain
J. Corn	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye
M. Babb	Absent
S. Hunter	Aye
S. Khaliq	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Abstain

III. Public Comments

A. Open to all community members (students, family members, faculty and staff, community members, and others)

Public comments from multiple students and parents were heard expressing their disappointment about Ms. Kaufman departure related to her academics as a science teacher and her dedication and support to the students.

IV. Chief School Officer Report

A. Executive Overview

A. Griffin presented executive report, more details on the slides attached to the agenda:

- School highlights
- Teacher turnover data 2022-25 were reviewed for RTHS compared to Durham County, Wake County and NC State
    - Math and Science teacher retention continues to be difficult

V. Finance Committee Report

A. RTHS Monthly Financials and Other Business

A. Drake provided an update on the finance committee, details on slides attached.

- Budget update for 2024-25 school year, end of year
- Update on allocation of year-end spending
- Proposed additional expenditures
- Service to covered ratio is good at 1.22 above required

Repair/replacement fund

- required by RTHS bond, CNA - capital needs assessment, every 5 years
- last one done in 2018

C. Coia made a motion to approve $60,288 for a one-time $1000 year-end bonus to all current full-time staff.
M. Dwomoh seconded the motion.
$1000 per staff plus required payroll expenditures
55 staff at RTHS
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Hunter	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
S. Khaliq	Absent
A. Tobien	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
M. Babb	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
M. Dwomoh	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye

S. Hunter made a motion to approve the amended RTHS 2024-25 budget as presented.
M. Dwomoh seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Dwomoh	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
S. Khaliq	Absent
J. Corn	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
M. Babb	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye

C. Coia made a motion to change the CNA annual amount from $85,800 to $65,816.
M. Dwomoh seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Hunter	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye

Roll Call

S. Rivers-Kobler	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
M. Babb	Absent
S. Khaliq	Absent
D. Requena	Absent
J. Berla	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Aye

S. Hunter made a motion to move into executive session for personnel matters.

C. Coia seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

S. Rivers-Kobler made a motion to approve contract for Allen Apple as EC teacher and EC case manager.

S. Hunter seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Khaliq	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
P. Thermitus	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
M. Babb	Absent

C. Coia made a motion to approve Akiba Griffin contract as Chief School Officer for 2025-26 school year at RTHS.

M. Dwomoh seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

P. Thermitus	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
J. Corn	Aye
M. Babb	Absent

Roll Call	
S. Khaliq	Absent
M. Dwomoh	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
S. Rivers-Kobler	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye

VII. Governance Committee Report

A. Governance Committee Business

C. Coia provided an update on the Governance committee:

- Board membership
- Finance Committee Chair replacements needed
- Board member participation
- Documents:
  - Student and Employee Handbooks planned to circulate for review and board approval by end of June 2025
  - SOPs reviews ongoing and expected later to come to the board

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

C. Coia made a motion to adjourn the board meeting.
S. Hunter seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Tobien

Coversheet

Approve Board Meeting Minutes

Section: II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes
Item: B. Approve Board Meeting Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for RTHS Board of Directors Meeting on July 13, 2025

APPROVED

Research Triangle High School

Minutes

RTHS Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time
Sunday July 13, 2025 at 4:00 PM

Location
https://rthighschool.zoom.us/j/93566460638

Meeting ID: 935 6646 0638

Directors Present
A. Tobien (remote), C. Coia (remote), E. Cunningham (remote), J. Berla (remote), P. Thermitus (remote), S. Hunter (remote), S. Khaliq (remote)

Directors Absent
D. Requena, J. Corn, M. Babb, M. Dwomoh, S. Rivers-Kobler

Guests Present
A. Griffin (remote), Priteesh Shahi (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Cunningham called a meeting of the board of directors of Research Triangle High School to order on Sunday Jul 13, 2025 at 4:05 PM.

II. Public Comments

A. Open to all community members (students, family members, faculty and staff, community members, and others)

None
C. Coia presented on the Governance Committee:

- 2025-26 RTHS Employee Handbook
- 2025-26 RTHS Student and Family Handbook
- New Board member - Priteesh Shahi
- Committee meetings to be set up by committee chairs for upcoming school year

The handbooks were circulated for board review and are attached to the agenda, as well as the CV for new proposed board member.

III. Governance Committee Report

A. Governance Committee Business

S. Hunter made a motion to approve the 2025-26 RTHS Employee Handbook, and the 2025-26 RTHS Student and Family Handbook.
A. Tobien seconded the motion.
with correction of formatting issues
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
S. Hunter	Aye
A. Tobien	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
J. Berla	Aye
M. Babb	Absent
J. Corn	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Absent
P. Thermitus	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
E. Cunningham	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
S. Khaliq	Aye

J. Berla made a motion to approve Priteesh Shahi as a new RTHS board member director.
S. Khaliq seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Berla	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
M. Babb	Absent
S. Khaliq	Aye
S. Rivers-Kobler	Absent
A. Tobien	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
C. Coia	Aye
J. Corn	Absent

IV. Executive Session

A. Executive session

S. Hunter made a motion to go to executive session for personnel.
C. Coia seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Other Board Business

A. Personnel Vote

C. Coia made a motion to approve Diane Dowman for new chemistry teaching position for 2025-26 RTHS school year.
S. Hunter seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Tobien	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
D. Requena	Absent
S. Khaliq	Aye
J. Corn	Absent
S. Rivers-Kobler	Absent
C. Coia	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
E. Cunningham	Aye
M. Babb	Absent

B. 2025-26 Meeting Dates

- Board Meeting 2025-26 calendar - attached to the agenda, and has an in-person option every other month
    - request for the community to have more in-person opportunities to interact with the Board
- 5 Aug 25 at 9:30am - Board members are invited to attend to meet the school staff and teachers
- Board Retreat - ~4-5hr to meet in person. Doodle poll for dates/times.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

S. Hunter made a motion to adjourn the board meeting.
A. Tobien seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 4:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Tobien

Coversheet

Executive Overview

Section: IV. Chief School Officer Report
Item: A. Executive Overview
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: CSO Report Highlights, 8-20-2025.pdf

CSO Report to the RTHS Board of Directors

August 20, 2025

CSO Highlights

- Welcomed students and staff back to campus
- Freshman and Senior Celebrations/Events
- Celebrated our Dean of Students and Culture
- Welcome Week was a success
- Pep Rally and Volleyball Game

Coversheet

RTHS Monthly Financials and Other Business

Section: V. Finance Committee Report
Item: A. RTHS Monthly Financials and Other Business
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: FY 2024-25 Budget Update 6.30.25 (8.11.25).pdf
RTHS FY 2025-26 Budget Update 7.31.25.pdf
Finance Committee Update for Board, 8-20-2025.pdf

FY 2024-25 Budget Update 6.30.25 (8.11.25)

Research Triangle High School	FY 2024-2025 Approved AmendedBudget	Actuals as of 6.30.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget
ADM	*564*		
State Funding per ADM	*$ 6,576.91*		
EC ADM	*29*		
State EC Funding per ADM	*$ 5,249.28*		
Revenue			
State Funds - Revenue	3,709,377	3,709,377	100%
State Funds - Growth Funding (ADM 8)	52,615	52,615	100%
State EC Funds	197,328	197,328	100%
State Funds - LI Adjustment	62,869	62,869	100%
State Funds - LEP Funds	57,410	57,410	100%
State Funds - School Technology	6,674	6,674	100%
State Funds - NCVPS	(8,138)	(8,138)	100%
State Funds - Fines & Forfeitures	-	-	
State Funds - COVID-19	-	-	
State Funds - Other Funds (non-recurring)	27,355	27,355	100%
State Funds - Paid Parental Leave Reimbursement	5,210	5,210	100%
Total State Funding	**4,110,700**	**4,110,700**	100%
Alamance County Funds	2,160	2,165	100%
Chapel Hill Funds	50,049	49,546	99%
Chatham County Funds	45,000	47,619	106%
Cumberland County Funds	1,800	1,815	101%
Durham County Funds	1,555,848	1,567,274	101%
Franklin County Funds	-	-	
Granville County Funds	2,313	2,378	103%
Harnett County Funds	1,927	2,264	117%
Johnston County Funds			
Orange County Funds	55,530	56,793	102%
Wake County Funds	936,000	939,989	100%
Mecklenburg County Funds	-	-	
Total County Funding	**2,650,627**	**2,669,843**	101%
Federal Funds - PRC 060 (EC)	69,882	69,882	100%
Federal Funds - PRC 050	-	-	
Federal Funds - PRC 103	21,069	21,069	100%
Federal Funds - PRC 108		-	
Federal Funds - PRC 118	-	-	
Federal Funds - COVID-19		-	
Grant Funds SRSA	73,551	73,551	100%
Total Federal Funding	**164,502**	**164,502**	100%
Sales & Use Tax Refund	25,000	25,623	102%
Corporate/Board/Private Donations	20,000	19,038	95%
Interest Income	21,250	21,008	99%
Other	6,541	6,541	100%
Total Revenue	**6,998,620**	**7,017,255**	100%
Expenses			
Principal	250,000	250,000	100%
Interest	522,144	495,346	95%
Bond Costs	8,600	3,829	45%
Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800	85,800	100%
Capitalized Improvements/Purchases	112,463	66,482	
Building Expenses			
Utilities - elec, water and trash	114,000	112,163	98%
Telephone/Communications	2,600	2,572	99%
Maintenance & Repair	76,000	76,166	100%
Custodial - Supplies/Materials	16,000	14,206	89%
Facility Contracted Services:		-	
Custodial Services	88,772	88,772	100%
Carpet - Tile Cleaning	12,450	12,452	100%
HVAC	24,856	21,941	88%
Grounds - Landscaping	16,000	14,235	89%
Total Building Expenses	**350,678**	**342,506**	98%
Personnel Costs			
Salaries	3,638,730	3,636,698	100%
Substitutes	141,500	143,460	101%
Personal Leave	-	-	
Health Insurance - State Plan	390,940	390,116	100%
Retirement - State 457 Plan + Match	72,518	70,213	97%
Payroll Taxes - 7.65%	284,273	284,353	100%
NC Flex Plan Fees	4,730	4,408	93%
SUTA	12,429	13,288	107%
Workers Comp Insurance	14,916	14,916	100%
Bonus	130,650	130,663	100%
Total Personnel Costs	**4,690,686**	**4,688,115**	100%
Information Technology			
Technology	132,000	126,598	96%
Digital Resources & SW Licenses	73,394	72,512	99%
Total Information Technology	**205,394**	**199,110**	97%
Instructional Services			
Staff Development	28,000	27,559	98%
Counseling - Staff Dev	500	309	62%
Travel & Mileage Reimbursement	5,000	3,155	63%
Staff Dev - PD Meals	12,000	11,833	99%
Staff Development - EC	2,100	2,056	98%
Educational Programs	25,000	24,184	97%
Edu Materials - Science Dept	14,300	9,084	64%
Edu Materials - English Dept	4,000	3,685	92%
Edu Materials - Languages Dept	3,000	2,829	94%
Edu Materials - History Dept	1,000	943	94%

Research Triangle High School	FY 2024-2025 Approved AmendedBudget	Actuals as of 6.30.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget
Edu Materials - Arts Dept	11,000	10,524	96%
Edu Materials - Math Dept	7,500	7,474	100%
Edu Materials - PE Dept	4,000	2,812	70%
Education Materials - EC Dept	2,200	2,189	100%
Testing (AP/PSAT)	7,566	(2,249)	-30%
Textbooks/Assessment	5,000	4,852	97%
Social Service Fund	500	300	60%
Furniture & Fixtures	30,000	20,908	70%
Administrative Expenses	9,000	5,171	57%
EC Contracted Services: ($50,000 FY23)	-	-	
Visually Impared & Orientation	15,000	14,720	98%
Speech-Language Therapy	20,000	18,846	94%
Mental Health Service		-	
Web-based IEP Service	4,016	4,016	100%
Occupational Therapy	7,000	6,563	94%
Interpreting and Written Translation Service		-	
Psychoeducational Assessments	25,000	23,700	95%
Total Instructional Services	**242,682**	**205,463**	85%
Support Services			
Administration Contracted Services:			
Legal & Consulting	40,000	41,275	103%
Contracted Financial Services	57,600	57,600	100%
LINQ Software Support	5,769	5,769	100%
Contracted HR Services	20,000	19,920	100%
Student Information Management Services	23,000	22,420	97%
Contracted Printing Services	35,183	41,677	118%
Contracted Audit Services	24,400	24,400	100%
Schoolmint	-	-	
Background Checks	1,500	1,404	94%
General Insurance	40,645	40,645	100%
Board of Director Materials	12,495	12,495	100%
Fundraising/Development	-	-	
Marketing/Advertising	13,200	13,141	100%
Transportation Contracted Services:		-	
Daily Bus Services	41,195	41,195	100%
Special Event Transportation Services	2,000	1,965	98%
Transportation - Fuel	5,500	5,562	101%
Transportation Maintenance	5,500	5,238	95%
Food Services	17,000	13,462	79%
Total Support Services	**344,987**	**348,168**	101%
Other Expenses			
Athletics	78,650	77,783	99%
PRC 088 - Hygiene Grant Supplies	500	500	100%
Counseling/College Dept	5,250	5,381	102%
Graduation	10,000	10,124	101%
Senior Class Events	2,000	952	48%
Safety - Off Duty Officer	43,000	43,465	101%
Staff Snacks (Joy Room)	3,500	3,365	96%
Sales Tax	25,000	24,390	98%
Repayment to DPI - IDEA Funds	29,591	29,591	
Robotics	-	-	
Transfer to Raptorium	100	100	100%
Total Other Expenses	**197,591**	**195,652**	99%
Total Expenses	**7,011,025**	**6,880,472**	98%
Surplus	**(12,404)**	**136,784**	
Surplus from Previous Years	2,266,463	2,266,463	
Ending Cash Balance	**2,254,058**	**2,403,246**	

Liquidity Requirement Calculation:	**Debt Service Coverage Ratio Calculation:**	
Total Expenses	Surplus (cash basis)	136,784
Clubs, PTSO, Boosters Expenses (projected)	Net Income - Raptorium	100
Less: Capitalized Purchases	Net Income - Clubs, PTSO, Boosters	(25,516)
Less: Principal Payments	Net Income - US Bank	-
Less: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	Add: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfe	85,800
Total Operating Expenses	Add: Capitalized Items	66,482
Divided by 365 days	Add: Principal Payments	250,000
Operating Expense per Day	Less: Amortization	(11,869)
Multiplied by 45 days	Less: Depreciation	-
Minimum balance required for unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	**Change in Net Assets**	**501,781**
	Add: Interest	495,346
	Add: Amortization	11,869
Ending Cash Balance	Add: Depreciation	-
Raptorium Cash	**Net Income Available for Debt Service**	**1,008,997**
Clubs, PTSO, Boosters Cash	Maximum Annual Debt Service	762,144
Total Unrestricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	**Projected Debt Service Coverage Ratio**	**1.32**
Divided by Operating Expense per Day	**Excess of DSCR Requirement**	**94,424**
Projected Days Cash on Hand	**Required DSCR in Covenants**	**1.20**

Liquidity Requirement for Days Cash on Hand

Proposed FY 2023 - 2024 Amended Budget	*Actuals as of 6.30.25*	*% Received / Expensed to Budget*	*Comments:*
564			
$ 6,576.91			
29			
$ 5,249.28			
4,110,700	4,110,700	**100%**	
2,650,627	2,669,843	**101%**	
164,502	164,502	**100%**	
25,000	25,623	**102%**	
20,000	19,038	**95%**	
21,250	21,008	**99%**	
6,541	6,541		
6,998,620	**7,017,255**	**100%**	
250,000	250,000	**100%**	
522,144	495,346	**95%**	
8,600	3,829	**45%**	
85,800	85,800	**100%**	
112,463	66,482		
350,678	342,506	**98%**	
4,690,686	4,688,115	**100%**	
205,394	199,110	**97%**	
242,682	205,463	**85%**	
344,987	348,168	**101%**	
197,591	195,652	**99%**	
7,011,025	**6,880,472**	**98%**	
(12,404)	**136,784**		
2,266,463	2,266,463		
2,254,058	**2,403,246**		

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Calculation:

Surplus (cash basis)	136,784
Net Income - Raptorium	100
Net Income - Clubs, PTSO, Boosters	(25,516)
Net Income - US Bank	-
Add: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800
Add: Capitalized Items	66,482
Add: Principal Payments	250,000
Less: Amortization	(11,869)
Less: Depreciation	-
Change in Net Assets	**501,781**
Add: Interest	495,346
Add: Amortization	11,869
Add: Depreciation	-
Net Income Available for Debt Service	**1,008,997**
Maximum Annual Debt Service	762,144
Projected Debt Service Coverage Ratio	**1.32**
Excess of DSCR Requirement	**94,424**
Required DSCR in Covenants	**1.20**

RTHS FY 2025-26 Budget Update 7.31.25

Research Triangle High School	FY 2025-2026 Board Approved Budget	FY 2025-2026 Working Budget	Variance	Actuals as of 7.31.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget	Comments:
ADM	*572*	*572*	*0%*			
State Funding per ADM	*$ 6,605.00*	*$ 6,520.93*	*-1%*			
EC ADM	*29*	*42*	*45%*			
State EC Funding per ADM	*$ 5,249.28*	*$ 4,996.25*	*-5%*			
Revenue						
State Funds - Revenue	3,778,060	3,729,972	-1%	335,277	9%	
State Funds - Growth Funding	-	-		-		
State EC Funds	197,328	209,843	6%	16,787	8%	
State Funds - LI Adjustment	-					
State Funds - LEP Funds	-	18,727		-	0%	
State Funds - School Technology	-	6,741		-	0%	
State Funds - NCVPS	(8,138)	(9,303)	14%	-	0%	
State Funds - Fines & Forfeitures	-	-		-		
State Funds - COVID-19	-	-		-		
State Funds - Other Funds (non-recurring)	-	-		-		
State Funds - Paid Parental Leave Reimbursement	-	-		-		
Total State Funding	**3,967,250**	**3,955,980**	0%	**352,065**	9%	Updated to State Initial Allotment
Alamance County Funds	2,160	2,160	0%	-	0%	
Chapel Hill-Carrboro Funds	50,049	50,049	0%	-	0%	
Chatham County Funds	45,000	45,000	0%	-	0%	
Cumberland County Funds	1,800	1,800	0%	-	0%	
Durham County Funds	1,534,752	1,534,752	0%	-	0%	
Franklin County Funds	-	-		-		
Granville County Funds	2,313	2,313	0%	-	0%	
Harnett County Funds	1,431	1,431		-	0%	
Johnston County Funds						
Orange County Funds	55,530	55,530	0%	-	0%	
Wake County Funds	939,900	939,900	0%	-	0%	
Mecklenburg County Funds	-	-		-		
Total County Funding	**2,632,935**	**2,632,935**	0%	**-**	0%	
Federal Funds - PRC 060 (EC)	106,437	106,437	0%	-	0%	
Federal Funds - PRC 050	-	-		-		
Federal Funds - PRC 103	21,069	21,069		-	0%	
Federal Funds - PRC 108				-		
Federal Funds - PRC 118	1,100	1,100	0%	-	0%	
Federal Funds - COVID-19				-		
Grant Funds SRSA				-		
Total Federal Funding	**128,606**	**128,606**	0%	**-**	0%	
Sales & Use Tax Refund	25,000	25,000	0%	-	0%	
Corporate/Board/Private Donations	30,000	30,000	0%	87	0%	
Interest Income	50,000	40,000	-20%	4,510	11%	
Other	6,500	6,500		3,596	55%	
Total Revenue	**6,840,291**	**6,819,021**	**0%**	**360,257**	5%	
Expenses						
Principal	265,000	265,000	0%	22,083	8%	
Interest	511,425	511,425	0%	42,163	8%	
Bond Costs	8,600	8,600	0%	1,372	16%	
Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800	85,800	0%	7,150	8%	
Capitalized Improvements/Purchases	-	-		-		
Building Expenses						
Utilities - elec, water and trash	115,000	110,000	-4%	7,453	7%	
Telephone/Communications	3,000	4,011	34%	95	2%	
Maintenance & Repair	53,000	53,000	0%	3,152	6%	
Custodial - Supplies/Materials	18,000	18,000	0%	865	5%	
Facility Contracted Services:				-		
Custodial Services	88,772	88,772	0%	-	0%	
Carpet - Tile Cleaning	12,450	12,450	0%	-	0%	
HVAC	24,856	24,856	0%	-	0%	
Grounds - Landscaping	16,000	12,000	-25%	-	0%	
Total Building Expenses	**331,078**	**323,089**	-2%	**11,565**	4%	
Personnel Costs						
Salaries	3,833,642	3,833,642	0%	294,674	8%	
Substitutes	100,000	100,000	0%	-	0%	
Personal Leave				-		
Health Insurance - State Plan	416,510	416,510	0%	32,041	8%	
Retirement - State 457 Plan + Match	80,506	80,506	0%	5,906	7%	
Payroll Taxes - 7.65%	295,810	295,810	0%	22,345	8%	
NC Flex Plan Fees	5,000	5,000	0%	416	8%	
SUTA	11,429	11,429	0%	-	0%	
Workers Comp Insurance	14,000	14,000	0%	(286)	-2%	
Bonus				-		
Total Personnel Costs	**4,756,898**	**4,756,898**	0%	**355,096**	7%	
Information Technology						
Technology	45,000	45,000	0%	(222)	0%	
Digital Resources & SW Licenses	58,394	58,394	0%	6,127	10%	
Total Information Technology	**103,394**	**103,394**	0%	**5,905**	6%	
Instructional Services						
Staff Development	25,000	25,000	0%	-	0%	
Counseling - Staff Dev	1,000	1,000	0%	-	0%	
Travel & Mileage Reimbursement	5,000	5,000	0%	452	9%	
Staff Dev - PD Meals	12,000	12,000	0%	-	0%	
Staff Development - EC	2,000	2,000	0%	-	0%	
Educational Programs	17,000	17,000	0%	94	1%	
Edu Materials - Science Dept	7,000	7,000	0%	-	0%	
Edu Materials - English Dept	4,000	4,000			0%	
Edu Materials - Languages Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	36	1%	
Edu Materials - History Dept	4,000	4,000	0%	-	0%	

RTHS FY 2025-26 Budget Update 7.31.25

Research Triangle High School	FY 2025-2026 Board Approved Budget	FY 2025-2026 Working Budget	Variance	Actuals as of 7.31.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget	Comments:
Edu Materials - Arts Dept	5,000	5,000	0%	-	0%	
Edu Materials - Math Dept	4,000	4,000	0%	-	0%	
Edu Materials - PE Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	870	29%	
Education Materials - EC Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	-	0%	
Testing (AP/PSAT)	7,566	7,566	0%	-	0%	
Textbooks/Assessment	5,000	5,000	0%	-	0%	
Social Service Fund	500	500	0%	-	0%	
Furniture & Fixtures	5,000	5,000	0%	219	4%	
Administrative Expenses	9,000	9,000	0%	279	3%	
EC Contracted Services: ($50,000 FY23)	-	-		-		
Visually Impared & Orientation	13,000	13,000	0%	-	0%	
Speech-Language Therapy	20,000	20,000	0%	-	0%	
Mental Health Service				-		
Web-based IEP Service	-			-		
Occupational Therapy	5,000	5,000	0%	-	0%	
Interpreting and Written Translation Service				-		
Psychoeducational Assessments	20,000	20,000	0%	-	0%	
Total Instructional Services	**180,066**	**180,066**	0%	**1,950**	1%	
Support Services						
Administration Contracted Services:				-		
Legal & Consulting	50,000	50,000	0%	-	0%	
Contracted Financial Services	60,480	60,480	0%	-	0%	
LINQ Software Support	5,769	5,769	0%	-	0%	
Contracted HR Services	20,400	20,400	0%	1,670	8%	
Student Information Management Services	21,000	21,000	0%	1,750	8%	
Contracted Printing Services	35,183	35,183	0%	3,536	10%	
Contracted Audit Services	25,000	25,000	0%	-	0%	
Background Checks	2,000	2,000	0%	-	0%	
General Insurance	40,645	40,645	0%	22,115	54%	
Board of Director Materials	12,495	12,495	0%	-	0%	
Fundraising/Development	5,000	5,000	0%	-	0%	
Marketing/Advertising	6,000	6,000	0%	-	0%	
Transportation Contracted Services:				-		
Daily Bus Services	48,000	48,000	0%	-	0%	
Special Event Transportation Services	4,000	4,000	0%	-	0%	
Transportation - Fuel	7,000	7,000	0%	-	0%	
Transportation Maintenance	4,000	4,000	0%	-	0%	
Food Services	22,000	22,000	0%	712	3%	
Total Support Services	**368,972**	**368,972**	0%	**29,783**	8%	
Other Expenses						
Athletics	66,650	66,650	0%	881	1%	
Feminine Hygiene Grant				-		
Counseling/College Dept	5,000	5,000	0%	-	0%	
Graduation	11,000	11,000	0%	-	0%	
Senior Class Events	2,000	2,000	0%	-	0%	
Safety - Off Duty Officer	45,000	45,000	0%	-	0%	
Staff Snacks (Joy Room)	3,000	3,000	0%	-	0%	
Sales Tax	25,000	25,000	0%	632	3%	
Repayment to DPI						
Robotics	9,000	9,000	0%	-	0%	
Transfer to Raptorium	100	100	0%	-	0%	
Total Other Expenses	**166,750**	**166,750**	0%	**1,513**	1%	
Total Expenses	**6,777,982**	**6,769,993**	**(0)**	**478,580**	7%	
Surplus	**62,309**	**49,028**		**(118,322)**		
Surplus from Previous Years	2,403,246	2,403,246		2,403,246		
Ending Cash Balance	**2,465,555**	**2,452,274**		**2,284,924**		

Liquidity Requirement Calculation:

Total Expenses	6,769,993
Clubs, PTSO, Boosters Expenses (projected)	450,000
Less: Capitalized Purchases	-
Less: Principal Payments	(265,000)
Less: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	(85,800)
Total Operating Expenses	**6,869,193**
Divided by 365 days	365
Operating Expense per Day	**18,820**
Multiplied by 45 days	45
Minimum balance required for unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	**846,887**
Ending Cash Balance	2,452,274
Raptorium Cash	1,390
Clubs, PTSO, Boosters Cash	126,226
Total Unrestricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	**2,579,890**
Divided by Operating Expense per Day	18,820
Projected Days Cash on Hand	**137**
Liquidity Requirement for Days Cash on Hand	**45**

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Calculation:

Surplus (cash basis)	49,028
Net Income - Raptorium	100
Net Income - Clubs, PTSO, Boosters	-
Net Income - US Bank	-
Add: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800
Add: Capitalized Items	-
Add: Principal Payments	265,000
Less: Amortization	(11,869)
Less: Depreciation	-
Change in Net Assets	**388,059**
Add: Interest	511,425
Add: Amortization	11,869
Add: Depreciation	-
Net Income Available for Debt Service	**911,353**
Maximum Annual Debt Service	762,144
Projected Debt Service Coverage Ratio	**1.20**
Excess of DSCR Requirement	**(3,220)**
Required DSCR in Covenants	**1.20**

FY 2023-2024 Approved Budget 6/19/24	Proposed FY 2023 - 2024 Amended Budget	Actuals as of 7.31.25	% Received / Expensed to Budget	Comments:
572	572			
$ 6,605.00	$ 6,520.93			
29	42			
$ 5,249.28	$ 4,996.25			
3,967,250	3,955,980	352,065	9%	
2,632,935	2,632,935	-	0%	
128,606	128,606	-	0%	
25,000	25,000	-	0%	
30,000	30,000	87	0%	
50,000	40,000	4,510	11%	
6,500	6,500	3,596		
6,840,291	**6,819,021**	**360,257**	5%	
265,000	265,000	22,083	8%	
511,425	511,425	42,163	8%	
8,600	8,600	1,372	16%	
85,800	85,800	7,150	8%	
-	-	-		
331,078	323,089	11,565	4%	
4,756,898	4,756,898	355,096	7%	
103,394	103,394	5,905	6%	
180,066	180,066	1,950	1%	
368,972	368,972	29,783	8%	
166,750	166,750	1,513	1%	
6,777,982	**6,769,993**	**478,580**	7%	
62,309	**49,028**	**(118,322)**		
2,403,246	2,403,246	2,403,246		
2,465,555	**2,452,274**	**2,284,924**		

6,769,993	
450,000	
-	
(265,000)	
(85,800)	
6,869,193	
365	
18,820	
45	
846,887	
2,452,274	
1,290	
126,226	
2,579,790	
18,820	
137	
45	

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Calculation:

Surplus (cash basis)	49,028
Net Income - Raptorium	100
Net Income - Clubs, PTSO, Boosters	-
Net Income - US Bank	-
Add: Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800
Add: Capitalized Items	-
Add: Principal Payments	265,000
Less: Amortization	(11,869)
Less: Depreciation	-
Change in Net Assets	**388,059**
Add: Interest	511,425
Add: Amortization	11,869
Add: Depreciation	-
Net Income Available for Debt Service	**911,353**
Maximum Annual Debt Service	762,144
Projected Debt Service Coverage Ratio	**1.20**
Excess of DSCR Requirement	**(3,220)**
Required DSCR in Covenants	**1.20**

RESEARCH TRIANGLE

RAPTORS

FINANCE UPDATE
AUGUST 20, 2025

BUDGET UPDATE

- **As of 7/31/25:**

  Projected deficit: $3,220
  DSCR: 1.20

- Still no increases in funding projected
- Projected salary expenditures increased slightly with new staff members hired

- **Committee Business:**
  - Update on FY25 audit and year-end financials
  - Update on 2025-26 enrollment
  - Update on preparation for the new school year
  - New personnel for approval

Audit/FY25 Year-End Update

- **Actuals as of 6/30/25:**

  Surplus: $94,424
  DSCR: 1.32

- Auditors from Thomas Judy & Tucker, CPA were on site at RTHS on July 16
- Fieldwork by auditors is still in progress
  - A handful of open items remain to be resolved
    - Conflict of interest forms from board members
    - Several additional accounting items requested by TJT on 8/8

Enrollment Update

TOTAL 2025-26 ENROLLMENT
(as of 8/14/25)

577 (572)

Historical Enrollment Data

	25-26*	24-25	23-24	22-23
12th	127	119	115	138
11th	152	129	126	127
10th	146	168	151	135
9th	152	156	170	172
Total	**577**	**572**	**562**	**572**

* Projected

Attrition Data

Number of students departing between school years

	Summer 2025	Summer 2024
Rising 12th	2	3
Rising 11th	6	13
Rising 10th	9	12
Total	**17**	**28**

In the 3 years prior to 2024, total attrition averaged **27**.

Preparations for New Year

- **Summer Building Enhancements**
  - Roof replacement completed
  - New public address system
  - Upgrades to security camera system
  - New chairs for several classrooms (not yet arrived, but in transit)
  - Classrooms and common areas painted

- **Other Maintenance / Repairs**
  - Carpets and hard surfaces deep-cleaned
    - Repairs to carpet made in several spots
  - Repairs to wallpaper in some spots (still ongoing)
  - Outside refresh
    - Mulch, pinestraw, etc.
    - Flower beds and natural areas
    - Plans to lay down additional grass seed and put in new shrubs in the fall
  - Elevator repairs
    - Building hit by lightning in July
    - Both elevators fully repaired and functional as of 8/8

Coversheet

Governance Committee Business

Section: VII. Governance Committee Report
Item: A. Governance Committee Business
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material:
RTHS Financial Policies and Procedures, for approval 8-20-2025.pdf
RTHS Exceptional Children's Operating Procedures, for approval, 8-20-2025.pdf
School Safety Manual 2025-26, for approval 8-20-2025.pdf
RTHS Board of Directors Officers for Approval and Presentation, 8-20-2025.pdf

Research Triangle High School Financial Policies and Procedures

This policy manual outlines the framework for financial policies, procedures, and controls at Research Triangle High School (RTHS), ensuring a structured and proactive approach to the maintenance of financial records and assets.

Purpose 2
Scope 2
Responsibilities 2
Financial Procedures 3
- Budget Planning and Approval 3
- Internal Control Procedures 3
- Money Collection and Receipting 4
- Purchasing Process 4
- Fundraising 7
- Payroll 8
- Financial Reporting 9

Third-Party Contracts 10
Management of Federal Grants 11
Compliance and Audits 12
Document Control 13
Appendix A: Board Conflict of Interest Policy 14

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to establish clear financial management processes for Research Triangle High School that ensure the school's financial resources are used responsibly, transparently, and in compliance with relevant regulations.

Scope

This manual applies to all financial activities conducted by RTHS, including budgeting, income and expense management, procurement, fee collection, and financial reporting.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chief School Officer	Signatory on all contracts, ensuring that budgeting and spending align with RTHS's needs and mission.
Chief Operations Officer	Day-to-day financial operations, record-keeping, compliance reporting, creation of annual budget
Department Heads	Submission of budget needs for departmental expenses; submission of purchase requests on behalf of department members
Board of Directors	Approval of all contracts over $25,000, review and advise on budget through the year, approval of annual budget
External Accountant	Annual auditing, tax filing, and compliance consultation, update of budget monthly for Board and Chief Operations Officer review

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Financial Procedures

Budget Planning and Approval

- The Chief Operations Officer and the External Accountant create a draft budget based on projected revenues and expenses, in consultation with the Chief School Officer, Board of Directors, and various other administrators and department heads.
- The Chief Operations Officer submits the draft budget no later than April for review and approval by the Finance Committee and the full Board of Directors.
- The Board shall have the right to make budget transfers or amendments to the budget resolution for the reasons prescribed by state law and in accordance with the adopted budget resolution.
- A copy of the approved budget is given to department heads and administrators for planning the following year's expenses.
- The budget should be compared to actual revenue and expenditures on a monthly basis to identify variances.
- When applicable, the Chief Operations Officer, in consultation with the Finance Committee and the full Board of Directors, will review the status of unallocated funds in the operating budget and make proposals to the Board of Directors for how those funds should be expended.

Internal Control Procedures

Handling of Monies

- All funds collected via cash or check shall be submitted daily to the Chief Operations Officer along with a Deposit Request Form.
- The Chief Operations Officer prepares deposits and places money in a safe until they can be taken to the bank for deposit into the appropriate accounts.
    - The Office Manager, Chief Operations Officer, and Chief School Officer are the only staff members with safe access.
- Once the funds are deposited, the deposit receipt from the bank is attached to the completed and signed Deposit Request Form and filed in the Chief Operations Officer's office.

Budget and Deposit Controls

- All bank statements should be reconciled promptly upon receipt by the External Accountant.
- In performing the reconciliations, the External Accountant should check for the following:
    - Compare dates and amounts of deposits on the statements with the check and deposit register.
    - Investigate bank transfers to see that both sides of the transaction have been recorded.
    - Account for all check numbers, including voided checks
    - Examine deposited checks for authorized signatures, irregular endorsements, and alterations

    - Bank reconciliation procedures should always include comparing the reconciled balance to the balance per the general ledger for accuracy

Money Collection and Receipting

- All monies due to the school must be paid through cash, check, or a school-approved online platform. RTHS currently has accounts with GoFan and Stripe, and those are the only approved online platforms.

- Every payment made via cash or check must be issued a numbered receipt; receipt books can be obtained from the Office Manager. Receipts should be filled out completely prior to giving them to the payor. School-approved online platforms provide a receipt directly to the payor.

- All funds collected via cash or check shall be submitted daily to the Chief Operations Officer along with a Deposit Request Form. The Chief Operations Officer shall lock away all funds for safekeeping until they are deposited with a bank.

- The Chief Operations Officer deposits all received funds into the appropriate bank account on a weekly basis.
    - The Chief Operations Officer shall record all funds deposited on a spreadsheet shared with the External Accountant.

- The Chief Operations Officer files all deposit request forms and receipts showing when the funds were deposited.

Purchasing Process

- The Chief Operations Officer shall verify budget availability for all purchases.

- All invoices, both for one-time purchases as well as recurring monthly payments for services, shall be submitted to the Office Manager. The Office Manager will, on a weekly basis, compile these invoices and send them to the Chief Operations Officer for approval. The Office Manager will then send the approved invoices to the External Accountant for processing.

- All purchases exceeding $25,000 must be approved by the school's Board of Directors in a duly-called meeting.
    - The process for obtaining bids and granting approval for large purchases is outlined in detail in the school's Operations and Board Policy Manual.

- All purchases by staff members exceeding $50.00 shall require approval by the Chief Operations Officer.

Purchases by Check

- For purchases to be made via check, a Check Request Form and supporting documentation (e.g., invoices or quotes) shall be submitted to the Chief Operations Officer for approval and payment.
    - Payment from the School's Operational Account:

        - Submit the check request form and supporting documentation to the Office Manager, who will submit requests to the Chief Operations Officer for approval on at least a weekly basis.
        - The External Accountant will then prepare the checks and give them to the Office Manager for mailing or disbursement.
    - Payment from School's Club Accounts:
        - Submit the check request form and supporting documentation to the Chief Operations Officer, who will submit requests to the Chief School Officer for approval on at least a weekly basis.
        - The Chief Operations Officer will then prepare the checks and give them to the Office Manager for mailing or disbursement.

Reimbursements

- If a staff member wishes to make a school-related purchase with personal funds and then obtain reimbursement, they must first seek written approval (via email) for that purchase from the Chief Operations Officer to ensure the purchase qualifies for reimbursement.
- The staff member will then submit a Check Request Form and supporting receipt(s) to the Chief Operations Officer for final approval; the Chief Operations Officer will then give the form and supporting receipt(s) to the Office Manager who will send them to the External Accountant for processing and payment.
- If an employee has a question as to whether a purchase or expense is reimbursable, they should contact the Chief Operations Officer for clarification.

Travel and Mileage Reimbursement

- RTHS encourages teachers and staff members to attend meetings and conferences in the interest of their professional development and service to the school, and the school will support employees by covering related expenses.
- Staff members wishing to attend a conference must obtain written approval from a member of the Leadership Team.
- Staff members attending conferences shall track trip-related expenses on the Travel Reimbursement Form and submit the form, including all required receipts and documentation, to the Chief Operations Officer within one (1) week of the conclusion of the trip.
    - Alcoholic beverages may not be expensed to the school.
    - Employees who must fly to a conference should reserve the lowest airfare available from Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU).
- If an employee has a question as to whether a purchase or expense is reimbursable, they should contact the Chief Operations Officer for clarification.

Amazon Business Purchases

- RTHS has an account with Amazon Business through which school-related purchases may be made.
- Staff members should ask their Department Head or the Office Manager to submit purchase requests through this account to be approved by the Chief Operations Officer.
- The "pay by invoice" option shall be utilized for these purchases unless otherwise directed or approved by the Chief Operations Officer
- The Office Manager shall collect the invoices to send to the Accountant for processing.

Procurement Cards

- RTHS utilizes procurement cards through Bill.com (formerly Divvy.com) for purchases that can be paid for by card.
- All cardholders must sign the “Procurement Card Policy” terms and conditions through Bamboo. This form will be provided in Bamboo by the Chief Operations Officer.
- Cardholders shall request funds using the Bill.com app for the Chief Operations Officer to approve prior to making purchases.
    - All receipts must be uploaded on the Bill.com app for any purchase made with a procurement card, and staff members shall submit all receipts and categorization of expenses in the Bill.com app within ten (10) business days of the purchase.
- Personal items shall not be charged on school-issued procurement cards. If a personal item is inadvertently purchased on a school-issued card, repayment by the employee must be made immediately.

Capitalized Expenses

- Goods and equipment that meet the value threshold to be a capitalized expense (greater than $2,500 per single invoice) shall be documented and inventoried by the External Accountant and the department head responsible for each good or piece of equipment.

Fundraising

- To foster an environment that is focused on learning and student growth, RTHS will only raise funds for purposes directly related to school improvement, school community development, or learning enhancement.

  Restrictions on Fundraising

  - All RTHS marketing for fundraisers must comply with the School Engagement Plan and is subject to approval by the Leadership Team.
  - Fundraisers taking place on campus must benefit an RTHS-related club, organization, or cause. Students and parents are prohibited from soliciting RTHS staff and other families on school property if the fundraiser is not benefiting RTHS or a cause associated with RTHS (i.e., a charity or non-profit that an RTHS club wants to fundraise for).
  - Students and staff will not be required to participate in selling any type of product in connection with school-approved fundraisers. All participation in fundraising activities is voluntary.

  Clubs and Activities

  - Club and activity fundraisers are permitted with the approval of the Chief School Officer or their designee.
  - Funds can be collected through cash, checks, or a school-affiliated digital account (i.e., GoFan or Stripe). All currency and checks shall be turned into the Chief Operations Officer or their designate with a completed Deposit Request Form at the end of each school day.
    - Collection of money after the school's regular hours should be secured in a locked location until the next school day.
  - Club funds are maintained only in the school's club account. Under no circumstances are employees or students allowed to use personal electronic cash accounts (e.g., CashApp) for money transactions.
  - Staff are prohibited from selling any non-school-related items to students or colleagues.
  - Staff are prohibited from depositing funds into a personal account.
  - Failure to comply will result in discipline and up to termination.

Payroll

- Payroll and deductions for taxes and all elected benefits are sent by the External Accountant to the Chief Operations Officer for review and approval each month.

- The External Accountant will obtain a record of days/classes worked by substitute teachers from the Office Manager to process at the same time as regular employees' payroll.

- Payroll is processed monthly and submitted by the External Accountant by the 25th of each month.

- Paychecks are direct-deposited to the bank account designated by each staff member; the schedule of days when paychecks will be direct-deposited will be provided to staff via email and the school's internal staff calendar no later than August of each year.

- All pay stubs and tax information are accessible to staff via LINQ.

  Login Instructions for LINQ:

  - Go to employeeling.linq.com
  - If a first-time user, employees should create an account using their personal email address.
    - The "Unit ID" asked for on the home page is **32N.**

Financial Reporting

- Monthly financial statements are prepared by the External Accountant and provided to the Chief School Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Finance Committee, and Board of Directors for review at their regular monthly meetings.

- Reports include a summary of revenue and expenditures, comparing actual amounts to the amounts in the approved budget, as well as reconciled bank statements.

- The Chief Operations Officer shall submit all required reporting and documentation to external agencies (e.g. bondholders) at the times prescribed by those agencies.
    - Contacts for Reporting:
        - US Bank (bondholder)
          Lee Moua - lee.moua1@usbank.com
        - School Improvement Partnership (charter renewal and compliance)
          Devante Robinson - devante@schoolimprovementpartnership.net

- The Chief Operations Officer and External Accountant will consult with the school's auditors or other financial professionals each year to complete the IRS Form 990 required of all 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

Third-Party Contracts

- The Chief School Officer and the Chair of the Board of Directors are the only authorized signers of contracts with third-party vendors.
- All contracts or agreements requiring an expenditure of greater than $25,000 must be approved by the full Board of Directors in a duly-called meeting.
- For all service or vendor contracts, the school should endeavor to obtain at least three (3) bids from various vendors. If the value of the contract exceeds $25,000, the school is required to obtain at least three (3) bids and present them to the Board of Directors for review, selection of a vendor, and approval.
- The school and the Board of Directors shall ensure that any vendor with which RTHS enters into a contract does not constitute a conflict of interest, financial or otherwise, between the vendor and any interested party. See Appendix A for more details of the Board's conflict of interest policy.
- Guidelines for the use of state funds are outlined in the school's Operations and Board Policy Manual.
- All vendor contracts shall be valid for one (1) year.
- For all service contracts, the Chief Operations Officer shall ensure that the following items are obtained from the vendor:
    - A fully-executed contract signed by a vendor representative, as well as either the Chief School Officer or the Chair of the RTHS Board of Directors
    - A certificate of liability insurance with RTHS listed as an interested party
- All contracts and agreements entered into by RTHS shall include the following language in accordance with North Carolina state statute:
  No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the State or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the State or its political subdivisions.

Management of Federal Grants

Application for Funding

- Federal funding and grants are applied for through North Carolina CCIP.
- The annual application for entitled federal funds shall be the responsibility of the following personnel:
    - IDEA (PRC 060, EC funds): Director of Exceptional Children
    - All other consolidated funds (Title I, Title II, etc.): Chief Operations Officer
- The External Accountant shall input the proposed budget for each budget code (PRC) as part of the funding application.

Monitoring and Maintenance of Effort

- The Board of Directors and the Chief School Officer are ultimately responsible for ensuring that use of all federal funds complies with all relevant guidelines and statutes.
- The External Accountant, in coordination with the Chief Operations Officer, shall ensure that the use of all federal funds received by RTHS aligns with the grant application and the budget submitted as part of the application.
- All equipment and supplies purchased with federal funding shall be inventoried by the External Accountant, in coordination with the Chief Operations Officer.
- Any employees paid with federal funds must do the following:
    - Sign a semi-annual certification form in December and June each year, affirming that their time and effort was spent on activities related to their respective grant
    - Maintain all valid certifications and licensures required of the grant with which they are being paid.
- Research Triangle High School shall ensure that it consults the appropriate OMB Circular, applicable to open-enrollment charter schools, to determine what costs are allowable. RTHS shall ensure that all grant funds are expended in accordance with the circular.

Additional details regarding the acquisition and expenditure of federal funds can be found in the RTHS Operations and Board Policy Manual.

Compliance and Audits

- RTHS’s accounting and reporting system will be in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and will conform to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Accounting procedures shall show a detailed and meaningful analysis of both receipts and expenditures.
- All financial records are retained for at least 7 years and will be stored in the first floor Records Room.
- An external audit is conducted annually by a certified public accountant in accordance with North Carolina state law. The External Accountant and the Chief Operations Officer shall assist the auditor in their compliance testing, as well as a review of the school’s financial records.
- The Board of Directors is the fiduciary of the school. It is ultimately responsible for ensuring that financial activities comply with all federal, state, and local regulations for the use of school funds.
- The Chief School Officer, in consultation with the Accountant, external auditor, and any relevant state or federal points of contact, shall ensure that financial activities comply with all federal, state, and local regulations for the use of funds.

Document Control

All forms, receipts, and reports must use standardized templates. Only the Chief Operations Officer is authorized to update these templates, with the consent and approval of the Chief School Officer and Board of Directors.

Appendix A: Board Conflict of Interest Policy

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Research Triangle High School's contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the School or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Definitions for the purposes of this policy:

1. Interested Person
Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest
A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement,
b. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under this policy a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures:

1. Duty to Disclose
In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists
After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the School can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its

own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**
   a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
   b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Records of Proceedings:

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Compensation:

a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Acknowledgment:

Each director and board member shall sign a statement which affirms such person:

a. Has read and understands the conflicts of interest policy,
b. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
c. Understands the School is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Periodic Reviews:

To ensure the School operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

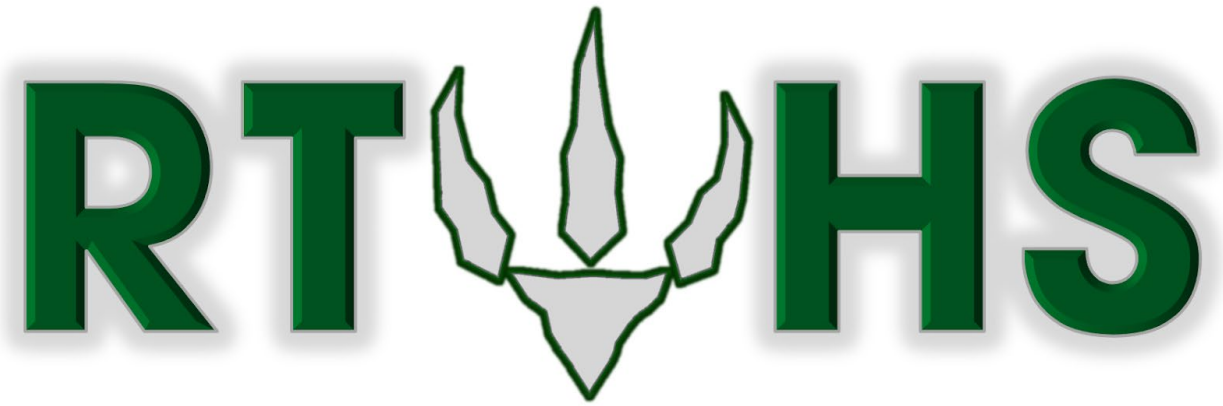
a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining,
b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the School's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Use of Outside Experts:

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for this policy, the School may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Exceptional Children's Operating Procedures

Research Triangle High School



3106 NC 54 Highway East
Durham, NC 27713

Revised July 2025

Table of Contents:

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (EC) PHILOSOPHY 5
Purpose of EC Operating Manual 5
Legal Framework 5
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – 2004 6
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 6
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 6
North Carolina State-Specific Policies and Guidelines 7
SECTION I: EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (EC) GOALS AND PURPOSES 8
A. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION 8
B. FULL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY AND GOAL 8
C. INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM 8
D. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT 8
E. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS 8
F. EVALUATION 9
G. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION 9
H. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS 9
I. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT 9
J. PERSONNEL STANDARDS 9
K. PERFORMANCE GOALS AND INDICATORS 10
L. PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENT 10
M. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION 10
N. DISCIPLINARY INFORMATION/RECORDS 10
SECTION II: CHILD IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION 11
A. ASSURANCES: CHILD IDENTIFICATION 11
1. Child Find 11
Why Child Find is Important: 12
B. PROCEDURES FOR CHILD IDENTIFICATION 12
C. PURPOSE OF INITIAL SCREENING 12
D. SCREENING AND REFERRAL PROCEDURES 13
1. Overview of the Screening Process 13
2. School Based Team Coordinator 13
3. Teacher(s) 13
4. The Parents 14
5. The School Administrator 14
6. The Initial Referral Process 14
E. INDIVIDUAL EVALUATIONS 15
F. CHILD WITH A DISABILITY 17
(a) General 17
(1) Autism 17

(2) Deaf-blindness 18
(3) Deafness 18
(4) Developmental Delay 18
(5) Emotional Disability 18
(6) Hearing Impairment 19
(7) Intellectual disability 19
(8) Multiple disabilities 19
(9) Orthopedic impairment 20
(10) Other health impairment 20
(11) Specific learning disability 20
(12) Speech or language impairment 20
(13) Traumatic brain injury 21
(14) Visual impairment including blindness 21
G. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY 21
H. ADOPTING IEPS FOR TRANSFERRING EC STUDENTS 22
IEPs for children who transfer public agencies in the same State. 22
In-State Transfer Students 23
Out-of State Transfers 24
SECTION III: THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND PLACEMENT 26
A. ASSURANCES: INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM 26
B. LETTER OF MEETING NOTIFICATION 26
C. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: 26
D. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: 29
E. TRANSITION SERVICES 31
F. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT: 33
G. EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY) SERVICES 33
SECTION IV: PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS 35
A. ASSURANCES: PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS 35
B. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE 35
C. PRIOR NOTICE 36
D. INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (IEE) 36
E. DUE PROCESS HEARING 37
F. COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT 37
SECTION V: DISCIPLINE 38
A. ASSURANCE: DISCIPLINE 38
B. DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES 38
SECTION VI: CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION 39
A. GENERAL SAFEGUARD ASSURANCES 39
B. DEFINITIONS 39
C. RESPONSIBILITY OF CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNEE 40
D. PARENT ACCESS RIGHTS 40

E. PARENT'S RIGHTS TO AMEND RECORDS AND/OR RECEIVE A HEARING 41
F. CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS 42
G. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS 43
SECTION VII: DISCONTINUING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES 43
A. NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES 43
B. GRADUATION 44
C. SERVICES TO AGE 21 44
D. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE 45

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (EC) PHILOSOPHY

Research Triangle High School (RTHS) believes that all students are entitled to an educational program, which will promote appropriate development. This implies an awareness of individual differences in students and diversified programs, which will provid e opportunity for each child to move towards her/ his potential. We believe that effort should be directed toward each individual becoming an effective member of society. We believe that all students have individual needs. The goal of RTHS is to provide se rvices to students whose educational needs require modifications and/or accommodations of instructional media to meet those needs.

Purpose of EC Operating Manual

The purpose of the Exceptional Children's (EC) Manual is to establish a structured framework that supports the effective delivery of services to students with disabilities and special needs in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. This man ual serves as a comprehensive guide for educators, support staff, and administrators in implementing best practices for identification, individualized education planning, instruction, accommodation, and inclusion.

It aims to ensure that all exceptional learners receive equitable access to high -quality education tailored to their unique needs, fostering academic achievement, social - emotional development, and independence. Additionally, the manual provides clarity on roles, responsibilities, procedures, and compliance standards, promoting consistency, accountability, and collaboration across all areas of exceptional student services.

Legal Framework

The provision of services for exceptional children is governed by a comprehensive legal framework designed to ensure equitable access to education and support for students with disabilities. This section outlines the key federal and state laws that form th e foundation of special education practices in schools.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – 2004

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the primary federal law governing special education in the United States. IDEA ensures that all eligible children with disabilities have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the L east Restrictive Environment (LRE). Key provisions of IDEA include:

- The development and implementation of an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** for each eligible student.
- Procedural safeguards to protect the rights of students with disabilities and their parents.
- Requirements for early identification, evaluation, and appropriate educational placement.
- Guidelines for transition planning beginning by age 16 (or younger if appropriate).

IDEA mandates collaboration among educators, parents, and specialists to deliver a personalized educational experience that meets the unique needs of each student.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, including public schools. Unlike IDEA, Section 504 does not require a student to be eligible for special education but ensures access to accommodations and services necessary to participate fully in the general education curriculum. Key elements include:

- Development of a **504 Plan** outlining necessary accommodations and supports.
- Equal access to educational opportunities, including extracurricular and nonacademic activities.
- Protection against disability-based discrimination in school policies and practices.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA extends the protections of Section 504 to all public entities, including schools, regardless of federal funding. It ensures that students with disabilities are not excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities offered by public schools. ADA mandates include:

- Accessible facilities and communication methods.
- Nondiscriminatory policies and practices.
- Equal access to school programs, events, and services.

North Carolina State -Specific Policies and Guidelines

In addition to federal regulations, the **North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)** provides specific policies and procedures that govern the implementation of special education services across the state. These policies are outlined in the *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, a document adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education and aligned with IDEA. Key components include:

- **Eligibility criteria** for each of the 14 disability categories recognized in North Carolina.
- **Evaluation and reevaluation procedures** as required under both state and federal law.
- Guidelines for **IEP team composition, development, and implementation**.
- **Due process procedures** and dispute resolution options for parent(s)s/guardian(s) and schools.
- Requirements for **least restrictive environment (LRE)** placement, discipline of students with disabilities, and access to related services.
- Training and licensing expectations for **special education personnel**.

These state -specific policies ensure consistent, compliant, and high -quality services across all North Carolina public schools and charter schools, under the oversight of the Exceptional Children Division at NCDPI.

For more information, refer to the full document:
Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities (North Carolina State Board of Education)
Available at: https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov

SECTION I: EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (EC) GOALS AND PURPOSES

A. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

RTHS assures that a free appropriate public education is available to all enrolled children with disabilities.

B. FULL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY AND GOAL

RTHS assures that a full educational opportunity will be provided to all enrolled students with exceptionalities.

C. INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

RTHS assures that all procedures for the development and implementation of the Individualized Education Program/Placement process detailed in North Carolina's "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities" are followed.

D. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

RTHS assures that students with exceptionalities are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with exceptionalities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Students with exceptionalities are afforded placements that assure physical, social, and academic integration with non-disabled peers. Cardinal Charter Academy at Wendell Falls further assures that all policies and procedures for the Individual Education Program/Placement process detailed in North Carolina's "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities" are followed.

E. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

RTHS assures that it has established and maintains procedures to ensure that children with exceptionalities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards with respect to the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The board assures that the procedures include all procedural safeguards contained in North Carolina's "Parent Rights & Responsibilities in Special Education: Notice of Procedural

Safeguards" assures that the most current edition of this publication is used, as required, to notify children with exceptionalities and their parents of all procedural safeguards available to them.

F. EVALUATION

RTHS assures that evaluations conducted for children suspected of being exceptional and reevaluations of children receiving special education services are conducted in accordance with North Carolina's "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabili ties."

G. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

RTHS that all policies and procedures regarding the confidentiality of personally identifiable information contained in NC 1505 -2 are adopted and implemented as required; and that these same policies and procedures also apply to the electronic transfer of any educational records among educational agencies.

H. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS

RTHS assures that each interagency agreement is designed in accordance with NC 1501-11 in order to achieve or accelerate the achievement of FAPE for all exceptional children. Nothing in any such agreement may be construed to reduce assistance available or to alter eligibility.

I. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

RTHS assures that an ongoing program for personnel development is implemented and updated periodically to improve the knowledge and skills of personnel employed to provide exceptional children services.

J. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

RTHS assures that qualified personnel, as identified by NC 1501 -12.2, are employed to provide exceptional children programs and services to children and youth with disabilities under IDEA.

K. PERFORMANCE GOALS AND INDICATORS

RTHS assures that it has established goals for the performance of children with disabilities in the school to ensure that all students with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and relate d services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living; to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected; and to ensure that educators and parents have the nec essary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting systemic -change activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination of information, and support; and technology development and media services.

L. PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENT

RTHS assures that all students with disabilities participate in statewide and district wide assessment. Each student's IEP will include a statement of any individual accommodations to be provided during the administration of state or district wide assessme nts of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment.

M. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

RTHS assures that data concerning suspensions and expulsions will be kept and reviewed to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of long - term suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities when compared to such rates for non-disabled children or among local educational agencies in the state.

N. DISCIPLINARY INFORMATION/RECORDS

RTHS assures that all procedures for the transfer of a child's records from one school to another will include both the child's current individualized education program and any statement of current or previous disciplinary action that has been taken agains t the child.

SECTION II: CHILD IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

A. ASSURANCES: CHILD IDENTIFICATION

RTHS assures that Child Identification activities are conducted in accordance with North Carolina's "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities."

1. Child Find

Child Find is a critical component of the Exceptional Children program and is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Its purpose is to ensure that all children who may have disabilities and need special education services are identified, located, and evaluated as early as possible —regardless of the severity of their disability.

This includes:

- Children ages birth through 21,
  Students who attend public, private, or charter schools,
- Children who are homeless, highly mobile, or in foster care,
- Students who are advancing from grade to grade but still may have learning or behavioral challenges,
- And preschool-aged children who are not yet enrolled in school.

The school district (Local Education Agency) is responsible for actively seeking out students who may qualify for special education services through public awareness campaigns, collaboration with community agencies, and school-based screenings.

If a parent, teacher, or other concerned individual suspects a child may have a disability, they are encouraged to refer the child for evaluation. Once a referral is made, the school must follow timelines and procedures to assess whether the child is eligible for services under IDEA.

Why Child Find is Important:

- It promotes early identification and intervention, which are key to improving educational outcomes.
- It helps ensure that no student falls through the cracks, especially those whose needs may not be immediately visible.
- It supports the school's legal obligation to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all eligible students.

In North Carolina, Child Find efforts are coordinated by local school systems in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and other early childhood and health agencies.

B. PROCEDURES FOR CHILD IDENTIFICATION

RTHS understands that forms used for collecting and recording information may be forms issued by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), which can be modified to meet local requirements, or forms developed by the local LEA. RTHS assure s that the instruments used are compliant with federal and state statutes, regulations and procedures, including local procedures. The school based Administrator will ensure that parents are informed of the educational rights of exceptional children. RTHS's Special Education Designee will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a system for tracking the progress of students.

C. PURPOSE OF INITIAL SCREENING

The first step in determining if a child might be exceptional is that of Initial Screening. The purpose of initial screening is to collect and review information about a student for the purpose of identifying those who might possibly be exceptional. This m eans that following the initial screening process not every child will be identified as being possibly exceptional. Many students may be screened but not all students screened will be referred for an individual evaluation. Following the required screening process children who are suspected of being exceptional are referred for a full and individualized evaluation in accordance with NC 1500 -2.14. A parent, student, teachers, principals, and/or other relevant school/community professionals may initiate the screening process

D. SCREENING AND REFERRAL PROCEDURES

1. Overview of the Screening Process

RTHS will establish a School Based Team consisting of school staff members which may include a school administrator, teacher(s), instructional coach(es), curriculum specialists, school psychologist, or other professional staff.

The initial screening process consists of a screening of sensory functioning and a review of the child's educational and general health history, a review of the child's academic and social performance, language and communication skills, performance on appl icable achievement tests, and if appropriate a motor proficiency conducted by the child's teacher.

All information gathered during the screening process is carefully analyzed by the School Based Team to determine if the student may be suspected of having a disability. If it is determined that evidence exists indicating the student should be referred to for an evaluation, a referral for evaluation will be initiated.

2. School Based Team Coordinator

The coordinator's general role on the School Based Team is to act as a liaison between parents, teachers, assessment team, and other support personnel.
The coordinator is a designee of the school principal to expedite and monitor the screening process and referrals for evaluation of Exceptional Children Services.
The coordinator ensures that appropriate screening procedures are carried out in a timely fashion and are documented. The coordinator ensures that the referral packet contains all required components.

3. Teacher(s)

The teacher’s role in the process is as follows:

- Confers with the student's parents to advise of the reason for referral.
- Implements at least one carefully planned evidence-based intervention to resolve the student's problem.
- Provides descriptions of the student's learning behavior to the School Based Team

- Works with School Based Team members in developing and implementing strategies to ameliorate or determine the degree of the student's problems.

4. The Parents

It is of vital importance that parents be included in every stage of the screening and referral process. Prior to referral to the School Based Team, it is the teacher's responsibility to confer with the parents to make them aware of the child's specific difficulties within the classroom. It is strongly suggested that the parent be invited to attend the School Based Team meeting during the time their child's case is being discussed. Parents can provide important information regarding the child that cannot be obtained from any other source. Parents should be included in the intervention implementation stage by being provided with instructions of how they can assist their child at home.

5. The School Administrator

The school administrator has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring those students who are suspected of having a disability receive an evaluation for consideration of Exceptional Children services.

6. The Initial Referral Process

The process for initial referrals is as follows:

- The student exhibits difficulties, which are identified by the teacher, parent, professional, and/or other appropriate persons.
- The teacher makes documented efforts to resolve the problems without success.
- The teacher notifies parents of concerns in an attempt to secure their help in resolving the difficulty. This contact is NOT to ask for permission for an evaluation. It will be the teacher's responsibility to document the date of letter, phone call, or personal contact with the parent.
- If the difficulty still persists, the teacher contacts the School Based Team Coordinator and the student's case is brought before the School Based Team.

- The team discusses concerns and recommends academic and/or behavioral interventions, which are to be carried out by the classroom teacher. The interventions implemented must be appropriate to the student's age and directly related to the student's learning and/or behavior difficulties.
- The required screening activities including interventions suggested by the School Based Team are carried out. The interventions should be monitored throughout the intervention process, as they may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- A follow up School Based Team meeting to discuss the results of the screening activities and interventions is scheduled.
- At the subsequent School Based Team meeting concerning the student, the results of the interventions are discussed as well as all other information collected during the initial screening process and one of three decisions is made.

If, as a result of the screening information gathered, it is determined that the child is not suspected of having a disability, the School Based Team's decision may be:

(a) To have the child remain in the regular education program without any additional services, or (b) To have the child remain in the regular education program with continued interventions targeting the area of difficulty.

If the review of the student's response to intervention data indicates that the student may be exceptional, a referral is made to request an individual evaluation.

Prior to a referral, the School Based Team Coordinator ensures that all necessary documentation is properly completed and follows procedures in NC 1503-1 related to obtaining parent consent for evaluation.

E. INDIVIDUAL EVALUATIONS

1. Overview of Responsibilities As soon as the screening and referral packet are received, the School Based Team Coordinator collaborates with the Exceptional Children Lead who will contact the required members of the evaluation team. This begins the 90-day timeline in accordance with NC 1503-2.2. The Exceptional Children Lead assumes the responsibility of case management from this point forward.

The Exceptional Children Lead shall ensure that:

- The child's parents are notified of the referral, a referral meeting is held, and parental consent is requested in accordance with NC 1503-1.
- The child's parents are provided with their procedural safeguards.

In accordance with NC 1503-2.2, evaluations must be conducted, eligibility determined, and for an eligible child, the IEP developed and placement completed within that timeline, barring any allowable exceptions as noted in NC 1503-2.2(d).

The parents of the child are afforded an opportunity to participate in all meetings related to the identification, evaluation and the educational placement of the child.

All required elements of the evaluation are conducted in the area of suspected exceptionality according to NC 1503-2.5 requirements. The evaluation report will reflect an accurate and comprehensive account of the evaluation results and recommendations.

Evaluation is the process of using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the children, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining (a) whether the child is a child with a disability under NC 1500-2.4; and (b) the content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.

RTHS shall ensure that evaluation procedures are implemented in accordance with NC 1503-2.5 and, at a minimum, that tests and other evaluation materials:

• Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis
• Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so
• Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable
• Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel
• Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

In addition, no single test or procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child. RTHS will ensure that each disabled child's individualized education program is reviewed annually and that reevaluation

procedures in accordance with NC 1503 -2.4 are followed at least once every three years.

F. CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

(a) General

(1) Child with a disability means a child evaluated in accordance with NC 1503 -2.5 through NC 1503 -3.5 as having autism, deaf -blindness, deafness, developmental delay (applicable only to children ages three through seven), hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, serious emotional disability, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment (including blindness), and who, by re ason of the disability, needs special education and related services.

(2)(i) If it is determined, through an appropriate evaluation under NC 1503 -2.5 through NC 1503- 3.5, that a child has one of the disabilities identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, but only needs a related service and not special education, the c hild is not a child with a disability under IDEA.

(ii) If the only service required by the child is speech language, it is considered special education rather than a related service and the child would be determined to be a child with a disability under paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(b) Definitions of disability terms. The terms used in this definition of a child with a disability are defined as follows:

(1) Autism

(i) Means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, which adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotypical movements, restricted interests, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

(ii) Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability, as described in paragraph (b)(5) of this section. (iii)A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section are satisfied.

(2) Deaf -blindness

(i) Means hearing and visual impairments that occur together, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with de afness or children with blindness.

(3) Deafness

(i) Means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects the child's educational performance.

(4) Developmental Delay

(i) Means a child aged three through seven, whose development and/or behavior is delayed or atypical, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, comm unication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development, and who, by reason of the delay, needs special education and related services.

(5) Emotional Disability

(i) Means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

(a) An inability to make educational progress that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
(b) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
(c) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
(d) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
(e) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

(ii) Emotional disability includes schizophrenia.

(iii)The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disability under paragraph (b)(5)(i) of this section.

(6) Hearing Impairment

(i) Means impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section. The term "hard of hearing" may be used in this capacity.

(7) Intellectual disability

(i) Means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(8) Multiple disabilities

(i) Means two or more disabilities occurring together (such as intellectual disability/blindness, intellectual disability -orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in specia l education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities does not include deaf -blindness.

(9) Orthopedic impairment

(i) Means a severe physical impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments fro m other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures, etc.).

(10) Other health impairment

(i) Means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that —

a) Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemi a, and Tourette’s Syndrome, etc.; and

(b) Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(11) Specific learning disability

(i) Means a disorder in the processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. Conditions may includ ed, but are not limited to, dyslexia and dyscalculia; and

(ii) Disabilities not included. Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, of emotional disability, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

(12) Speech or language impairment

(i) Means a communication disorder, such as an impairment in fluency, articulation, language, or voice/resonance that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(a) Language may include function of language (pragmatic), the content of language (semantic), and the form of language (phonologic, morphologic, and syntactic systems).

(b) A speech or language impairment may result in a primary disability or it may be secondary to other disabilities.

(13) Traumatic brain injury

(i) Means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or by an internal occurrence resulting in total or partial functional disability and/or psychosocial impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Causes may include but are not limited to, open or closed head injuries, cerebrovascular accidents (e.g., stroke, aneurysm), infections, kidney or heart failure, electric shock, anoxia, tumors, metabolic disorders, toxic substances, or medical or surgical treatments. The brain injury can occur in a single event or can result from a series of events (e.g., multiple concussions). Traumatic brain injury also can occur with or without a loss of consciousness at the time of injury. Traumatic brain injury may result in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative but can include brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

(14) Visual impairment including blindness

(i) Means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

G. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with NC 1503 -2.7, upon completion of the administration of assessments and other evaluation measures, the parent is provided written notice of invitation to meet and review the evaluation results and determine whether the child is a child wit h a disability as defined in NC 1500 -2.4 and NC 1503-2.7. Also included in this meeting will be not less than one regular education of the child (if the child, or may be, participating in the regular education environment); not less than one special educat ion teacher/provider; a representative of the LEA who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency; an evaluation specialist; the child whenever appropriate; and any other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child (NC 1503 -4.2).

The Evaluation Specialist, who is the professional who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, will lead the discussion related to the findings from the evaluation report.

The Team will consider the evaluation results against the eligibility requirements as identified in NC 1503 -2.5(d) and if the student is found eligible, an IEP will be created for the student.

H. ADOPTING IEPS FOR TRANSFERRING EC STUDENTS

According to State Board Policy NC 1503 -4.4:

IEPs for children who transfer public agencies in the same State.

(1) If a child with a disability (who has a current IEP that was in effect in a previous LEA in the State) transfers to a new LEA in the State, and enrolls in a new school, the new LEA, in consultation with the parents, must provide FAPE to the child (incl uding services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous LEA), until the new LEA either –

(i) Adopts the child's IEP from the previous LEA; or (ii) Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that meets the applicable requirements in NC 1503 -4.1 through NC 1503 -5.1.

(2) A student who has been determined eligible in North Carolina using the response to scientific research -based intervention method continues to be a

student with a disability and should not be reevaluated for the sole purpose of re-determining eligibility using the discrepancy method.

IEPs for children who transfer from another State.
If a child with a disability (who has a current IEP that was in effect in a previous public agency in another State) transfers to an LEA in North Carolina, and enrolls in a new school, the new LEA (in consultation with the parents) must provide the child with FAPE (including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous public agency), until the new LEA –

(1) Conducts an evaluation pursuant to NC 1503-2.5 through NC 1503-2.7 (if determined to be necessary by the new LEA); and
(2) Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP, if appropriate, that meets the applicable requirements in NC 1503-4.1 through NC 1503-5.1.

In making determinations regarding the adoption of students' IEPs,RTHS in accordance with NC 1503-4.4, differentiates between students who are transferring from within the State of North Carolina and students who transfer from out of state.

In-State Transfer Students

When a student with a disability transfers to RTHS from another North Carolina public agency the procedure that will be followed is based upon one of three possible situations.

1) Transfers from another public agency in North Carolina with a Current IEP: If the student has a current IEP from another public agency within North Carolina and we are able to match the services listed on the IEP the following steps should be taken:

a) The Enrollment Manager at RTHS will contact the previous school to obtain any evaluation information, previous IEPs/progress reports, and any other information that may be helpful when working with the student. The Enrollment Manager will document the conversation. The Enrollment Manager will notify the EC Lead.

b) The EC Lead or EC Case Manager will contact the parent/guardian within 10 days of the beginning of the school year documentation to discuss implementation of IEP services.

*If the assigned EC teacher/provider(s) suspects that the student may meet criteria for an additional exceptionality, parental consent for a reevaluation

must be obtained, and an eligibility meeting must be held upon completion of the reevaluation.

2) Transfers from another public agency in North Carolina with an out of date IEP, but the student is still within the 3 -year reevaluation timeframe:
If the student has an IEP that is not current, but is still within the three -year reevaluation time frame, the following steps should be taken:

a) The Enrollment Manager will contact the previous school to obtain any evaluation information, previous IEPs/progress reports, and any other information that may be helpful when working with the student. The Enrollment Manager will document the conversat ion. The Enrollment Manager will notify the EC Lead.
b) The assigned EC teacher/provider(s) will implement comparable services based upon the services indicated on the out of date IEP.
c) The EC Lead or EC Case Manager will contact the student's parent/guardian to schedule a timely meeting to develop a new IEP within thirty (30) school days. d) An IEP meeting will be convened to develop a new annual IEP.

3) Transfers from another public agency in North Carolina with an out of date IEP and the student is outside of the three -year reevaluation timeframe: If the student has an IEP that is not current, and is not within the three -year reevaluation timeframe, t he following steps should be taken:

a) The Enrollment Manager will contact the previous school to obtain any evaluation information, previous IEPs/progress reports, and any other information that may be helpful when working with the student. The Enrollment Manager will document the conversat ion. The Enrollment Manager will notify the EC Lead.
b) The assigned EC teacher/provider(s) will implement comparable services based upon the services indicated on the out of date IEP.
c) Within ten (10) school days the EC Lead will contact the student's parent/guardian to schedule a timely meeting to develop a reevaluation plan as well as to obtain parent/guardian consent for reevaluation
d) Once all requested evaluations are completed, an eligibility determination meeting will be scheduled.
e) Upon completion of the reevaluation, a meeting with the Team with be convened to develop a new annual IEP.

Out-of State Transfers

Similar to in -state transfers, there are three possible situations that guide the transfer procedures when an EC student transfers RTHS from out of state.

1) Transfers from out of state with a Current IEP:

If the student has a current out of state IEP the following steps should be taken:

a) The Enrollment Manager will contact the previous school to obtain any evaluation information, previous IEPs/progress reports, and any other information that may be helpful when working with the student. The Enrollment Manager will document the conversat ion. The Enrollment Manager will notify the EC Lead.

b) The EC teacher/provider(s) assigned to the student will implement comparable services based on the services indicated on the current out of state IEP.

c) The IEP team will review the student's prior evaluation against the required North Carolina evaluation components as specified in NC 1503 - 2.5 through NC 1503 -2.7 as part of the initial referral process.

d) If the prior evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to meet North Carolina eligibility determination standards, an eligibility determination meeting should be scheduled by the EC Lead and a new Annual IEP should be developed.

e) If the prior evaluation is not sufficiently comprehensive to meet North Carolina eligibility determination standards or if the prior evaluation is unavailable, the EC Lead will obtain consent for evaluation from the parent/guardian. Upon completion of t he evaluation the team will meet to make an eligibility determination decision and will subsequently develop a new Annual IEP if warranted based on evaluation results.

SECTION III: THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND PLACEMENT

A. ASSURANCES: INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

RTHS assures that all procedures for the development and implementation of the Individual Education Program/Placement process detailed in the current IEP document and corresponding instructions are followed.
RTHS also assures that all transition services are provided as detailed in the current IEP document and corresponding instructions.
RTHS further assures that it adheres to NC 1501 -2.4, Extended School Year Services, for determining student eligibility and for designing and conducting the ESY Program.

B. LETTER OF MEETING NOTIFICATION

RTHS shall implement the procedures described in Section IV of this manual to ensure that full and effective notice is given to parents and that parental consent is obtained when required. If the student is of majority age, he/she must be provided full and effective notice also.

C. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

INITIAL IEP Preparing and Scheduling the Initial IEP Meeting.

The EC Lead or EC Case Manager schedules the Initial IEP meeting, invites all required IEP Team members and the parent of the student in accordance with NC 1503 -4.2.

When developing the IEP, the IEP Team will consider the strengths of the child, the concerns of the parent for enhancing the education of their child, the results of the initial evaluation, and the academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child , in accordance with NC 1503 -5.1. Special factors are also considered by the IEP and addressed, as relevant.

The IEP Team will document the student's present levels of academic and functional performance, goals for the student to work toward during the IEP period, necessary accommodations, supplemental aids and services needed by the student, as well as special e ducation and related services to allow the student to work toward meeting his/her IEP goals.

IEP Team, in accordance with NC 1503 -4.2 consists of the following:

(1)The parent(s) of the child;
(2) Not less than one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
(3) Not less than one special education teacher/provider of the child of the child;
(4) A representation of the Local Educational Agency (LEA) who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general educational cur riculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency. At RTHS either the EC Lead or a school administrator will serve in this role unless the LEA has designated another qualified representative;
(5) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the described above;
(6) At the discretion of the parent(s) or RTHS, as LEA, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and
(7) The child with a disability.

The letter sent to parents regarding the IEP meeting shall indicate, when appropriate, that the student will be invited to the meeting. Students who will turn age 14 or older during the IEP period are invited to attend their IEP meetings.

The parents may invite whomever they choose to attend the IEP meeting but are asked to inform RTHS prior to the meeting on who will be in attendance. The school may invite whomever they choose to attend the IEP meeting but must inform the parent of the mee ting participants when Notice of Meeting is provided.

Parent Participation in the Initial IEP:

Parents will be provided with two forms of sufficient notification of the upcoming meeting and at least one of the notifications will be in writing.
Should the proposed meeting date not be convenient for the parents, RTHS shall attempt to reschedule the meeting for a mutually agreed upon time and place.

Should the parents be unable or unwilling to attend the initial IEP meeting, the EC Lead upon conclusion of the meeting will reach out to the parents to explain the IEP and request parental consent for placement.

The EC Lead shall ensure that parental consent is obtained PRIOR to placement.

Conducting the Initial IEP Meeting:

The EC Lead or EC Case Manager shall:

- Be responsible for collecting and making available at the meeting all pertinent information concerning the student, including evaluation reports, specialist reports, and information for other service providers, and explaining the recommendations of the e valuation report.
- Ensure that all members of the committee are present.
- Ensure that the IEP is completed in its entirety, including goals and objectives for related services, at the meeting with all members present.
- Ensure that the IEP forms are available and appropriately completed, including dates and signatures during the meeting. • Assist in developing goals and objectives.
- Ensure that the parent receives a complete copy of the IEP and a copy of the procedural safeguards and gives the parent an opportunity for a verbal explanation of the procedural safeguards.

The RTHS Representative shall:

- Introduce members and explain each person's role in developing the IEP.
- Explain the purpose of the IEP, including the length of time for which it applies and the ways it may be modified.
- Encourage input from all present.
- Ensure that the parent understands all program and placement information discussed during the meeting.

The Teacher(s), both regular and special education, shall:

- Make available for committee members any classroom information pertaining to the student.
- Assist in developing goals and objectives.
- Complete IEP based on the committee's decisions.

Special Education/Related Service Providers shall:

- Discuss the student's need for related service(s) and explain to the members the nature of the related service(s)
- Assist in developing goals and objectives.

D. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

ANNUAL IEP

Preparing for and scheduling the Review IEP Meeting

Thirty (30) calendar days prior to the anniversary date of the IEP, RTHS EC department shall collaborate with the school -based members of the IEP Team to ensure that the following activities are conducted:

- Review the student's current IEP, the latest evaluation results, and any other information/data collected by the school that may be pertinent to the student's needs.
- Schedule the IEP meeting to be held a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the anniversary date of the IEP.
- Send the letter of meeting notification to the parent (and student if age of majority), which will include access to a copy of the procedural safeguards.
- Contact the school -based team members, and appropriate other persons to provide them with the proposed date and time of the meeting.

Annual IEP Meeting Participants:

The LEA Representative:

- Is knowledgeable of the general curriculum
- Can provide or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction for EC students
- Can commit resources of the school

The special education teacher

For a student receiving IEP based therapy services, the special education provider will be present or have communicated with the parents prior to the meeting. Any additional related services personnel delivering services to the student shall be invited to attend. The regular education teacher shall attend the meeting to discuss the general education curriculum, and the student's needs to access the curriculum.

The Case Manager shall invite the parents to the meeting. At least two forms of sufficient notice will be provided to the family and at least one form will be in writing.

The parents may invite whomever they choose to attend the IEP meeting but are asked to inform RTHS prior to the meeting as to who will be attending.

The school may invite whomever they choose to attend the IEP meeting but must inform the parent(s) of the meeting participants when the letter of meeting notification is given.

Parent Participation in the Annual IEP Meeting:

Parents will be provided with two forms of notification of the upcoming meeting and at least one of the notifications will be in writing. Notification will occur at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting, unless the parent allows the meeting to occu r sooner.

Should the proposed meeting date not be convenient for the parents, RTHS shall attempt to reschedule the meeting for a mutually agreed upon time and place.

Should the parents not respond to the meeting notice or should they indicate that they cannot attend but wish for the meeting to proceed, the IEP team will move forward and hold the meeting as scheduled.

Should this be the case, the EC Lead will forward copies of any documents that were created at that meeting home for the parents to review. Should the parents be unable or unwilling to attend the initial IEP meeting, the EC Lead upon conclusion of the meet ing will reach out to the parents to explain the IEP and request parental consent for placement.

Conducting a Meeting to Review/Amend the IEP During the Annual IEP Period:

Should the child's parent(s) or RTHS desire to propose a change to a portion of the IEP, the EC Lead shall follow the same procedures as when scheduling an Annual IEP meeting. During a meeting to review/amend the IEP, all service providers are not required to attend, unless changes to the goals/services that the specific service provider works with will be part of the review discussion.
In the event a member of the IEP Team notices a clerical error within the Annual IEP, this can be amended without a formal IEP team meeting, as long as the parties who developed the Annual IEP are in agreement about the error and are comfortable with the c orrection being made barring a formal meeting. Should this occur, the circumstances surrounding this amendment shall be documented by the EC Lead or EC Case Manager and copies of any amended documents will be sent home to the parents and reviewed with the school -based IEP team members and educational staff working with the student.

Reevaluation:

As described in NC 1503 -2.4, RTHS will ensure timely reevaluation for each enrolled child with a disability if the school determines that the educational or related services needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, of the child warrant additional evaluation data, or if the child's parent or teacher requests additional evaluation data.

Reevaluation must be considered at least once every three years and typically may not occur more than once a year, unless agreed to otherwise by the parent and RTHS. During the reevaluation process, the IEP team conducts a review that includes the examina tion of existing data on the student, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student, current classroom -based assessments and/or observations, and teacher and related services providers' observations. The team will identify wh at additional data, if any, is needed and provide the parent with written notice of its proposal regarding reevaluation. If additional assessment data is needed, written parental consent will be needed prior to the initiation of any formal testing.

E. TRANSITION SERVICES

Definition: "Transition Services" means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a results -oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disabil ity to facilitate the child's movement from school to post -school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent livin g, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities is based upon the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences and interests, and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the develo pment of employment and other post -school adult living objectives, and if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Transition Planning For a student with a disability who will turn 14 years of age during the period when the IEP will be in effect, and each year thereafter, the IEP must include a statement of initial transition components, including the child's needs, pr eferences and interests, and course(s) of the student.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16, and updated each year thereafter, the IEP must include appropriate measurable post - secondary goals based upon appropriate transition age assessments related to training, educ ation, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

RTHS will invite the student and, when appropriate and with consent from the parent, a representative of any participating service agency likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, for a transition IEP meeting. These particip ants would be in addition to the standard IEP team.

The student shall participate in the transition planning process.

Process:

The EC Lead or EC Case Manager shall:

- Invite the student and parent to the meeting and keep documentation of the invitation. i.e., Invitation to IEP Team Meeting.
- Be responsible for collecting and making available at the meeting all pertinent information concerning the student, including evaluation reports, previous IEPs, specialist reports, information from other service providers, classroom information, vocation al 24 training information, and vocational assessment information for the use of developing a future vision statement and school action steps.
- Ensure that all members of the IEP team are present.
- Introduce members and explain each person's role in developing the transition plan focusing the discussion at the meeting on desired post school outcomes and adult options which promote the concepts of having choices, living an integrated life, and being as independent as possible.

The team will encourage input from all present, especially the student.
If necessary, the team will have a person familiar with the student facilitate input from the student utilizing an appropriate communication mode.

Determine the necessity for instruction/related services, community experiences, employment and post school adult living objectives, and functional vocational evaluation and daily living skills.

For each area, which requires transition planning, the IEP team will formulate action steps necessary for the completion of the transition plan recommendations. List which team members are responsible for each step and determine timelines for completion. I dentify family and community support services available or needed to achieve the outcomes and how the linkages will be made to these services. Coordinate the transition services to promote attainment of movement from school to post school activities. In th e absence of a recommended support service, the team members will develop alternative approaches to achieve the desired outcome.

Assist in developing action steps and converting school action steps into IEP goals and objectives.

Ensure that the transition plan is completed in entirety including goals and objectives for related services, at the meeting with all members present.
Implement the transition plan and monitor its effectiveness. Adjust as necessary through the IEP review process.

Follow Up to Transition Services

A RTHS EC teacher will monitor the transition plan to ensure that timelines are being met. This will necessitate contacting all parties responsible for completing action steps. If the student is not making progress with agreed upon services, the IEP team w ill reconvene to develop alternative strategies and revise the IEP accordingly.

F. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT:

PARTICIPATION IN REGULAR EDUCATION

1. ASSURANCES: Least Restrictive Environment RTHS assures that children who are disabled are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non - disabled peers and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabiliti es from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Students with disabilities ar e afforded placements that assure physical, social, and academic integration with non -disabled peers. RTHS Falls further assures that all policies and procedures for the development and implementation of the Individual Education Program/Placement process detailed in North Carolina's "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities" are followed.

G. EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY) SERVICES

Extended School Year (ESY) services are available to EC students as necessary to ensure the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

ESY allows for the provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability beyond the normal school year, in accordance with the child's IEP, and at no

cost to the parents of the child. RTHS's EC students are eligible to receive ESY services if determined necessary by the IEP Team, in accordance with NC 1501 -2.4. During the IEP meeting, the IEP team considers the following factors to make this determinati on:

(1) Whether the student regresses or may regress during extended breaks from instruction and cannot relearn the lost skills within a reasonable time; or
(2) Whether the benefits a student gains during the regular school year will be significantly jeopardized if he or she is not provided with an educational program during extended breaks from instruction; or
(3) Whether the student is demonstrating emerging critical skill acquisition ("window of opportunity") that will be lost without the provision of an educational program during extended breaks from instruction.

During the IEP meeting, the EC Lead or EC Case Manager will facilitate the discussion on ESY services, using the Extended School Year Eligibility Worksheet, to allow the team to make the decision on whether or not the student is eligible. If the student is eligible for ESY services, the IEP Team will identify the ESY period, the services that the student will receive during ESY, and the goals from the current IEP that will be addressed during ESY.

SECTION IV: PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

A. ASSURANCES: PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

RTHS assures that it has established and maintains procedures to ensure that children with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). RTHS assures that th e procedures include all procedural safeguards contained in North Carolina's "Parent Rights & Responsibilities in Special Education: Notice of Procedural Safeguards." RTHS assures that it has established and maintains procedures to ensure that children with exceptionalities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The board assure s that the procedures include all procedural safeguards contained in North Carolina's "Parents Rights & Responsibilities: Notice of Procedural Safeguards" and Cardinal Charter Academy at Wendell Falls assures that the most current edition of this publicati on is used, as required, to notify children with exceptionalities and their parents of all procedural safeguards available to them.

B. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE

In accordance with NC 1504 -1.5, a copy of the procedural safeguards is provided to the parents of a child with a disability at least once per year. The procedural safeguards are also provided to parents by the school upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation; upon receipt of the first State complaint and upon receipt of the first petition for due process hearing in a school year; as required in accordance with the discipline procedures in NC 1504 -2; upon request by a parent; and upon any revisi on to the content of the procedural safeguards publication.

In addition to providing parents with a copy of the procedure the school extends the offer to explain the contents of the procedural safeguards to parents if desired.

RTHS utilizes the procedural safeguards developed and provided by North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction. This document can also be found on RTHS website.

C. PRIOR NOTICE

RTHS ensures that written notice is provided to parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with NC 1504 -1.4, within a reasonable time before the LEA proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the chi ld or the provision of FAPE to the child; or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of FAPE to the child.

The notice shall contain:

- A description of the action proposed or refused by the school;
- An explanation of why the school proposes or refuses to take the action;
- A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record or report that the school used as a basis for the proposed or refused action;
- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards, if this notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained;
- Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of the procedural safeguards;
- A description of other options that the IEP Team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected; and
- A description of other factors that are relevant to the school 's proposal or refusal.

The notice will be written in language understandable to the general public and provided in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. If the native language or other mod e of communication of the parent is not a written language, RTHS will take steps to ensure that the notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent in his or her native language or other mode of communication; that the parent understands the co ntent of the notice and that there is written evidence that the requirements related to prior notice have been met.

D. INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (IEE)

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the LEA responsible for the education of the child in question. Public expense means that the LEA either pays for the full cost of

the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent. Parents should give their written request for an IEE to the School Administrator or EC Lead.

The evaluation must be conducted according to the criteria in NC 1503.

It is RTHS's responsibility to inform the parent of where they may have the child evaluated. A child with a disability's parents are entitled to only one Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense each time the LEA conducts an educational evaluat ion with which the parent disagrees.

If a parent requests an independent educational evaluation at public expense, RTHS will, within ten (10) school days, file for a due process hearing to show that its evaluation is appropriate; or notify the parent in writing that the independent evaluation will be conducted at RTHS's expense.

When a parent requests an independent educational evaluation RTHS the EC Lead will consult with school administration to determine what action should be taken in regard to due process or granting the evaluation request. Once the decision has been made, RTHS will provide the parent with the response in writing.

E. DUE PROCESS HEARING

Administration of RTHS is responsible for ensuring that due process procedures outlined in NC 1504 are implemented. This includes offers of mediation, filing and participating in due process hearings, the child's status during proceedings, as well as the r esolution process.

F. COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

If a parent, child, child advocate, or other individual has reason to believe that RTHS has violated a requirement of federal or state law, regulations, policies, rights, or procedural safeguards thereby posing problems for parents, children, or others reg arding the identification, evaluation, and provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to exceptional children or those children suspected of being exceptional; they have the right to file a complaint with the State Department of

Education. The Administrator and/or EC Lead at RTHS shall, on request, provide such person(s) with the necessary information to file a formal complaint.

SECTION V: DISCIPLINE

A. ASSURANCE: DISCIPLINE

RTHS assures that data concerning suspensions and expulsions will be kept and reviewed to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities when compared to such rates for non-disabled children or among local educational agencies in the state.

B. DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

It shall be the policy of RTHS that students receiving special educational services shall adhere to the same rules and regulations concerning proper conduct as other students. Prior to any administrative disciplinary action with regard to a student classified as disabled, the relationship between the behaviors of concern, the disabling condition of the student, and the proposed disciplinary action must be considered.
RTHS may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement for 10 or less days. Services do not have to be provided, unless services are provided to the non-disabled.
The principal must notify the parents and present them with the procedural safeguards.

RTHS may remove a student from school for more than 10, or the student can be removed for multiple incidents (if a pattern does not exist). Services must be provided on the 11th day of removal (nonconsecutive) and must meet the goals and objectives listed on the IEP. Within ten (10) school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, a manifestation determination meeting where the IEP Team will determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's

disability; or if the conduct in question was the direct result of RTHSs failure to implement the IEP.

Under special circumstances, RTHS personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 schools days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the child carries a weapon or possess a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function; knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

SECTION VI: CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

A. GENERAL SAFEGUARD ASSURANCES

RTHS will ensure confidentiality requirements of all personally identifiable information pertaining to exceptional students during the collection, maintenance and destruction of such information. (NC 1505 -2)

B. DEFINITIONS

Destruction means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable; Education records means the type of records covered under the definition of "education records" in the regulations implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); Participating agency means any agency or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information, or from which information is obtained, under Part B of the IDEA.

C. RESPONSIBILITY OF CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNEE

The Administration of RTHS shall ensure that there is an annual in -service conducted on confidentiality requirements for all educational personnel who collect or use personally identifiable information.
In -service topics shall include: parent informational rights and access to records, amendment rights, hearing rights, consent/disclosure, destruction of records and rights of parents acting on behalf of their children.
The principal of RTHS shall appoint a confidentiality designee who shall maintain a current list of names and positions of all persons who have access to confidential information, which is available for public inspection at each site where records are maintained. The Confidenti ality Designee shall ensure that records be maintained of persons obtaining access to education records. In accordance with NC 1505 -2.5, RTHS will utilize a File Access Log to keep a record of all parties obtaining access to a student's EC records, includi ng the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to view the records. Parental consent will be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to parties, except access by parents and authorized employees of the LEA,

D. PARENT ACCESS RIGHTS

Parents have the following rights regarding the confidentiality of any educational records with the name of the parent, address, and phone which are collected, maintained, or used by the RTHS in the identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of F APE.

- To inspect and review all educational records.
- To receive a response from the participating agency to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of records.
- To request the school to provide copies of records.
- To have a representative inspect and review records.

E. PARENT'S RIGHTS TO AMEND RECORDS AND/OR RECEIVE A HEARING

Parents have the following rights to amend information in education records, which are collected, maintained or used by RTHS

- To request that information contained in education records be amended if they believe that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the rights of the child.
- To request and receive a hearing to challenge the decision of the school if it is in disagreement with the parent.

Requests for amendments shall be handled according to the following procedures.

When a parent requests either verbally or in writing to amend information contained in education records, the school employee to whom the request is directed shall inform the parents that they may contact the Confidentiality Designee of RTHS and/or their request will be forwarded to the Confidentiality Designee within seven (7) calendar days.

The Confidentiality Designee shall coordinate a meeting with the parent and Administration from RTHS within seven (7) calendar days to arrange a mutually agreed upon time and place to obtain the pertinent information from the parent and discuss the request to amend the information. Within seven (7) calendar days from that meeting, a written description from the parent indicating the records to be amended and the specific information to be amended.

Following the meeting with the parent, the Confidentiality Designee and Administration from RTHS shall Confer with other representatives knowledgeable about the matters related to the requested amendment to make a determination whether to amend the informa tion according to the parent's request. The parent will be informed of the decision verbally and in writing within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written request from the parent.

If it is the decision of RTHS to amend the record according to the parent's request, the Confidentiality Designee and School Administration shall ensure that it is done within ten (10) calendar days of the decision. Every record containing the specific inf ormation shall be amended. Insofar as is possible, the information shall be amended in such a way so that it is not obvious that information has been changed or deleted.

If it is the decision of RTHS not to amend the record according to the parent's request, the Confidentiality Designee/School Administration shall inform the parent verbally and in writing of the right to a hearing should they decide to challenge the decisi on of the school. Should a parent decide, either verbally or in writing, to challenge the decision of the school concerning the requested amendment, the parent will be provided with information on hearing procedures.

F. CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS

Parental consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information regarding their child is released to anyone other than the following:

- Parent or competent major student
- Other school officials, including teachers, within the school who have legitimate education interests.
- Authorized officials from participating agencies for the purpose of meeting a requirement related to monitoring under NC 1505.

The following procedures apply to obtaining consent and release of personally identifiable information.

The Confidentiality Designee shall use a Release of Information form for obtaining written parental consent for release of confidential information, which includes the following:

- Specification of records to be disclosed.
- The purpose(s) for disclosure.
- The party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made.
- Period of time for which the consent is valid, not to exceed one (1) year.
- Signature of parent and date of signature.

If parental consent is not necessary, as in the case of the transfer of educational records from one public school to another public school within North Carolina, the Confidentiality Designee shall maintain a written record showing the nature and date of w hen educational records were shared and with whom.

If parental consent is necessary:

- The appropriate release form shall be completed and signed by the parent.

• A copy of the signed release form shall be maintained as part of the student's record.
• A copy of the record(s) to be released shall be offered to the parent.

It may be assumed that the parent is authorized to give consent, unless RTHS has been provided with a legally binding instrument, which proves to the contrary.

G. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

RTHS maintains confidential records on students referred to the Special Education Program. We must notify you when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child. The par ent or student, if of age, has the right to obtain a copy of these files if desired and is therefore informed of the following information concerning the destruction of student records.

• Student records will be destroyed at the age of 27 unless destruction is requested at an earlier time.

SECTION VII: DISCONTINUING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

There are times when a child’s eligibility for special education and related services ends or when the parent or student chooses to end the provision of special education services.

A. NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

When a parent or school suspects that a child is no longer eligible for special education services and related services, a reevaluation must be conducted prior to the child’s dismissal from the program to determine if the child is no longer a child with a

disability. As part of the reevaluation, the IEP team will review existing data and determine whether they need to conduct any additional assessments.

B. GRADUATION

All students receiving special education services will receive a high school diploma at the completion of their secondary program if they meet graduation requirements of the State of North Carolina.

Some students may require services through age 21 to meet IEP goals. Cardinal Charter Academy at Wendell Falls's obligation to provide special education services ends:

1. When the student meets graduation requirements and receives a high school diploma,
2. At the end of the school year in which the child reaches age 21,
3. When a reevaluation shows that the child is no longer eligible for special education services.

Students with disabilities will be afforded the same opportunity to participate in graduation ceremonies as students without disabilities, even if the IEP team determines that services will continue after the student has met all of the required credits (bu t the official diploma has not been awarded).

A student may require services through age 21 to meet IEP goals or because he or she has not obtained all of the required credits for graduation. In either case, the student will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies with his or her classmates . Before the student completes the last semester of high school in which he/she is expected to graduate,

RTHS must provide the student (if over the age of 18) and the parents with prior written notice of the discontinuation of services at the end of the school year. The prior written notice will clearly state that the student will no longer be entitled to rec eive special education services from RTHs after graduation.

C. SERVICES TO AGE 21

RTHS must make FAPE available to any student who has not graduated with a high school diploma until the end of the school year in which the student turns 21. The IEP team may determine that the student needs extended school year (ESY) services.

Even when the student or parent states that he or she does not intend to return to school for the next school year, the IEP team must provide the student with notice that he or she is eligible to continue receiving services through age 21 and develop an IE P for the student.

D. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

A summary of performance (SOP) is required for a student whose eligibility for special education services terminates due to graduation with a high school diploma or due to exceeding the age of eligibility. RTHS will provide the student with a summary of th e student's academic achievement and functional performance which must include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting the student's postsecondary goals.

The SOP will address the following:

1. Academic achievement: information on reading, math and language grade levels, standardized scores, or strengths.
2. Functional performance: information on learning styles, social skills, independent living skills, self -determination, and career/vocational skills.
3. Recommendations: Team suggestions for accommodations, assistive services, compensatory strategies for postsecondary education, employment, independent living, and community participation.



2025-2026

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & SCHOOL SAFETY MANUAL

Plan Introduction 6
Concept of Operations 6
Campus 6
Community and Surroundings 7
Safety Planning 7
General Safety Information 7
Emergency Supplies Location 7
Staff and Student Records 8
General Safety Procedures and Policies 8
School Efforts to Mitigate Violence 8
Safety Procedures 8
General 8
Alarm System 9
Exits 9
Drills 10
Safe Arrival/Departure Procedures 11
Visitors 12
Special Needs Population Procedures 12
Off Site Procedures 12
Section 1: Introduction 14
How to Use This Guide 14
General Staff Responsibilities For All Emergencies 14
Administrator On Site (Chief School Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or designee) 14
Teachers 14
Definition of a crisis 15
What constitutes a crisis? 15
Individualized crises and what to report 15
Communication of a critical incident 16
Communication with media 16
Section 2: Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) 17
Important CIT Items: 17
Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Trained Staff to restrain - Contact Administrator or Counselor as soon as issue arises. 17
Section 3: Emergency Responses and Codes 18
Emergency Alert Systems 18
LOCKDOWN 18
What is Lockdown? 18
Lockdown Procedure 18

SHELTER-IN-PLACE 20
What is the purpose of shelter-in-place? 20
Shelter-in-Place Procedure 20
EVACUATION 20
Evacuation Procedure 20
Teachers: Evacuation Procedures 21
CRISIS SCENARIOS 21
Assault/Fight 21
Bio-Nuclear Threat Response 22
Bomb Threat 22
Contagious Conditions 23
Disturbance in School 24
Disturbance Outside of School 24
Earthquake 24
Indoor Safety 25
Crowded Indoor Public Places, multi-purpose room, etc. 25
Outdoor Safety 25
Automobiles 25
If Trapped Under Debris 26
Fire 26
If a fire is discovered 26
Firearms and Weapons in School 27
Report of a firearm or weapon in a backpack: 27
If a weapon is found law enforcement will take and secure the weapon. 27
If no weapon is found the administrator on site and police officer should go to the student's class. 27
Report of a student carrying a firearm or weapon: 27
Hostage Situation 28
Evacuation 28
Law Enforcement 28
Teachers and Students 29
Intruder in the Building 29
Administrator on site 29
If the intruder refuses to leave use the following steps: 29
Active Shooter Protocol 29
Information you should provide to the 9-1-1 Operator: 30
RUN, HIDE, FIGHT 30
RUN 30

HIDE 30
FIGHT 31
When Law Enforcement arrives: 31
Knives or Other Sharp Objects in the Building 31
Report of a knife or other sharp object in a backpack 31
Report of a student carrying a knife or other sharp object 32
Administrator on-site responsibilities 32
Power Outage Procedures 33
Brown Out 33
If a blackout occurs without warning: 33
If an emergency exists, the administrator on site will notify all affected personnel. 34
Serious Injury or Death in School 34
If the suspect hands over the weapon: 34
If the suspect flees: 35
In the event of the death of a student that occurs outside of the school day, the following procedures will be followed 35
Crisis Team Expectations 35
Expectations for Teachers 35
Expectations for Data-Operations Managers 36
Severe Weather 36
Tornado Warning 36
Release of Students 36
Threat to Harm Self or Others 37
Child Abuse and Neglect 37
Bullying and Harassment Reporting 37
Appendix A: Crisis Intervention Team Roles and Responsibilities 38
Senior Administrator On Site 38
Crisis Team Coordinator 38
Counselor 39
Team member in charge of security 39
Health Coordinator 39
Team member in charge of communications 39
Follow these steps when dealing with media 40
Debriefing a crisis 40
Appendix B: Building Crisis Management Checklist 42
Appendix C: Crisis Response Team Evaluation Form 44
Appendix D: Bomb Threat Report Form 45
Appendix E: Incident Report Form 46

Appendix F: School Drill and Inspection Form **47**
Appendix G: School Maps and Fire Evacuation Routes **48**
Appendix H: Child Abuse and Neglect Form **51**

Plan Introduction

Our staff, students, parents/guardians, and community leaders are committed to providing the safest environment possible. We recognize the possibility of a hostile attack, sabotage, or other violent action, as well as disaster/crisis resulting from fire, natural causes, or acts of school violence. As a public institution of learning, RTHS realizes the importance of and need to mitigate, provide for, and respond to emergency situations. This school safety manual provides a framework in which our school can plan for and perform its respective emergency functions during school crisis situations. It is further designed to assist the staff in following procedures with the greatest possible speed and safety. Regardless of the prescribed procedures, training, and instruction, we acknowledge that the sound judgment of the administration and staff is an integral part of safety management. The safety and well-being of students, staff, parents/guardians, and community members are of the utmost importance.

Concept of Operations

Any incident occurring on school grounds while staff and students are present will be responded to initially by school personnel. The staff is expected to take charge and manage the incident until it is resolved or until the command is shifted to someone more qualified with legal authority to take command. In an incident, the Chief School Officer or designee will activate the Crisis Management Plan.

Campus

RTHS is located on an 11-acre campus that is open and unsecured other than a chain-link fence that separates the property from Interstate 885 on its western border. In addition to one driveway that serves as the campus's main entrance, several worn footpaths exist between the RTHS campus, neighboring properties, and the greenway trail that runs along Highway 54 on the campus's northern border.

Left turns from the school's driveway onto Highway 54 are prohibited during morning dropoff and afternoon dismissal. Although the school endeavors to have law enforcement personnel present during these times on a daily basis, it sometimes falls to school administrators to direct traffic during afternoon dismissal.

The building's interior and exterior facilities are maintained by RTHS staff and third-party contractors. Elevators, alarm systems, and fire extinguishers are maintained and inspected periodically in accordance with state and local laws.

Community and Surroundings

Being located in Research Triangle Park, RTHS is surrounded by commercial properties. Progress Center, a currently vacant office building, borders the RTHS campus to the east. Boxyard RTP, a mixed-use facility containing restaurants and retail shops, is located across Highway 54 to the north of the campus. Interstate 885 and undeveloped wooded property border the campus to the west and north respectively. The RTP Streetside Trail runs along the north edge of the campus alongside Highway 54.

A HAWK-style crosswalk with a pedestrian-triggered stop light is located just to the north of campus, allowing pedestrians to safely cross Highway 54.

The HUB RTP, a new mixed-use development containing both residential and commercial properties, is under construction and partially completed approximately half a mile to the east of RTHS. The impact this will have on both vehicle and pedestrian traffic continues to be studied.

Safety Planning

The Chief School Officer and Chief Operations Officer are responsible for development and maintenance of this School Safety Manual. Specific responsibilities supporting plan maintenance include:

- Annual review of the Manual with approval of necessary changes
- Distribution and record of distribution of the Manual
- Assignment of personnel to fulfill roles
- Training for staff as needed to support assigned roles and responsibilities

General Safety Information

Emergency Supplies Location

Emergency supplies and first aid supplies are necessary when an incident of any nature occurs. Supplies are housed in a storage area located in the front desk area (the drawers are marked with a red cross symbol). Each classroom is equipped with a red “crisis bag.”

RTHS endeavors to have as many staff members as possible certified in CPR, first aid, and the use of automated defibrillator devices (AED). Training is provided annually during a staff workday.

The school is equipped with three (3) permanently-mounted AED units - one in the Holodeck office suite on the 2nd floor near the copy machine, one in the front desk area on the 1st floor, and one near the restrooms and water fountains on the basement level. The school also has one (1) portable AED unit that stays in the possession of the Director of Athletics so it can be present at off-campus athletic contests at facilities that do not have an AED on site. Batteries on each AED are checked to be in working order on an annual basis.

Staff and Student Records

RTHS maintains staff and student information that is current, accurate, accessible on computer, and regularly updated. The front office staff shall ensure that pertinent medical information about students is maintained digitally in Infinite Campus, including but not limited to allergies and required medications.

Current photos of each student are acquired annually from the Yearbook advisor or the school's contracted photographer, and uploaded digitally for reference.

Records shall clearly identify persons authorized to pick up the student in the absence of a parent/guardian. Copies of court orders relevant to the children are on file in the school office.

General Safety Procedures and Policies

School Efforts to Mitigate Violence

A Code of Conduct, including a discipline plan, is disseminated to each child/parent each year as part of the Student and Family Handbook. A signed notice of receipt is kept on file by the school.

The cornerstone of any plan to mitigate violence or student misbehavior is vigilance by all administration, faculty, and staff. All faculty and staff should be visible throughout the school day to support the Code of Conduct and the discipline plan as provided in the school's duty schedule. Classroom teachers are encouraged to stand in the hallways during the time period between periods to monitor students as they move between classrooms.

Safety Procedures

RTHS implements the following procedures to ensure student and staff safety:

General

- There are distinctive codes for fire/weather alarms and other designated emergencies.
- Emergency lighting is installed throughout the building for use in the event of a power outage; these lights are checked monthly in accordance with Durham County fire code to ensure they are in working order.
- Evacuation maps are located in each classroom and common area throughout the building.
- Rally points are designated off-campus in case of immediate evacuation from the school.
- Community evacuation plans that include the school/students are shared with all staff/students and posted on the RTHS website.
- Faculty and staff adequately monitor all areas of the campus at all times.

Alarm System

- An automated fire alarm system is utilized throughout the building that can be activated at given locations throughout the building and can be heard from all points on the RTHS campus.
- A NOAA weather radio is located in the front office to alert school officials in case of a warning.
- The public address system is used to alert staff to problems utilizing a specific code system.
- In the event of a power failure an air horn shall be used to alert staff to an emergency.

Exits

- All exit doors open to the outside with a panic bar and have a fire exit sign.
- Exit doors are clearly marked and kept free of debris or clutter that could prevent egress.
- All exit doors are visible from at least one security camera.
- Exit doors should never be propped open for any reason.

Drills

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held monthly in accordance with North Carolina state law. All staff, students, and visitors present in the building shall fully participate in each drill. Classroom teachers should review the evacuation route for their respective classrooms with students at the outset of each school year.

Fire Drill Procedure:

- The Chief Operations Officer contacts the alarm company and has the alarm system placed into "test mode."
- The Chief Operations Officer then activates the alarm, using a stopwatch to record the time it takes to evacuate the entire building.
- Teachers shall carry their red "crisis bag" with them that includes class rosters and a red/green two-sided card - if all students are accounted for at the class's designated rally point, the teacher shall hold up the green card; if a student is missing, they shall hold up the red card and administration will work to locate the student(s).
- Once all students are at their class's designated rally point, an "all-clear" will be given to return to the building.
- Following the drill, the Chief Operations Officer will complete the monthly fire inspection/drill form and place the form on file for inspection by Fire Marshals upon request.

Severe Weather Drills

A severe weather (tornado) drill is held annually in conjunction with Severe Weather Week, typically in March. Classroom teachers should review their classroom's designated location for severe weather instances with their students at the outset of each school year.

Severe Weather Drill Procedure:

- A member of the Leadership Team will make the following announcement: **Attention staff and students: We are currently under a severe weather warning. Please move to your designated shelter area at this time.**
- Students and staff should move to the areas designated in the school's Severe Weather Plan. Classrooms on the first floor and ground level should move first to avoid congestion when second floor classrooms evacuate to the first floor.
- Students should crouch on the ground away from windows or doors and cover their heads and necks with their arms ("duck-and-cover position").
- An all-clear will be given via the school's PA system to return to class once the drill is complete.

Lockdown Drill

A lockdown drill should be held annually to make students aware of what happens in the event of an imminent threat inside the building.

Lockdown Drill Procedure:

- Prior to the drill (ideally 2-3 days prior), a member of the Leadership Team will announce the upcoming lockdown drill via ParentSquare.
- At the time of the drill, a member of the Leadership Team will make the following announcement:
  Attention staff and students: This is a LOCKDOWN DRILL. LOCKDOWN LOCKDOWN LOCKDOWN.
- All staff will lock their classroom doors, lower their door shades, and lower their exterior window shades to the maximum extent possible. Students will move as far from windows and doors as possible.
- If possible, before locking the door, teachers should look in the hallway and pull any students in the hallways into their classrooms. Additionally, teachers in Room 118, 218, and 50 - the rooms closest to the restrooms - should sweep the restrooms.
- An "all-clear, drill concluded" will be made after the Leadership Team has checked the building for the effectiveness of the drill.

Safe Arrival/Departure Procedures

As students arrive on campus each morning, at least one staff member will be present on the school's front patio from 8:00 to 8:40. Teachers and administrators are also posted in various common areas and classrooms throughout the school building. These duties are assigned in the school staff's duty schedule.

In the afternoon as students are departing, staff members will be assigned via the duty schedule to help direct traffic in the school's driveway and assist with students crossing Highway 54 via the crosswalk. A law enforcement officer will direct traffic at the intersection of Highway 54 and the driveway when possible; an alternate traffic control person from the school's staff is assigned in the duty schedule.

The front office staff will not allow students to be checked out of school in the last 30 minutes before the end of the school day - 3:00 Monday-Thursday, 1:45 Friday, and 12:30 on early release days. Other information regarding student check-out can be found in the Student and Family Handbook.

Visitors

For all guests in classrooms, outside maintenance workers, and other visitors to campus, the following safety measures are in place.

- All exterior doors are visible via the school's security camera system.
- All visitors must enter the building through the main entrance.
- Visitors are immediately recognized by front desk staff and they are given a visitor's badge to wear once they have shown identification and been checked in via the Navigate360 system. Badges are clearly identifiable, commercially made, and cannot be duplicated. Visitors are not allowed to proceed to classes unless they have received prior approval from the school's administration.
- Procedures for school visitation are covered in the Student/Family and Employee Handbooks.
- The visitor procedure is consistently and efficiently implemented. Family members/guardians, students, faculty, and staff are notified immediately if change in procedure takes place.
- Faculty and staff are instructed to be aware of identified and non-identified visitors.
- If disruption is anticipated, visitors are escorted out and away from the building and law enforcement should be notified.

Special Needs Population Procedures

The ability to get to accessible exits and personal items may be reduced. Communication may be impeded at a time when clear and rapid communication is crucial to safety and survival.

The school's administration, counselors, and exceptional children staff will endeavor to assist these students to the greatest extent possible in the event of an emergency or crisis.

Off Site Procedures

The following safety measures and procedures are in place should an incident occur at an off-campus school-sanctioned event such as a field trip or an athletic contest.

- The RTHS staff member in charge (teacher, athletic coach, etc.) will have access to emergency contact information and medical information for all RTHS students participating. Teachers supervising a field trip should carry the field trip permission forms (including the emergency contact and medical information) for each student.

- In the event of an incident, the staff member should immediately contact a member of the school administration (at an athletic event, the coach should notify the Director of Athletics as soon as possible) and call 911 if necessary.
- The staff member or coach in charge will contact the parents/guardians of students involved in the incident as soon as the situation is stabilized.
- The Incident Report Form should be completed by a staff member or coach that was present at the incident.

Section 1: Introduction

How to Use This Guide

A labeled copy of this Manual will be available in the front office as well as the Chief Operations Officer's office. The manual will be reviewed during staff training at the beginning of each year.

This manual does not replace common sense, sound judgment, and prudent actions in response to emergency situations. Law enforcement reminds all that in the event of an actual emergency involving an intruder on campus the best response is RUN, HIDE, FIGHT. Please remember that we do not "RUN" during a practice drill.

General Staff Responsibilities For All Emergencies

Administrator On Site (Chief School Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or designee)

- Call 911, if necessary
- Use the panic button located in Room 217, or by holding down the button on the intercom call system in any room.
- Notify community agencies, if necessary (those not responding to 911 call)
- Seal off high-risk areas
- Administrator on site implement the post-incident procedures as outlined in this document
- Notify the other Directors as soon as possible
- Chief School Officer will be responsible for notifying Board
- Call a lockdown if needed via the public address system and evacuate students and staff, if necessary
- Notify students and staff (Note: depending on the emergency, students may be notified by teachers)
- Keep detailed notes and fill out the appropriate forms in certain emergencies
- Refer all media to the Chief School Officer

Teachers

- Monitor staff chats (Emergency Hotline, Coconut Telegraph)
- Listen for pertinent public address announcements and heed instructions
- Lock classroom doors unless evacuation orders are issued
- Seal off high-risk areas
- Notify/warn students, if advised
- Stay with students at all times

- Take emergency bag anytime you leave the building and ensure the class roster is up to date
- Account for all students and have them turn off cell phones

Definition of a crisis

An event that is extraordinary and therefore cannot be predicted; an event that can throw the building out of balance and disrupt the daily operations with potential to expose staff and the student population to serious injury.

Human reactions to crises are consistent and, although complex, follow some predictable patterns. Being aware of, and understanding beforehand, how people react in a critical situation makes it possible to implement a plan that defuses those reactions and prevents them from precipitating a secondary crisis.

The challenge is how to provide support and training that not only helps students and faculty weather the storm but also does so in a manner that restores:

- Emotional Balance
- Order & Direction
- Positive Action & Growth

What constitutes a crisis?

- Tornado/severe weather
- An explosion or bomb threat
- Terrorist acts
- A shooting/firearm
- Stalking
- A stabbing/knife
- Student unrest
- Violence/violent acts/threats of violence
- Fire
- Chemical accidents
- Disturbance on or near campus
- Serious injury
- Intruder in the building

Individualized crises and what to report

- Divorce/separations - notify counselor if needed
- Family issues (neglect, fights, drugs/alcohol) - must report to admin and counselor

- Abuse - mandatory reporting laws apply - must report to an administrator and counselor
- Fighting - notify an on-site administrator as soon as possible
- Death or anticipated death of family members - notify admin and counselor
- Suicidal ideation - notify counselor and do not leave student alone
- Illness (only for serious medical issues) - notify counselor
- Death of a student or staff member - notify admin and counselor as soon as possible

Communication of a critical incident

The senior administrator on site is responsible for communication of critical incidents.

- The Leadership Team will notify the Board of Directors of the situation as soon as possible after the crisis is handled and student safety is assured.
- When all Leadership Team members are absent, they shall assign contact duties to a designated staff member.
- The Leadership Team will notify parents of a critical incident as soon as possible after the crisis is handled and student safety is assured.

Communication with media

- If approached by the media, direct them to the Chief School Officer, who will be the key spokesperson for the school in a time of crisis.
- Administrators may ask designated personnel to prepare media release(s). Any media release(s) related to a crisis shall be shared and reviewed with the Board of Directors Chair and school attorney prior to distribution.
- The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) precludes school staff from disclosing a student’s name, grade, or other personal identifying information.

Section 2: Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) promotes a school-wide approach to managing crises through prevention, intervention, and post-incident debriefing activities.

The Crisis Team will include The Leadership Team and support staff including the Student Services Coordinator, Counselors, and Instructional Coaches.

Important CIT Items:

- Crisis Intervention Team Roles and Responsibilities- Appendix A
- Building Crisis Management Checklist- Appendix B
- Crisis Response Team Evaluation Form- Appendix C

Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Trained Staff to restrain - Contact Administrator or Counselor as soon as issue arises.

- Kristen Cook (School Counselor)
- Mechia DuPree (EC Coordinator)
- Donya Headen (School Counselor)

NOTE: All restraints must be documented on the Seclusion and Restraint Form. Please notify the Leadership Team if this occurs.

Section 3: Emergency Responses and Codes

Emergency Alert Systems

Staff will be alerted to an emergency using email-based staff chats (Emergency Hotline) and ParentSquare via text and email.

There is a "PANIC BUTTON" located at the front desk and in Room 217 in the Holodeck. The button is directly linked to a 911 call and will prompt local law enforcement to call the school. If the school does not answer then a SWAT team is dispatched to come on campus and respond to the emergency. In the event there is a crisis, this button needs to be pushed, if possible.

Family members/guardians will be notified as soon as student safety is assured using ParentSquare via email, phone call, and text.

Three types of Alerts will be utilized:

- LOCKDOWN
- SHELTER IN PLACE
- EVACUATION

Summarized below are the procedures for each alert.

LOCKDOWN

What is Lockdown?

Lockdown is a procedure used when there is an immediate threat to the school such as in the case of a school intruder. The purpose of a Lockdown is to provide protection to faculty, staff, students, and visitors at RTHS. Lockdown minimizes access to the school and secures staff and students in rooms. As part of this procedure, everyone must remain in the room until the situation has been declared safe by an authorized person and an "all clear" has been given.

Lockdown Procedure

1. Administrator on-site or designee will order a "LOCKDOWN."
2. Notification: The administrator will immediately:
    a. Utilize the public address system to repeatedly announce in a clear and concise manner:
        i. "ATTENTION LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN. RTHS is under LOCKDOWN. Proceed to the nearest secure location and lock and secure the doors."

        ii. NOTE: If the location of the intruder is known, use the public address system to state their last known location.
    b. Immediately notify 911
3. When the “LOCKDOWN” is announced
    a. Remain calm and stay with your students.
    b. Teachers check hallways and quickly bring any students in sight into the nearest classroom, close and lock all classroom doors, and keep students in the classroom, seated on the floor, quiet, and away from the windows and door. Move classroom furniture to barricade doors from inside the classroom.
        i. If possible to do so, teachers in the following classrooms will check the restrooms:
            1. Basement/Ground Floor: 50
            2. 1st Floor: 118
            3. 2nd Floor: 218
    c. Students in the hall or restroom must proceed immediately to the nearest classroom. (It is the responsibility of the teacher of that classroom to assist those students in getting secured in their classroom.)
    d. Relocation Areas for the following open spaces
        i. Gallery 1: 130 or 134
        ii. Gallery 2: 126
        iii. Gallery 3: 230 or 234
        iv. Gallery 4: 226
        v. Gallery 5: 50 or 52
    e. If students are outside, the teacher must be made aware of the lockdown. These students will be walked to the relocation area used during an evacuation.
    f. Teachers will not allow students to leave the classroom until a police officer evacuates them or instructions are given over the public address system by the Senior Administrator. Do not leave if a fire alarm is pulled during a lockdown unless directed by law enforcement or a Senior Administrator.
    g. Administrators and front office staff will follow lockdown procedures.
    h. The Leadership Team will be responsible for notifying the Board of Directors and family members/guardians.
4. The “LOCKDOWN” will be ended via ParentSquare and the public address system: “THIS IS (ADMIN NAME) AND TODAY IS (DATE). THE LOCKDOWN IS OVER.”

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

What is the purpose of shelter-in-place?

Sheltering provides safety for students, staff, and others in an emergency. Shelter-in-place action is implemented as a response to an imminent hazard to protect students, staff, and all other personnel in and around the school, from potential consequences of a pending threat, or to maintain open hallways during a medical emergency with a student or staff member. Please note that "safe areas" may change depending upon the type and location of the emergency.

Shelter-in-Place Procedure

1. Senior Administrator on-site or designee will order a "SHELTER-IN-PLACE."
2. Notification: The administrator will immediately:
    a. Utilize the public address system: "ATTENTION SHELTER IN PLACE, SHELTER IN PLACE, SHELTER IN PLACE."
3. Teachers will need to return to the classroom, remain there, and take attendance.
4. Hallways need to be cleared.
5. Students working in open spaces need to report to their teachers and be secured in a classroom.
    a. Students outside will need to be notified and return to the school and given directions to either report to a secure location or remain in their current location.
    b. Instruction may continue but students and staff are not allowed to leave the designated classroom and/or safe area.
6. Once the Shelter in Place is over, an announcement will be made and students and staff may resume normal activity.
7. The SHELTER-IN-PLACE will be ended via the public address system: "THIS IS (ADMIN NAME), AND TODAY IS (DATE), THE SHELTER-IN-PLACE IS OVER."

EVACUATION

Evacuation Procedure

- Designated Administrator calls 911, if necessary.
- The Senior Administrator on site determines evacuation procedures.
- The Senior Administrator on site determines if students and staff should be evacuated outside of the school building, or to an off-campus location.
- Notification: The Senior Administrator on site will immediately:
    - Utilize the public address system to repeatedly announce in a clear and concise manner: "ATTENTION: EVACUATION, EVACUATION, EVACUATION."
- Teachers will take attendance and account for all students on your roster

- Staff and students off-site need to report to the relocation center.
- Senior Administrator on site notifies the relocation center.

Relocation Center/Rally Point:

RTP Frontier Building (Building 800)
800 Park Offices Dr.
Durham, NC 27713

- Direct students and staff to follow fire drill procedures and routes. If the primary route is too dangerous, follow an alternate route.

Teachers: Evacuation Procedures

- Direct students to follow normal fire drill procedures unless the administrator on site alters the route or the primary route is too dangerous.
- Take class roster and emergency bag
- Close classroom doors and turn out lights
- When outside the building:
    - Account for all students and indicate that all students are accounted for by holding up the green sign.
    - Inform the Senior Administrator on-site immediately if students are missing.
    - Stay with your class at all times.
    - Take roll again when you arrive at the relocation center.
    - Do NOT release students until directed by the administrator on site.

CRISIS SCENARIOS

Assault/Fight

- First, ensure the safety of students and staff by clearing areas.
- Call 911, if necessary.
- Notify the administrator on site.
- Administrator on site notifies the Leadership Team.
- Seal off the area where the assault took place.
- De-escalate and defuse the situation, if possible.
- Confiscate phones if you see students attempting to film the incident.
- Administrator on site notifies police if a weapon was used in the assault, if a victim has a physical injury causing substantial pain or impairment of physical condition, or if the assault involved sexual contact.
- The Leadership Team notifies parents/guardians of students involved in the assault and notifies the Board.

- Document all actions as soon as possible. Ask the victim(s) and/or witness(es) for their account of the incident as soon as it is possible to do so.
- The Chief Operations Officer and/or Dean of Students will pull any available security camera footage of the incident.
- Implement post-incident procedures to include referral to outside counseling services, if needed.

Bio-Nuclear Threat Response

RTHS will respond according to police and National Security dictates. Staff, students, and parents/guardians will be notified through the emergency alert system or the safest means necessary.

- The front office staff will monitor the phones.
- Students will be released only to authorized parents/guardians; students will not be permitted to leave without an adult.
- If RTHS does release, teachers will be released when their students are gone.
- After 30 minutes, the administrator on site will determine how to appropriately handle release of the remaining students. It is possible that staff members will need to reach out to students' emergency contacts if parents/guardians cannot be reached.. Staff and students must clear the premises as quickly as possible.

Bomb Threat

A bomb threat may come at any time and could be received by anyone who receives the threat, whether over the phone, written, verbal, or by email. Procedures should be reviewed in detail with all personnel including temporary replacements/substitutes, regarding specific duties in this type of emergency situation. The central problem in managing a bomb threat is to make a judgment between two inherently contradictory decisions:

1. Should I evacuate the school, guaranteeing the immediate safety of students and staff?
2. Should I keep the school in regular session, avoiding disruption, at the price of endangering everyone in the building?

This can be the most difficult decision a school administrator ever has to make. The purpose of this section is to provide assistance in making that decision and outline the steps that should be taken.

The person receiving the call should:

- Keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- Calmly ask questions that will lengthen the call.
- Try to obtain as much information as possible:
    - Where was the bomb placed?
    - Why was it placed?

    - When is it set to go off?
    - What does it look like?
    - What type of explosive?
    - Listen to the voice (male, female, accent, calm, angry).
    - Listen for background noises (trains, music, voices).
- Note Caller ID phone number if available.
- Contact the Senior Administrator on-site immediately.

Administrator on-site or building designee should:

- Collect all the facts from the person who took the phone call.
- Evaluate the facts and decide to remain in the building or evacuate.
    - Decision to remain in the building and keep the school in session:
        - Call 911 and repeat the information given by the caller.
        - If the preliminary search is conducted, it will be done by police and the senior administrator on site.
        - Students should not be aware of preliminary search unless law enforcement deems it necessary or prudent.
    - The decision to evacuate:
        - Call 911 and repeat information given by the caller.
        - Follow the Emergency Evacuation Routes and Procedures Plan.

Bomb Threat Checklist

Whoever receives the call MUST complete the checklist in the appendix as soon as possible and retain it.

Contagious Conditions

Any time you learn that a student or staff member in your building has contracted a serious, contagious disease, you are to do the following:

- Contact the Senior Administrator on site.
- The administrator on site will notify the Board of Directors and the Durham County Health Department for further instructions.
- In the event of a major health crisis, RTHS will follow the directives of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Homeland Security, or Durham County Health Department, in conjunction with requirements from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS).
- When managing a contagious situation, staff members should follow all posted screening, cleaning, quarantining, and reporting protocols.

EXAMPLES OF SERIOUS CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (including but not limited to):

- TUBERCULOSIS

- MENINGITIS
- HEPATITIS
- H5N1 (BIRD FLU)
- H1N1 (SWINE FLU)

Disturbance in School

If a disturbance in the school is reported (a fight involving weapons and/or resulting in serious injuries to students, some sort of demonstration, strike, unwanted people in the school causing problems), the following procedures should be followed:

- Dial 911 and explain to the dispatcher what is taking place. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher, if possible, until the dispatcher directs you to hang up.
- Notify the senior administrator on site immediately
- The administrator on-site or designee will order a “LOCKDOWN”
- Utilize the public address system to repeatedly announce in a clear and concise manner:
    - “ATTENTION LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN. RTHS is under LOCKDOWN. Proceed to the nearest secure location and lock and secure the doors.”
- Complete the steps for a lockdown.

Disturbance Outside of School

If a disturbance outside of the school is reported (large fight, police traffic stops where there is a fight or shots fired, a house/property being searched by SWAT, etc.) the following procedures should be followed:

- Call 911.
- Explain to the dispatcher what is going on and where the disturbance is taking place.
- Stay on the phone with the dispatcher, if possible, until the dispatcher directs you to hang up.
- Notify the administrator on-site immediately.
- The administrator on site or designee may order a “LOCKDOWN” or “SHELTER-IN-PLACE” depending upon the situation.
- Complete the steps identified above for a lockdown or shelter-in-place.
- The Chief School Officer or their designee will be responsible for notifying parents/guardians of the disturbance.

Earthquake

Stay as safe as possible during an earthquake. Be aware that some earthquakes are actually foreshocks and a larger earthquake might occur. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and stay indoors until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

Indoor Safety

- **DROP** to the ground; take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy table or other pieces of furniture - it can provide you with air space if the building collapses, and if you get under a table and it moves, try to move with it; and **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building. Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, load-bearing doorway. Inner walls or door frames are the least likely to collapse and may also shield against falling objects. If another cover is not available, go to an inner corner or doorway, away from windows or glass panels.
- Grab something to shield your head and face from falling debris and broken glass, large textbooks or binders work well.
- If the lights go out, use a battery-operated flashlight. Don't use candles, matches, or lighters during or after the earthquake. If there is a gas leak, an explosion could result.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.
- DO NOT use the elevators. Staff members should make every effort to assist any disabled students in their charge to get to safety.

Crowded Indoor Public Places, multi-purpose room, etc.

- If you are in a crowded public place, do not rush for the doorways. Move away from display shelves containing objects that may fall. If you can, take cover and grab something to shield your head and face from falling debris and glass.

Outdoor Safety

- Stay there.
- Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits, and alongside exterior walls.

Automobiles

- If you are in a moving vehicle, bus, or activity vehicle, stop as quickly and safely as possible and move over to the shoulder or curb, away from utility poles, overhead wires, and under- or overpasses. Stay in the vehicle, set the parking brake, and turn on the radio for emergency broadcast information. The vehicle may jiggle violently on its springs, but it is a good place to stay until the shaking stops. If you are in a life-threatening situation,

you may be able to reach someone with either a cellular or an emergency roadside assistance phone.
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

If Trapped Under Debris
- Do not light a match.
- Do not move about or kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

Fire
- All fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually.
- The school should conduct a fire drill during the first two weeks of school and on a monthly basis.
- The building shall have fire drill instructions for each classroom. The administrator on-site will designate selected staff members to assist with confirming that the building is cleared and assist with re-entry.

If a fire is discovered
- Remove anyone from immediate danger.
- Pull the nearest fire alarm.
- Dial 911. If possible, describe the location of the fire, if anyone is trapped by the fire and if anyone is injured. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher if it is safe until the dispatcher directs you to hang up.
- If possible, close all doors and windows in the involved area. If it is safe to do so, administrators should ensure that fire doors in the stairwells are closed.
- Evacuate students and staff to a safe distance outside of the building. Teachers should monitor the staff chat (Emergency Hotline) for further details or instructions.
- Evacuate the building in an orderly fashion. Keep at a minimum of 300 feet away from the building so as not to interfere with emergency personnel. Remain calm. Teachers must take an emergency bag with a class list/roster with them.
- Pay special attention to children with special needs. Check restrooms and elevators while exiting the building. The elevator should be empty and locked to prevent use.
- If the fire was minor and extinguished before the above steps, call 911 to inform them of the situation and request an inspection by the fire department.
- Refer to the fire drill procedures in this manual for more information on evacuation procedures.

Firearms and Weapons in School

If a firearm or weapon of any type is reported in the school, use the following procedures. Remember, the safety of **everyone**, including staff and students is the **most important** consideration.

Report of a firearm or weapon in a backpack:

- Report the information to the senior on-site administrator immediately.
- The administrator on site will call the police and report the information available and request an officer come to the school, or engage the law enforcement officer on campus if one is present.
- Have the **administrator on site/designee, or another staff member go and get the backpack. The backpack will be searched by the administrator on site and if possible in the presence of a law enforcement officer.** Any evidence will be submitted to law enforcement. (Search the entire backpack for the weapon, including bags and clothes).
- Do not alert the student or any student that the backpack is being searched prior to the search taking place.
- Notify the Board of Directors Chair as soon as reasonably possible prioritizing law enforcement and school safety.

If a weapon is found law enforcement will take and secure the weapon.

- The officers and the administrator on site will go to the student's class.
- Only the administrator on site should enter the classroom and ask the student to come out to the hallway and proceed to the nearest office.
- Out of sight of the other students, the officer must search the student for any other weapons.

If no weapon is found the administrator on site and police officer should go to the student's class.

- Only the administrator on site should enter the classroom and ask the student to come out to the hallway and proceed to the nearest office.
- Out of sight of other students, the Chief School Officer must search the student for any weapons.
    - Search the student's backpack for the next several days.

Report of a student carrying a firearm or weapon:

- **DO NOT** approach the student. Remain calm. Notify the senior administrator immediately.

- Tell the administrator on site the name of the individual suspected of bringing the weapon; where the weapon is located; if the suspect has threatened anyone; and any other details that may prevent the suspect from hurting someone or themselves.
- Administrator on site will call 911 **immediately** and provide the following information:
    - Explain there is a report of a student with a firearm, but the student has not been approached.
    - Ask that officers meet in the office at the school
- If the teacher suspects that a weapon is in the classroom, a neighboring teacher should be confidentially notified. The teacher should not leave the classroom.
- When officers arrive, the administrator on site and officers should go to the class the student is in. (Only the administrator on site or a law enforcement officer should enter the classroom and ask the student to come out to the hallway and proceed to the nearest office).
- Out of sight of other students, the officer must search the student for any weapons.
- Search the student's backpack, including personal belongings.
- Notify the Board of Directors Chair as soon as reasonably possible prioritizing law enforcement and school safety.

Hostage Situation

- Inform the senior administrator on-site immediately if possible. The administrator will call 911.
- If unable to get in touch with the administrator on-site, call 911.
- Stay on the phone, if possible, with the dispatcher until directed to hang up.
- Notify the senior administrator on-site as soon as practicable.
- The administrator on-site or designee will order a "**LOCKDOWN.**"
- Teachers will not allow students to leave the classroom until a police officer evacuates them or instructions are given by the school administrator via the public address system.
- Notify the Board of Directors Chair as soon as reasonably possible prioritizing law enforcement and school safety.

Evacuation

- Teachers and students must follow the instructions of law enforcement.
- Teachers must stay with their students during and after evacuation.
- Follow the Emergency **Evacuation Routes and Procedure Plan** referenced above.
- Parents and media will be directed to the designated location to keep them away from the school. (There will be law enforcement and school personnel at the designated area to assist).

Law Enforcement

- Once law enforcement arrives, they are completely in charge of the situation.
- Law enforcement will coordinate with the senior administrator on-site.

- Law enforcement will take all actions they deem appropriate and prudent to address the situation.

Teachers and Students

- Try to stay calm to avoid panic.
- If confronted by the hostage taker, cooperate to the best of your ability.
- **Do not try to be a hero.** You may be placing yourself and others in danger.
- Follow the instructions of the administrator on site and law enforcement.
- Do not give information concerning the code phrase or the presence of law enforcement to the hostage taker.

Intruder in the Building

"An unauthorized person who enters school property"

- Notify the senior administrator on-site immediately; description, location, and any other descriptive information.

Administrator on site

- Ask another staff member to accompany you before approaching the intruder; In the event, you do not feel comfortable waiting for the administrator on site to arrive.
- Politely greet the intruder and identify yourself.
- Ask the intruder the purpose of their visit.
- Inform intruder that all visitors must register at the main office if the reason is legitimate.
- If the purpose is not legitimate, ask the intruder to leave.
- Accompany the intruder to the exit.

If the intruder refuses to leave use the following steps:

- Call a "**LOCKDOWN**" and ensure all students are safe.
- Notify teachers who are outside the building that a "Lockdown" has been ordered and no one is to enter the building.
- Remind the intruder of the consequences of staying on school property. Inform the intruder that police are being called.
- Call 911 immediately and give them a full description of the incident and the intruder.
- Walk away from an intruder if he/she indicates potential for violence (be aware of actions, locations, weapons, packages, etc.)
- Notify the senior administrator on site.
- Notify the Board of Directors Chair as soon as reasonably possible prioritizing law enforcement and school safety.

Active Shooter Protocol

Staff members should recognize that an active shooter situation is fluid and evolving. The following procedures are guidelines to protect and minimize injury and loss of life.

If anyone sees a person with a firearm, call 911. Notify the senior administrator on site. Do not approach the person.

If shots are heard or an announcement is made about an active shooter situation on the walkie-talkies or other notification system, follow these steps in order, depending on the location of the shooter.

If a staff member hears or sees active gunfire, call 911 and follow the *RUN, HIDE, FIGHT* protocol below. Notify the administrator on site as soon as safety permits.

Information you should provide to the 9-1-1 Operator:

- Your exact location
- Location of the shooter if you know it
- Number of shooters if more than one, if you know it
- Description of the shooters, if you know it
- Number and type of weapons involved, if you know it
- Number of potential victims

RUN, HIDE, FIGHT

Teachers should instruct students according to the "Run, Hide, Fight" rule. Start with RUN. If that is not an option, HIDE. If the intruder/shooter sees you and you cannot run or hide, FIGHT.

RUN

- If possible, use the escape routes and movement plans for a fire or evacuation.
- Take the emergency bag if possible. Leave all belongings behind and tell students to leave all belongings behind.
- Students and teachers should keep their hands visible, raised high above their heads, and open wide at all times until directed otherwise by local law enforcement and emergency response personnel.
- When at a secure location, contact the site administrator or assignee with your location and status.
- Follow directives from all local law enforcement and emergency response personnel for reunification procedures.

HIDE

- Lock classroom doors (if possible) and barricade them with classroom furniture.
- Pull the shades/curtains to each window, if possible.
- Turn off all lights.
- Students and teachers should silence all devices (put on sleep mode, turn off all sound, turn down to the lowest light setting).

- Teachers should alert the administrator on site (if possible, and if safe) as to their location so they can communicate to law enforcement.
- Do not huddle together; spread out.
- Hide in any dark corner, against the wall, under desks/tables, away from windows, and out of the line of sight.
- Attempt to keep students as silent and calm as possible.
- Do not leave the location until verified law enforcement arrives and gives directions to leave.
    - Do not leave if the fire alarm goes off.
    - Do not leave if anyone other than a verified law enforcement gives that direction to leave.

FIGHT

- Fighting is ONLY a last resort, to be used when lives are in imminent danger.
- Attempt to disrupt and incapacitate the active shooter.
- Find any object to use as a weapon such as a chair, fire extinguisher, or items in your classroom or office that can be thrown/used to distract and disrupt the shooter.

When Law Enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and instruct students to follow officers' instructions.
- Raise your hands and have students raise their hands and keep them open wide and visible at all times.
- Avoid making quick movements toward the officers and help students remain calm.
- Follow directives for reunification.

<u>Knives or Other Sharp Objects in the Building</u>

Many people do not consider a knife as dangerous as a gun, but it is. Extreme caution should be used in dealing with anyone who may possess a knife. Remember, the safety of everyone, including staff and students, is the most important aspect.

Report of a knife or other sharp object in a backpack

- Have the senior administrator on-site and another staff member go to the students backpack or cubby and search. (Search for the knife, including bags and clothes).
- Do not alert the student or any student that the backpack/cubby is being searched.
- If a knife is found, take the knife, secure it and call the student out of class to the office.
- If no knife is found, do not tell anyone the backpack/cubby was searched.
- Senior administrator on site will then go to class and ask the student to come out to the hallway and escort them to the nearest office.
- Senior administrator on-site and another staff member as a witness will search the student by hand. (Females must search females. Males must search males).

- If the administrator on site and staff members are not comfortable getting and searching the student, call the police. Wait for the police to arrive before confronting the student.
- Senior administrator on site should go into the class and ask the student to come out to the hallway and proceed to the nearest office.
- Out of sight of other students, the administrator on site will search the student for any weapons.
- Search the student's backpack for the next several days.
- If the knife found is an automatic opening knife (switchblade), the police must be called, as this is an illegal knife according to law. (Turn the knife over to the police).
- If the knife found is not an automatic opening knife (switchblade) and is not illegal to carry according to law, but illegal by school policy, the police do not have to be called.
    - An incident report must be filled out.
    - The incident should be handled internally.
    - Keep control of the knife in case of an expulsion hearing.

Report of a student carrying a knife or other sharp object

- Report the information regarding the student, student location, and details to the administrator on-site immediately.

Administrator on-site responsibilities

- It will be the administrator on site's discretion regarding calling the police to approach the student.
- If you approach the student, use extreme caution.
- The administrator on site and another staff member should go to the class that the student is in and ask the student to come out to the hallway and then proceed to the nearest office.
- Senior administrator on-site and another staff member as a witness will search the student by hand. (Females must search females. Males must search males).
- If the administrator on site and staff members are not comfortable getting and searching the student, call the police. Wait for the police to arrive before confronting the student.
- The administrator on site should go into the class and ask the student to come out to the hallway and escort them to the Holodeck.
- Out of sight of other students, the administrator on site will search the student for any weapons.
- Search the student's backpack for the next several days.
- If the knife found is an automatic opening knife (switchblade), the police must be called, as this is an illegal knife according to law. (Turn the knife over to the police).
- If the knife found is not an automatic opening knife and is not illegal to carry according to law, but illegal by school policy, the police do not have to be called.
    - An incident report must be filled out.
    - The incident should be handled internally.
    - Keep control of the knife in case of an expulsion hearing.

- Notify the Board of Directors Chair as soon as reasonably possible prioritizing law enforcement and school safety.

Power Outage Procedures

Brown Out
In the event of a minor or major power failure occurring during regular school hours, the administrator on site will keep staff informed and notify parents if needed.

- In the event of a brownout a “Shelter-in-Place” may be called.

If a blackout occurs without warning:

- Stay calm. Reassure students. Open blinds to let outside light in or use flashlights. Emergency lights should activate in classrooms and common areas and should operate for at least 90 minutes.
- Turn off all light switches. The voltage may fluctuate and damage any lights that are on.
- Set all equipment and appliance switches to the OFF position. This is to protect against kicking out the circuit breakers, blowing fuses, or damaging equipment when the full surge or current hits as the power comes back on.
- Take measures to protect your equipment or experiments. Remember that air operated controls and water pressure may be affected.
- If the failure lasts more than a few minutes, it will be necessary to evacuate persons from darkened areas (restrooms, stairwells, or other areas with no windows or natural lighting).
- To prevent the office from being overwhelmed with calls, only the administrator on site should report power outages. If the failure is to be lengthy, The Leadership Team will decide on continued operations for the remainder of the day and/or the duration of the blackout.
- Report all persons trapped in elevators to the administrator on-site immediately.
- If it becomes necessary to evacuate the premises during a blackout, be sure to protect all valuables and make sure that all equipment is safe when the power comes back on.

During periods of very heavy power usage, the area utility company may have to reduce voltage. This is commonly called a "BROWNOUT" and may occur during periods of high air conditioner usage. In the event of a brownout, the following steps should be taken.

- In the event of a brownout a “Shelter-in-Place” may be called.
- Turn off all lights and equipment not necessary for safe operation.
- Central air conditioning may have to be shut down. However, general ventilation will be maintained in centrally air-conditioned buildings at diminished levels.
- Identify equipment that may be sensitive to low voltage, and take positive steps to prevent its damage.

- Full cooperation during a brownout is extremely important. Such cooperation may possibly prevent the loss of all electrical power.

If an emergency exists, the administrator on site will notify all affected personnel.

- All building evacuations or localized evacuations will occur when an alarm sounds continuous and/or when an emergency occurs.
- Take personal valuables, and lock office doors upon leaving. Walk, do not run to the nearest stairway exit.
- When there is a power failure, do not use the elevator. It will be inoperative.
- Assist disabled persons in exiting the building. If these persons are unable to use the stairs, assist them to a stairwell where they will remain. Notify the senior administrator on-site of the location of these persons.
- Evacuate to a distance of at least 300 feet from the building and out of the way of emergency personnel. Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the administrator on site. Staff will be notified whether to report to the evacuation site at the Frontier parking lot to the north of campus.
- The administrator on site will respond with the appropriate authorities to evaluate the situation and supervise an evacuation or appropriate action.
- The administrator on site will initiate the proper notification procedure for contacting appropriate personnel when a power failure occurs.
- At present, building lighting may not provide sufficient illumination in corridors and stairs for safe exiting. You should use a flashlight for emergency evacuations.

<u>Serious Injury or Death in School</u>

If it is reported that someone is seriously injured (the result of a gunshot, stabbing, self-inflicted wounds, fall, etc.), the following procedures should be followed:

- Call 911.
- Provide as much information as possible to the dispatcher.
- Notify the senior administrator on site immediately.

The administrator on site will call a "**Lockdown**" or a "**Shelter-in-Place**" depending upon the situation.

- The administrator on site will utilize the public address system and staff chats to repeatedly announce the steps to be taken in a clear and concise manner.
- If it is possible to get to the victim, First Aid should be administered.
- After prioritizing school safety and emergency personnel, notify the Board Chair as soon as reasonably possible.

If the suspect hands over the weapon:

- Take the suspect to the officer immediately.
- Take control of the weapon, touching it as little as possible.

- Keep everyone away from the actual scene until police and paramedics arrive.
- Keep any witnesses away from other people and separate them from each other.

If the suspect flees:

- Extreme caution should be used until the suspect is located.
- Keep everyone away from the actual scene until police and paramedics arrive.
- Keep any witnesses away from other people and separate them from each other.
- If the suspect is located, do not approach the suspect.

In the event of the death of a student that occurs outside of the school day, the following procedures will be followed

- Senior administrator on site will be notified immediately to verify the information
- Once administration is contacted, the crisis team will be alerted of the situation and schedule a meeting.
- The Leadership Team will notify the Board and will send out an email to RTHS staff making them aware of the situation

Crisis Team Expectations

- Creating a list of high risk students (friends, family members, etc.)
- Assessing need for police involvement for possible media presence
- Placement of staff outside buildings before and after school
-
- Determine who will be involved in the counseling
- Determine what counseling will look like
- Communication with family of deceased student
- Letter to pass out to parents with counseling information
- Procedures for emptying student's locker
- Food for students and counselors
- Assessing need for cancellation of after school events
- Providing staff with ways to address questions from students in crisis
- Creating a check in system throughout the day to address concerns or needs
- Following the crisis team meeting, the administrator on site will meet with the staff affected by the loss
- Crisis Team will debrief (at the end of the day):
    - Discuss concerns/issues with handling of crisis throughout the day
    - Follow up with thank you email to staff for support
    - Send an email message at end of day to parents/guardians to update
    - Plan for continued counseling services
    - If the impacted family allows, provide communication of funeral services and staff or student attendance at services

Expectations for Teachers

- Teachers are expected to assist students in expressing their feelings in a supportive environment and provide comfort
- Counselor will provide support/explanation at the beginning of the day if needed
- Teachers will keep a list of who is sent to the office so we know where students are
- Teachers should NOT talk to media
- Teachers should not tell students that "We can't talk about it" but should avoid discussing details of the student's death
- Teachers will be provided with resources to assist students throughout the day

Expectations for Data-Operations Managers

- Do not share information on the phone regarding the situation.
- Do not count students absent if sent home grieving.
- Students who need to miss instruction for grieving or counseling will be counted as excused absences.

Severe Weather

Whenever the U.S. Weather Service issues a tornado watch or severe thunderstorm warning, Leadership will decide if schools should remain in session.

Tornado Warning

- The administrator on site will alert staff of the severe weather using the public address system.
- Any students outside should be brought inside immediately.
- Students and staff will remain in the building; taking shelter at all designated areas.
- Close blinds, drapes, and stay away from windows, glass, and unsecured objects.
- Have students sit on the floor along interior walls as far away from any windows and assume the "duck and cover" position.
- Take the student roster and account for all students in your class.
- Wait for further instructions from emergency responders or administration before leaving designated safe areas.
- Be ready to move quickly if flooding occurs.

Winter Storm

- If school is in session and a winter storm strikes, it will be the decision of the Chief Operations Officer whether to close the school.
- If school closes, parents or legal guardians should pick their children up from school as soon as possible.

Release of Students

- Parents, legal guardians, or predetermined persons may pick up children from RTHS during any severe weather warning. We do ask that parents refrain from calling the school. It is extremely important that our school telephone lines remain open during severe weather watches and warnings.
- Should a severe weather incident happen during arrival, dismissal, and carpool, dismissal may be halted. Caregivers who are picking up children may leave their vehicles and take shelter inside the buildings.

Threat to Harm Self or Others

If a student threatens to harm themselves or another person, whether it be another student or staff member, it must be immediately reported to the administrator on-site and the school counselor in person, by phone, or text.

- Assess the situation for level of risk; (if at all not sure- get in contact with administration asap)
    - Making a threat vs. posing a threat
    - Converse with the student immediately to determine if he or she has any dangerous instrumentalities (weapons, substance, or other material capable of inflicting a mortal wound) on or nearby his or her person
- Notify your co-teacher/co-worker to contact the senior administrator on site and a counselor immediately in a crisis.
- Stay with the individual until the administrator and/or counselor are there to conduct an assessment. **Do not leave the student alone.**
- Documents to help guide staff: Responding to Students who threaten Violence, Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management
- You will be required to assist in completing the documentation form as soon as possible detailing the incident.

Child Abuse and Neglect

In the event of abuse or neglect, all staff members have a duty to report the information. If a staff member receives information deemed to be abuse or neglect, notify the administrator on site and the counselor asap. If the student contacts you after school hours or you are unable to get in touch with the administrator on site or counselor you must report the incident to Child Protective Services asap.

For more information regarding reporting laws: North Carolina Child Reporting Laws

Fill out the CPS Reporting form- Appendix H

Bullying and Harassment Reporting

State statute in regards to bullying

In the event a student, staff or parent reports bullying of a staff member or student the administrator on site and counselors need to be notified immediately.
In this instance documentation needs to be kept on a bullying report or incident report form depending upon the individual case
Our website also has an anonymous bullying report form.

Appendix A: Crisis Intervention Team Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Administrator On Site

- Establish chain of command. During a crisis, the senior administrator on site delegates responsibilities. However, during his/her absence, a chain of command is to be established in advance.
- Within the first 60 days of the school year, the following should be completed, and documentation submitted to The Leadership Team:
    - Building Crisis Management Annual checklist and preparation from the list.
    - In-service with staff.
    - Establish Building Crisis Team.
- Designate area to be used as a command post during a crisis situation
- Designate two or more outside assembly locations.
- Call 911 or other emergency numbers if the situation warrants.
- Convene Building Crisis Team, brief them on facts, and discuss procedures.
- Assign a team member to identify students involved in crisis, siblings, and family members.
- Contact family members. Serve as a school representative to the family.
- Convene faculty and staff. Share facts regarding the crisis. Warn against rumors. Provide a paper copy of the facts to all staff.
- In the event of a student death, remove personal items for parents to pick up
- Plan teacher and staff in-service reviewing emergency management.
- Inform staff of school-wide codes to alert staff to emergency.
- Develop an emergency response program. Teachers are to use their class roster for attendance.
- Assign a team member to account for all students and adults in the building.
- If possible, a short memo with the facts of the situation is prepared and communicated to parents.
- Provide local police and fire departments a floor plan and shut-off valves for the building.

Crisis Team Coordinator

- Implement Building Crisis Plan.
- Serve as a liaison between faculty and Crisis Team.
- Direct other significant roles as appropriate. (e.g., First Aid, building security, communications in the building, transportation).
- Serve as an information source for faculty and staff.
- Monitor Crisis Team's stress level.
- Organize debriefing for Crisis Team. Plans are made for working with students and staff during post-crisis as needed.
- Compile evaluation data on Crisis Team's effectiveness.

- Develop a plan of identification for safe, injured, or deceased individuals.
- Immediately following a crisis, some students may request permission to leave the building. How, when, and to whom students may be released should be determined.

Counselor

- Coordinate counseling services.
- Provide working space as needed for counselors and psychologists.
- Meet with resource personnel. Brief them on all the facts.
- Organize and supervise designated counseling areas.
- Counsel students as needed.
- Assist administration with implementation of the crisis plan.
- Provide support to family, students and staff.
- In the event of the death of a student, remove the student's name from the attendance roster.

Team member in charge of security

- Monitor the situation as to security issues.
- Secure additional help if needed.
- Place designated staff members at each entrance/exit at all necessary building locations.
- Direct media representatives to designated areas as needed.

Health Coordinator

- Handle medical needs (other than those requiring 911) of students and staff, as necessary. May need to move "meds" and log books to the crisis center.
- Develop and coordinate a First-Aid Team.
- Coordinate annual CPR and First-Aid training.
- Provide a list of CPR trained individuals to the crisis team coordinator.
- Ensure First-Aid Kit is available and properly stocked.
- Provide a list of medically fragile students to the crisis team coordinator.
- Collect and notify staff of Health Plans for students who have the following medical needs; Seizure Disorder, Diabetes, Asthma, and life-threatening Allergies (causing anaphylactic shock).
- Fill out the Annual Health Report due in June

Team member in charge of communications

- Establish communication plans in advance of a crisis.
- Convene HR & Data & Operations staff to answer incoming phone calls if needed.
- Brief HR & Data & Operations staff to r not share details with the public. Caution against the spreading of rumors.

- Avoid any large group announcements. Only make announcements over the walkie-talkies using predetermined codes.
- Avoid glamorizing of suicide, including school memorial services, flying flag at half-mast, student assemblies.
- Ensure that a visitors' screening procedure is in place and require all visitors (does not include emergency personnel) to sign in at the office so there is a record of everyone who is in the building.

Follow these steps when dealing with media

- Notify the administrator on site immediately. The team may prepare a written statement for the media and any statements to the media must be approved by the Leadership Team and shared with the Board Chair. **All media inquiries should be directed to the administrator on site. Staff members should not speak to the media on behalf of the school.**
- Designate an area for the media away from the incident area. Place a sign-in sheet by the door and require signatures and any other visitor requirements for the school.
- Designate and staff a waiting area for visitors away from the incident area.
- Escort media and visitors to **separate** designated locations.
- Ask the media inquiring by phone to leave a name, phone number, and deadline so that the administrator on site can return the call and provide accurate information.
- Advise students and staff of how information will be given to the media. Let them know if reporters ask them questions they should be encouraged to make no comment. They should be cautioned that any comments they make should be sensitive to the persons involved, and that any statements they may choose to make despite the above guidelines will not represent the official school response.
- Advise reporters that they may not interrupt classes/school programs/school business.

Debriefing a crisis

No one involved in the aftermath of a school crisis will remain untouched emotionally. Teachers and staff are no exception and a debriefing for them is imperative. Teachers and counselors may feel tremendous guilt and anger resulting from a sense of responsibility in the crisis. They must have an opportunity to discuss these emotions.

The debriefing should be conducted with small groups of people and, preferably, by a trained individual including counselor or outside professional who was not involved in the crisis. Specific information given about normal reactions and how to handle them is usually helpful. Staff may tend to dwell on preventing future crises from occurring. This is not helpful. What the staff members need most is to focus on their own emotional reaction. Preventive measures can be dealt with later.

Appendix B: Building Crisis Management Checklist

Annual Checklist

School_____ Year_____

Assigns team and responsibilities _____

Directors

_____ _____

Counselor Alternate

_____

Alternate

_____ Training and planning times for crisis team: _____

_____

_____ Training completed for staff: _____

_____ Update One Call List (include cellular phone access)

_____ School-Wide Universal Codes reviewed (LOCKDOWN, SHELTER IN PLACE):

_____ Physical assistance needed in office
_____ Physical assistance needed in designated location
_____ Student medications/First Aid Kit are in a portable container
_____ Prepare Command Center and Alternate Command Center:

_____ Building Floor plan provided to Police and Fire Departments

_____ Copy of crisis manual
_____ Blueprints for building
_____ First Aid Kit
_____ First Aid Manual
_____ Medical emergency list including names of students with medical needs and copy of student health plan
_____ Bull horn

_____ Emergency battery
_____ Legal pads
_____ Pens
_____ Permanent markers
_____ List of local telephone numbers for law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire department, and other agencies
_____ List of email addresses and fax lines at each building
_____ Current staff directory with cell phone numbers
_____ Floor plans that show exits, telephones, computer locations placed in medication and emergency box
_____ Local Street and zone maps
_____ Location of master keys
_____ List of CPR trained staff

Appendix C: Crisis Response Team Evaluation Form

Please return this form within two weeks to the Crisis Team Coordinator.

School: _____ Date _____

Presenting Problem:

_____

We would appreciate your cooperation in completing this evaluation of the recent services provided by the School Crisis Team. Please return to Crisis Team coordinator when completed.

	Very	Somewhat	Not at All	N. A.
1) Was the service delivery of the Crisis Team timely? Comments:				
2) Did the services of the Crisis Team meet your school's needs? Comments:				
3) Did you have sufficient access to counseling to meet your individual needs? Comments:				
4) Was individual/group counseling provided to students a valuable aspect? Comments:				
5) Were materials provided on site useful? Comments:				
6) Did you have an opportunity to debrief with the Crisis Team? effective? Comments:				

7) What else could have been done to increase the effectiveness and helpfulness of the Crisis Team?_____

_____

_____

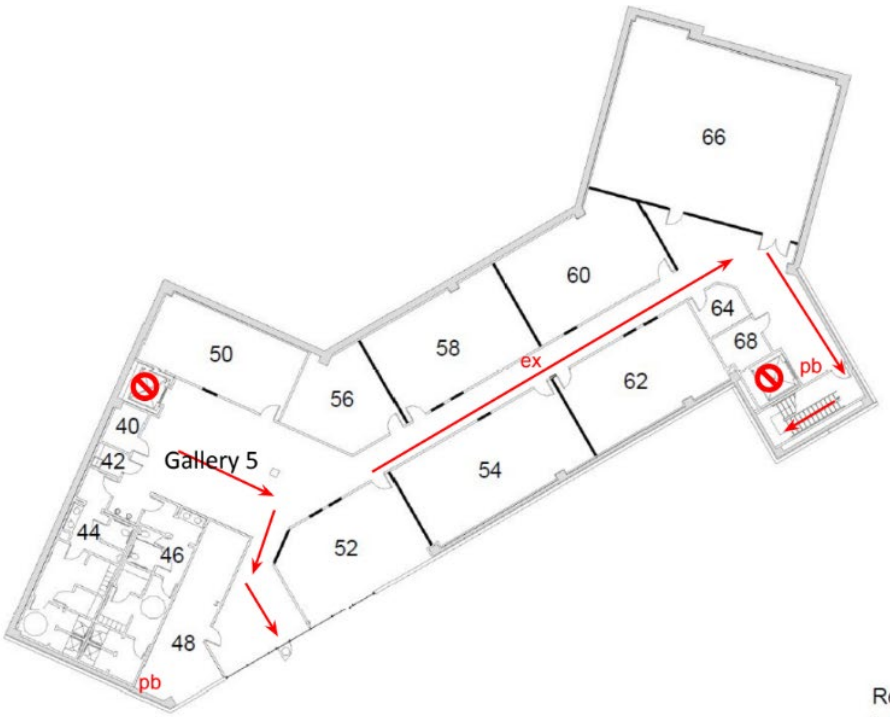
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Appendix D: Bomb Threat Report Form

Appendix E: Incident Report Form

Appendix F: School Drill and Inspection Form

Appendix G: School Maps and Fire Evacuation Routes

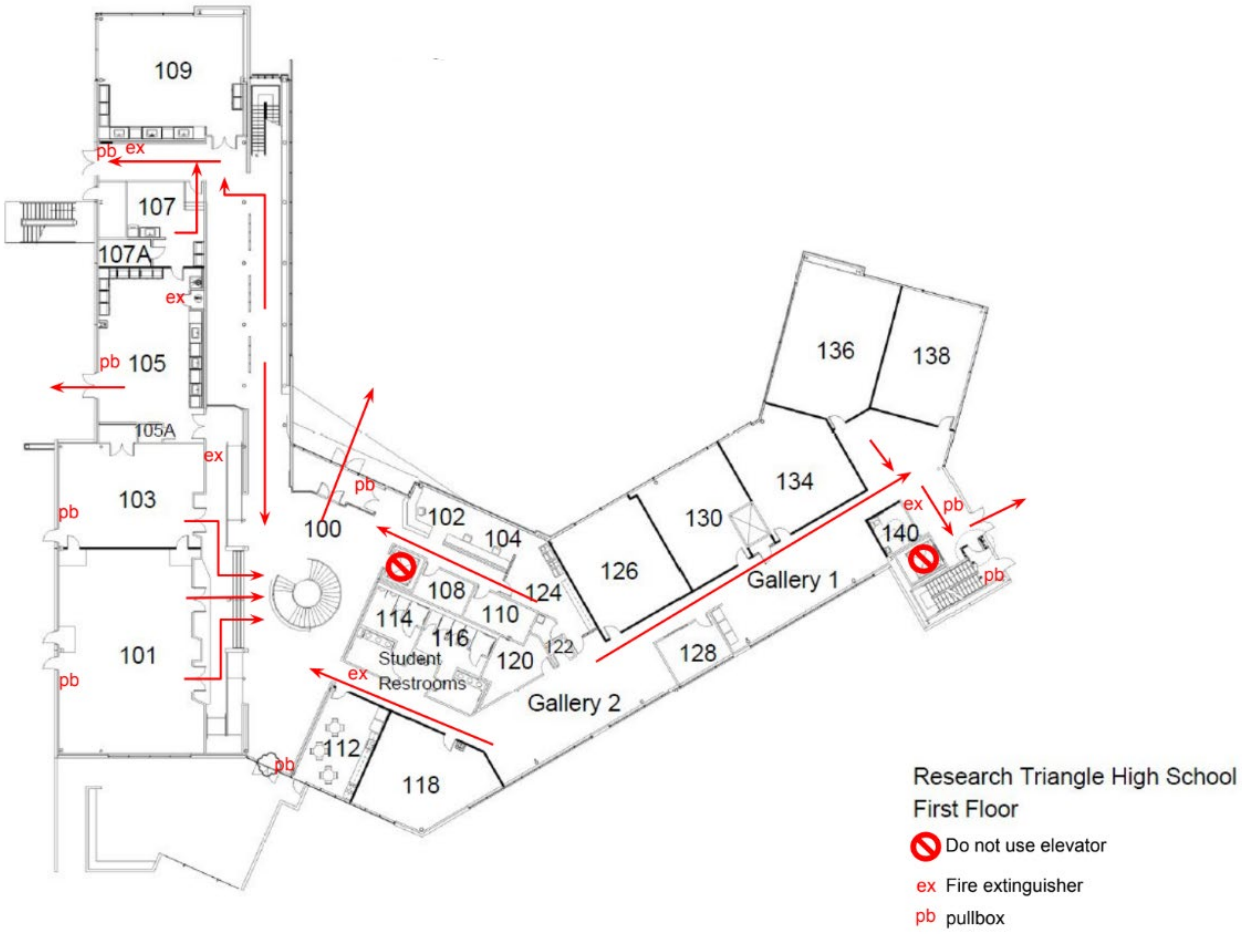


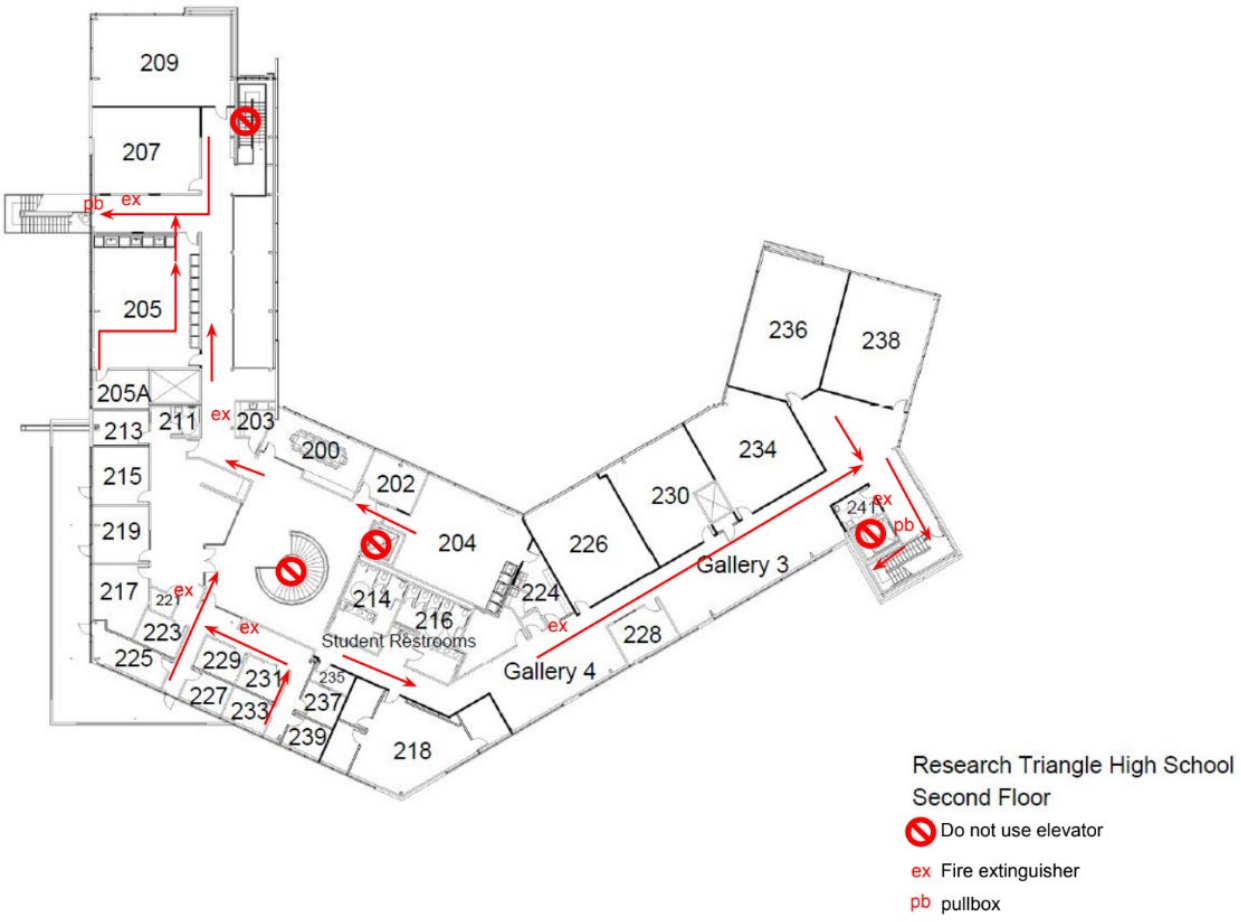
Research Triangle High School
Lower Level

Do not use elevator

ex Fire extinguisher

pb pullbox


109
pb
ex
107
107A
ex
pb
105
105A
ex
103
pb
101
pb
100
pb
102
104
108
124
114
116
110
120
122
Student
Restrooms
ex
112
pb
118
126
130
134
136
138
Gallery 1
Gallery 2
128
ex
pb
140
pb
Research Triangle High School
First Floor
Do not use elevator
ex Fire extinguisher
pb pullbox



Note: Be aware of all nearby exits, not just the one designated as the evacuation route, as emergencies may result in exits being blocked.

Appendix H: Child Abuse and Neglect Form

RTHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2025-26 BOARD AND COMMITTEE OFFICERS

PROPOSED SLATE OF 2025-26 BOARD OFFICERS FOR APPROVAL

- Board Chair: Elizabeth Cunningham
- Board Vice Chair: Steven Hunter
- Board Secretary: Ailette Tobien
- Finance Committee Chair and Treasurer: Carolyn Coia
- Academic Excellence Committee Chair: Jeni Corn
- Development Committee Chair: Dina Requena
- Governance Committee Chair: Michael Dwomoh
- CSO Evaluation Committee Chair: Carolyn Coia

2025-26 COMMITTEE VICE CHAIRS

- Finance Committee Vice Chair: Elizabeth Cunningham
- Academic Excellence Committee Vice Chair: Samina Khaliq
- Development Committee Vice Chair: Julian Berla
- Governance Committee Vice Chair: Carolyn Coia

Coversheet

Academic Excellence Business

Section: VIII. Academic Excellence Committee Report
Item: A. Academic Excellence Business
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: Academic Excellence Committee Presentation, 8-20-2025.pdf

Academic Excellence

Research Triangle High School
Academic Committee Data Calendar

This calendar is designed to guide monthly academic committee meetings by focusing on one key dataset at a time.

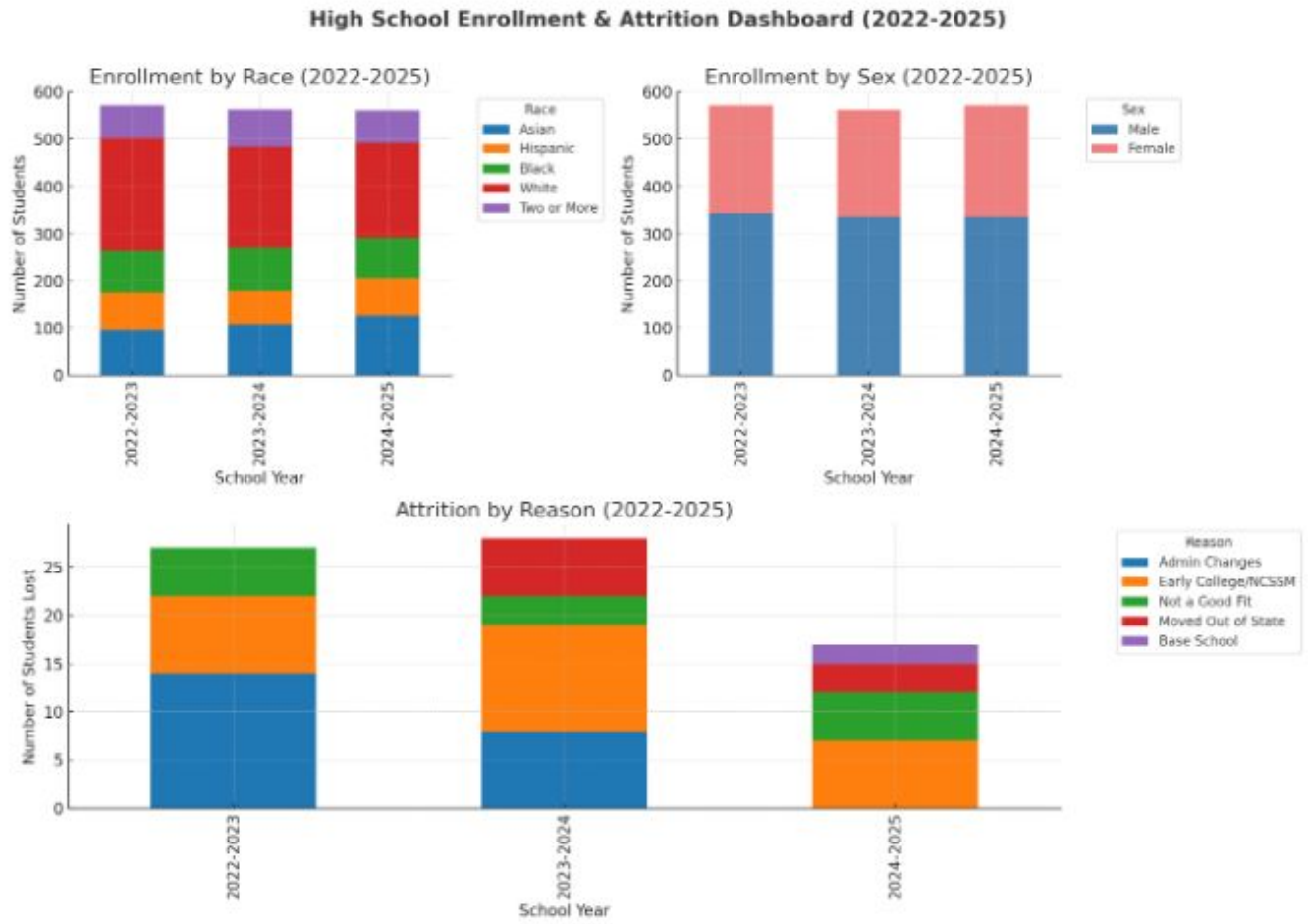
Month	Focus Dataset	Purpose	Key Questions
August	Student Demographics & Enrollment Trends	Understand student population, shifts, and subgroup composition	Who are our students this year? What trends are emerging in enrollment?
September	EOC State Assessment Results (Prior Year)	Analyze standardized test outcomes to inform instruction and interventions	Where did students struggle? Which subgroups need more support?
October	Course Grades & Failure Rates (Q1)	Identify academic risk early in the year	Which students are failing courses? What subjects are most impacted?
November	Attendance Data	Explore attendance trends and correlations with performance	Are there chronic absenteeism patterns by group or grade?
December	Discipline Data	Review behavior trends and equity in disciplinary actions	Are certain groups overrepresented in suspensions or referrals?
January	Mid-Year Benchmark Assessments	Evaluate student growth and instructional effectiveness	Are students on track for end-of-year goals? Where are the gaps widening?

Academic Excellence Committee

RTHS Enrollment and Attrition Data:

- The Academic Excellence Committee reviewed enrollment and attrition data for the past three years to see if there were any noticeable trends

Academic Excellence Committee



Academic Excellence Committee

Trends we noticed:

- Enrollment stayed steady (~570 students).
- Racial composition shifted slightly (growth in Asian enrollment, gradual decline in White enrollment).
- Sex ratio remained consistent (about 60% male, 40% female).
- Attrition drivers shifted — administrative changes impacted 2022–23, while early college opportunities and “fit” reasons became more prominent later.

Discussion Topics surrounding these trends:

- Enrollment numbers increasing for minority students due to school exposure via middle school tours and open houses at schools with larger minority populations
- Ways to increase enrollment for female students: Bring female students and teachers in STEM to open houses, market to our audience highlighting females in STEM to show there is diversity in STEM, connect with female alumni in STEM fields

Coversheet

Development Committee Business

Section: IX. Development Committee Report
Item: A. Development Committee Business
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: RTHS Development Committee Presentation, 8-20-2025.pdf

Research Triangle High School Development Committee

August 20, 2025

Development Committee Members

Board Members

- Dina Requena, Chair
- Julian Berla, Vice Chair
- Elizabeth Cunningham

Community Members

- Abid Ansari
- Joy Goodwin

PTSO Representative

- Julie Walker

RTHS Administrative Representatives

- Akiba Griffin, Chief School Officer
- Alex Drake, Chief Operations Officer
- Angelina Soulasinh, Director of School Advancement and Student Engagement
- Deirdre Lewis, Student Services Coordinator

Development Committee Mission & Purpose

- **Mission:**
  - To strategically build relationships that support high-impact STEM learning experiences, student activities, and school infrastructure while ensuring equitable access and excellence for all students.

- **Purpose:**
  - To build a positive & enthusiastic giving culture.
  - To build a sustainable, community-supported financial model that fuels innovation, enriches student life, and advances STEM excellence.
  - To supplement state and local funding for facilities, transportation, and other areas that will enhance the mission and vision of RTHS.

Development Committee Focus, 2025-26

1. Community Outreach

- Get out of the community and meet other RTP companies
- Bring potential partners to RTHS

ACTIONS:

- Social Media and Marketing Campaigns:
  - Send letters to organizations
  - Create a video that shows what RTHS is about
- In-Person Get to Know You Event
  - Objective: Invite community members and potential partners to RTHS

2. Capital and Infrastructure Development

- Begin discussions/planning for future expansions

ACTIONS:

- Work on a proof of concept
  - Start a scoping process
  - Leverage prior work/existing information

3. Consider Fundraising Initiative or Expansion of Existing Initiative (ex. Raptor Fund)