Research Triangle High School

RTHS Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday January 21, 2026 at 5:30 PM EST

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		Steven Hunter	2 m
	Board Chair Steven Hunter will convene the meeting of the Board of Directors.			
II.	**Approve Board Meeting Minutes**			**5:34 PM**

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

The Board will review and approve the minutes from the November 19, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

Approve minutes for RTHS Board of Directors Meeting on November 19, 2025

III. Public Comments   5:36 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Open to all community members (students, family members, faculty and staff, community members, and others)	FYI	Steven Hunter	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:

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   5:41 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Executive Overview	Discuss	Akiba Griffin	10 m

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

RTHS Chief School Officer (CSO) Akiba Griffin will share information about key school events and activities.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
V.	**Finance Committee Report**			**5:51 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 and approval:

- Finance Update / Budget
- Vote

B.	Executive Session	Vote	Carolyn Coia	5 m

The Board of Directors will be in Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

VI.	**Governance Committee Report**			**6:06 PM**

A.	Governance Committee Business	Vote	Elizabeth Cunningham	15 m

Committee Chair Elizabeth Cunningham will present the following items for Board review and approval:

- Review & Vote on Proposed **Wireless Communication Device Policy 2025 - 2026** *(amendment to the Student and Family Handbook)*
- Review & Vote on Proposed **Articulation Agreement with Sterling Montessori**
- Board Member Recruitment Update: Board members and Board leadership

VII.	**Academic Excellence Committee Report**			**6:21 PM**

A.	Academic Excellence Business	Discuss	Jeni Corn	15 m

Committee Chair Jeni Corn and CSO Griffin will present the following items for Board review:

	Purpose	Presenter	Time

- Review & Vote on **2026-2027 School Calendar**
- **Data Review / Presentation**: **Discipline Data**
- **School Engagement Team**: Update

VIII. Development Committee Report   6:36 PM

A. Development Committee Business · Discuss · Dina Requena · 15 m

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

- Giving Tuesday: Updates & Retrospectives
- 2026 & Long Term Plans

IX. Other Business Matters   6:51 PM

A. As needed · Discuss · Steven Hunter · 10 m

- **Upcoming/ongoing activities**

Next Board Meeting: February *18, 2026*

- **Additional Items for Discussion?**

X. Closing Items   7:01 PM

A. Adjourn Meeting · Vote · Ailette Tobien · 1 m

Coversheet

Board Meeting Minutes

Section: II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes
Item: A. Board Meeting Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for RTHS Board of Directors Meeting on November 19, 2025
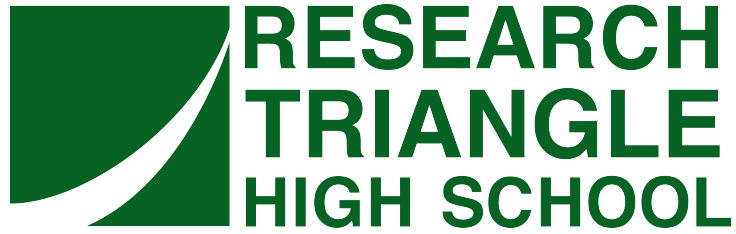
Research Triangle High School

Minutes

RTHS Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday November 19, 2025 at 5:30 PM

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

Directors Present
A. Saviello (remote), C. Coia (remote), D. Requena (remote), E. Cunningham (remote), J. Berla (remote), J. Corn (remote), P. Thermitus (remote), S. Hunter (remote), S. Khaliq (remote), T. Shahi (remote)

Directors Absent
A. Tobien, M. Dwomoh

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened
P. Thermitus

Guests Present
A. Drake (remote), A. Griffin (remote), Mateen Firoz (remote), Yolanda Wintz (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 Nov 19, 2025 at 5:30 PM.

II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes

A. Board Meeting Minutes

J. Corn made a motion to approve the minutes from RTHS Board of Directors Meeting on 10-15-25.
T. Shahi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Hunter	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
D. Requena	Aye
A. Tobien	Absent
T. Shahi	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
A. Saviello	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
P. Thermitus	Absent
S. Khaliq	Aye
C. Coia	Aye

B. Board Meeting Minutes

C. Coia made a motion to approve the minutes from RTHS Board of Directors Executive Session on 10-15-25.
J. Corn seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Berla	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
P. Thermitus	Absent
D. Requena	Aye
T. Shahi	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
S. Khaliq	Aye
A. Saviello	Aye
A. Tobien	Absent
J. Corn	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
S. Hunter	Aye

P. Thermitus arrived at 5:40 PM.

III. Public Comments

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

No public comments.

IV. Chief School Officer Report

A. Executive Overview

- Akiba presented CSO Highlights: Raptober Fest, Senior Class Trip - Carowinds, RTHS Tennis Team Champions, Soccer Semifinals, Whiplash! Improv Performances, Food Pantry and FRL
- Akiba shared upcoming events: Giving Tuesday Campaign, Student Performances: Winter Band Performance and Winter Play: A Midsummer Night's Dream, RTHS Staff Holiday Party

V. Finance Committee Report

A. RTHS Monthly Financials and Other Business

- The final Board audit letter and report (presented last month) is uploaded in meeting materials for Board review
- Budget Update: The current surplus is projected at $165,554 (we have not received all info needed on local funding levels, but are starting to see it come in), increase to last month due to carryover IDEA (EC) funding from prior school year that will likely be absorbed in this calendar year
  ◦ Unable to fully review unallocated funds due to unknown local funding commitments
- Facilities Updates: new shrubs, prepared beds for additional Spring landscaping, identifying ways to create curb appeal in the incoming year (window clings/vinyls for branding)

VI. Governance Committee Report

A. Governance Committee Business

J. Berla made a motion to Approve the 2025-26 Board Policy and Procedures Manual.
T. Shahi seconded the motion.
Elizabeth presented the 2025-26 Board Policy and Procedures Manual for approval
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Berla	Aye
C. Coia	Aye

Roll Call

D. Requena	Aye
S. Khaliq	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
T. Shahi	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
A. Saviello	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
A. Tobien	Absent

C. Coia made a motion to Approve the updated officers' slate: Chair - Steven Hunter, Vice Chair - Michael Dwomoh, and Interim Governance Chair - Elizabeth Cunningham.
P. Thermitus seconded the motion.

Officers' Slate *(as of January 2026):*
    Chair: Steven Hunter
    Vice Chair: Michael Dwomoh
    Interim Governance Chair: Elizabeth Cunningham

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

Roll Call

A. Tobien	Absent
J. Corn	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
D. Requena	Aye
T. Shahi	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
S. Khaliq	Aye
M. Dwomoh	Absent
E. Cunningham	Aye
J. Berla	Aye
A. Saviello	Aye

S. Hunter made a motion to Approve the removal of Mitch Babb as Board Member.
C. Coia seconded the motion.
Unable to participate further
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Shahi	Aye
E. Cunningham	Aye
C. Coia	Aye
A. Saviello	Aye
D. Requena	Aye
S. Khaliq	Aye
J. Corn	Aye
P. Thermitus	Aye

Roll Call

J. Berla	Aye
S. Hunter	Aye
A. Tobien	Absent
M. Dwomoh	Absent

- Board recruitment urgent needs: Governance and Finance
- Focused on Board advancement/leadership with current board members

VII. Academic Excellence Committee Report

A. Academic Excellence Business

- School engagement team reported out on more engagement items for staff and students including: food trucks, book clubs, little free library, gym memberships, PD time to grade/plan, study day for students, test taking strategies
- Reviewed attendance data and zeroed in on chronic absenteeism
  - 73/570 students are chronically absent; half of those are failing at least one class
  - RTHS is significantly less (better) than state/local averages
  - RTHS will provide more communication to familes help reduce these absences

VIII. Development Committee Report

A. Development Committee Business

- Giving Tuesday Campaign
  - Completed video filming today
  - Fundraising goal $30K
  - Campaign info will begin to go out a week prior
  - Wrapping up marketing information
- Clarifying Contemporary Science Center is the same as RTHS
- Board Member participation is critical
- Other outstanding discussions:
  - Gift Card Fundraiser
  - Development staffing needs
  - Fundraising toolkit for grant opportunities
  - Non-fundraising development needs

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

T. Shahi made a motion to Adjourn the meeting.
J. Berla seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** 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 6:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Coia

Coversheet

Executive Overview

Section: IV. Chief School Officer Report
Item: A. Executive Overview
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: CSO Highlights 1.21.26.pptx.pdf

CSO Report- January 21, 2026

CSO Highlights

- Successful End to Semester 1
- Food Truck Rodeo
- College and Career Update
- Winter Wonder Week
- Winter Sports

Development- January 9th 2026

Giving Tuesday Fundraising Campaign

- **Giving Tuesday updates**
  - Raised 21,500, raised more than last year but not yet the expected $30K
  - 3 donors who've contributed $1000 or more
- **Giving Tuesday Retrospective**
  - Run a Raptor fund campaign through the year
  - Keep the national Giving Tuesday campaign
  - Proposal that expresses the need for a dedicated Development Staff Member at RTHS
- **Spring 26 and long-term plans**
  - Building/capital expansion –Revisiting the conversation and original plans
  - Continue to push the Raptor Fund on a consistent basis
  - Suggestion: send email RTP companies to identify their development contacts.
  - Leverage parents for development contacts.
  - Continue to build relationship with RTP companies.
  - Engage staff and see what specific projects would benefit from Raptor fund.

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: RTHS FY 2025-26 Budget Update 12.31.25.pdf

Research Triangle High School	FY 2025-2026 Board Approved Budget	FY 2025-2026 Working Budget	Variance	Actuals as of 12.31.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget
ADM	572	572	0%		
State Funding per ADM	$ 6,605.00	$ 6,663.18	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	3,811,339	1%	2,309,932	61%
State Funds - Growth Funding	-			-	
State EC Funds	197,328	213,892	8%	106,946	50%
State Funds - LI Adjustment	-				
State Funds - LEP Funds	-	63,669		-	0%
State Funds - School Technology	-	6,742		-	0%
State Funds - NCVPS	(8,138)	(9,303)	14%	(9,303)	100%
State Funds - Fines & Forfeitures	-	-		-	
State Funds - COVID-19	-	-		-	
State Funds - Other Funds (non-recurring)	-	1,077		1,077	
State Funds - Paid Parental Leave Reimbursement	-	-			
Total State Funding	**3,967,250**	**4,087,416**	**3%**	**2,408,652**	**59%**
Alamance County Funds	2,160	6,840	217%	3,833	56%
Brunswick County Funds		1,200			0%
Chapel Hill-Carrboro Funds	50,049	56,824	14%	41,765	73%
Chatham County Funds	45,000	34,765	-23%	10,568	30%
Cumberland County Funds	1,800	-	-100%	-	
Durham County Funds	1,534,752	1,635,803	7%	724,169	44%
Franklin County Funds	-	4,320		-	0%
Granville County Funds	2,313		-100%	-	
Harnett County Funds	1,431	3,690		824	22%
Johnston County Funds					
Orange County Funds	55,530	34,668	-38%	7,734	22%
Wake County Funds	939,900	964,620	3%	243,565	25%
Mecklenburg County Funds	-	-		-	
Total County Funding	**2,632,935**	**2,742,729**	**4%**	**1,032,457**	**38%**
Federal Funds - PRC 060 (EC)	106,437	145,632	37%	36,770	25%
Federal Funds - PRC 050	-	-		-	
Federal Funds - PRC 103	21,069	20,489	-3%	-	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**	**167,221**	**30%**	**36,770**	**22%**
Sales & Use Tax Refund	25,000	25,000	0%	-	0%
Corporate/Board/Private Donations	30,000	30,000	0%	19,922	66%
Interest Income	50,000	40,000	-20%	23,483	59%
Other	6,500	8,700		8,681	100%
Total Revenue	**6,840,291**	**7,101,066**	**4%**	**3,529,965**	50%
Expenses					
Principal	265,000	265,000	0%	132,500	50%
Interest	511,425	511,425	0%	252,978	49%
Bond Costs	8,600	8,600	0%	4,122	48%
Repair and Replacement Fund Transfer	85,800	85,800	0%	42,900	50%
Capitalized Improvements/Purchases	-	-		-	
Building Expenses					
Utilities - elec, water and trash	115,000	110,000	-4%	51,109	46%
Telephone/Communications	3,000	4,011	34%	1,128	28%
Maintenance & Repair	53,000	53,000	0%	16,692	31%
Custodial - Supplies/Materials	18,000	18,000	0%	8,320	46%
Facility Contracted Services:				-	
Custodial Services	88,772	88,772	0%	36,988	42%
Carpet - Tile Cleaning	12,450	12,450	0%	-	0%

Research Triangle High School	FY 2025-2026 Board Approved Budget	FY 2025-2026 Working Budget	Variance	Actuals as of 12.31.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget
HVAC	24,856	24,856	0%	8,233	33%
Grounds - Landscaping	16,000	20,238	26%	13,238	65%
Total Building Expenses	**331,078**	**331,326**	0%	**135,707**	41%
Personnel Costs					
Salaries	3,833,642	3,817,642	0%	1,867,966	49%
Substitutes	100,000	116,000	16%	74,365	64%
Personal Leave				-	
Health Insurance - State Plan	416,510	416,510	0%	203,783	49%
Retirement - State 457 Plan + Match	80,506	80,170	0%	35,386	44%
Payroll Taxes - 7.65%	295,810	295,810	0%	146,371	49%
NC Flex Plan Fees	5,000	5,000	0%	2,540	51%
SUTA	11,429	11,429	0%	874	8%
Workers Comp Insurance	14,000	14,000	0%	341	2%
Bonus				1,077	
Total Personnel Costs	**4,756,898**	**4,756,562**	0%	**2,332,704**	49%
Information Technology					
Technology	45,000	45,000	0%	17,907	40%
Digital Resources & SW Licenses	58,394	58,394	0%	33,303	57%
Total Information Technology	**103,394**	**103,394**	0%	**51,211**	50%
Instructional Services					
Staff Development	25,000	25,000	0%	9,455	38%
Counseling - Staff Dev	1,000	1,000	0%	144	14%
Travel & Mileage Reimbursement	5,000	10,000	100%	5,187	52%
Staff Dev - PD Meals	12,000	12,000	0%	6,809	57%
Staff Development - EC	2,000	2,000	0%	1,311	66%
Educational Programs	17,000	17,000	0%	7,792	46%
Edu Materials - Science Dept	7,000	7,000	0%	1,442	21%
Edu Materials - English Dept	4,000	4,000		1,602	40%
Edu Materials - Languages Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	643	21%
Edu Materials - History Dept	4,000	4,000	0%	1,478	37%
Edu Materials - Arts Dept	5,000	5,000	0%	2,129	43%
Edu Materials - Math Dept	4,000	4,000	0%	353	9%
Edu Materials - PE Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	2,380	79%
Education Materials - EC Dept	3,000	3,000	0%	1,473	49%
Testing (AP/PSAT)	7,566	7,566	0%	(8,459)	-112%
Textbooks/Assessment	5,000	8,000	60%	7,431	93%
Social Service Fund	500	500	0%	-	0%
Furniture & Fixtures	5,000	5,000	0%	2,115	42%
Administrative Expenses	9,000	9,000	0%	5,179	58%
EC Contracted Services: ($50,000 FY23)	-	-		-	
Visually Impared & Orientation	13,000	13,000	0%	6,775	52%
Speech-Language Therapy	20,000	20,000	0%	12,140	61%
Mental Health Service				-	
Web-based IEP Service	-			-	
Occupational Therapy	5,000	5,000	0%	1,594	32%
Interpreting and Written Translation Service				-	
Psychoeducational Assessments	20,000	20,000	0%	6,325	32%
Total Instructional Services	**180,066**	**188,066**	4%	**75,300**	40%
Support Services					
Administration Contracted Services:				-	
Legal & Consulting	50,000	50,000	0%	10,774	22%
Contracted Financial Services	60,480	60,480	0%	30,240	50%
LINQ Software Support	5,769	6,346	10%	6,346	100%
Contracted HR Services	20,400	20,400	0%	10,020	49%
Student Information Management Services	21,000	21,000	0%	10,500	50%
Contracted Printing Services	35,183	35,183	0%	16,648	47%
Contracted Audit Services	25,000	25,000	0%	24,150	97%
Background Checks	2,000	2,000	0%	593	30%
General Insurance	40,645	40,645	0%	23,725	58%

Research Triangle High School	FY 2025-2026 Board Approved Budget	FY 2025-2026 Working Budget	Variance	Actuals as of 12.31.25	% Received/ Expensed to Budget
Board of Director Materials	12,495	13,195	6%	13,195	100%
Fundraising/Development	5,000	5,000	0%	384	8%
Marketing/Advertising	6,000	8,000	33%	5,380	67%
Transportation Contracted Services:				-	
Daily Bus Services	48,000	48,000	0%	20,250	42%
Special Event Transportation Services	4,000	4,000	0%	615	15%
Transportation - Fuel	7,000	7,000	0%	2,620	37%
Transportation Maintenance	4,000	4,000	0%	-	0%
Food Services	22,000	22,000	0%	5,747	26%
Total Support Services	368,972	372,249	1%	181,186	49%
Other Expenses					
Athletics	66,650	70,000	5%	40,568	58%
Feminine Hygiene Grant				-	
Counseling/College Dept	5,000	5,000	0%	470	9%
Graduation	11,000	15,000	36%	5,717	38%
Senior Class Events	2,000	6,000	200%	173	3%
Safety - Off Duty Officer	45,000	45,000	0%	23,050	51%
Staff Snacks (Joy Room)	3,000	3,000	0%	1,858	62%
Staff Appreciation		2,500		-	
Sales Tax	25,000	25,000	0%	12,222	49%
Repayment to DPI					
Robotics	9,000	9,000	0%	4,388	49%
Transfer to Raptorium	100	100	0%	-	0%
Total Other Expenses	166,750	180,600	8%	88,445	49%
Total Expenses	6,777,982	6,803,022	0	3,297,053	48%
Surplus	62,309	298,044		232,913	
Interfund Transfer				150,245	
Surplus from Previous Years	2,202,066	2,202,066		2,202,066	
Ending Cash Balance	2,264,375	2,500,110		2,585,224	

Liquidity Requirement Calculation:

Total Expenses	6,803,022
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	6,902,222
Divided by 365 days	365
Operating Expense per Day	18,910
Multiplied by 45 days	45
Minimum balance required for unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	850,959
Ending Cash Balance	2,500,110
Raptorium Cash	1,390
Clubs, PTSO, Boosters Cash	126,226
Total Unrestricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,627,726
Divided by Operating Expense per Day	18,910
Projected Days Cash on Hand	139

Liquidity Requirement for Days Cash on Hand   45

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Calculation:

Surplus (cash basis)	298,044
Net Income - Raptorium	100
Net Income - Clubs, PTSO, Boosters	-
Net Income - US Bank	-
Add: Repair and Replacement Fund Tran	85,800
Add: Capitalized Items	-
Add: Principal Payments	265,000
Less: Amortization	(11,869)
Less: Depreciation	-
Change in Net Assets	637,075
Add: Interest	511,425
Add: Amortization	11,869
Add: Depreciation	-
Net Income Available for Debt Service	1,160,369
Maximum Annual Debt Service	762,144
Projected Debt Service Coverage Ratio	1.52

Excess of DSCR Requirement   245,796
Required DSCR in Covenants   1.20

Coversheet

Governance Committee Business

Section: VI. Governance Committee Report
Item: A. Governance Committee Business
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: Wireless Communication Device Policy 2025-26, 1-15-2026, edited.pdf
                               Articulation Agreement - Sterling Montessori, 1-15-2026.pdf
                               2025-26 RTHS Student and Family Handbook, final.pdf

Cellular Phones and Wireless Communication Devices Policy

Section 1. Overview

North Carolina recently joined more than 20 other states and the District of Columbia by passing a law that restricts the use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices during the instructional time. The law and this policy recognize that such devices can disrupt the learning environment and should therefore only be permitted by students in limited and clearly defined circumstances.

A Wireless Communication Device is a wireless, portable device that can provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties. The following is a non-exhaustive list of wireless communication devices prohibited by this policy: cellular phones, laptops, gaming devices, smart watches, and any personal technology device.

SecWion 2. ExcepWions

Use of Wireless Communication Devices is not allowed during instructional time except for the following situations:

1) When expressly authorized by a teacher for educational purposes.
    a. A teacher must clearly state the intended educational purpose to students and shall have documentation available to support the use (e.g., lesson plans detailing why devices would be needed).
    b. The teacher shall only allow devices for the duration and purpose allowed.
2) When expressly authorized for a teacher for use in an emergency.
3) When required by the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan;
4) As required to manage a student's health care, in accordance with a documented medical condition.
    a. Students who need wireless communication device to manage health care must request access from the school and as part of that request, must provide documentation from a licensed medical professional outlining the necessity of access to the device.
    b. If approved by administration, students with documented medical condition shall be granted permission to use the wireless communication device only as necessary for their condition.
    c. The school shall make accommodations as needed to ensure the student has access to their device but without compromising the educational environment.

Section 3. Procedures

Students may keep their wireless communication devices on their person, but any device (including a watch) must be turned off and put away. Simply having the device on airplane or silent mode is not sufficient and could subject the student to discipline.

Any student found in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Section 4. Consequences

The first violation of this policy is a Tier 2 violation under the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary measures can include parent/guardian notification and/or detention.

Repeated violations of this policy will lead to more serious consequences in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.

Section 5. Implementation and Training

The Chief School Officer or their designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy, including how to confiscate wireless communication devices if necessary.

The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

All staff members shall receive training on this policy and its enforcement.

Section 6. Communication

This policy shall be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and staff members through appropriate channels, including but not limited to student handbooks, parent newsletters, and staff meetings. The policy shall also be submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) as required by law; DPI shall also receive the revised version of this policy any time it is modified.

Section 7. Legal Authority

This policy aligns with North Carolina General Statute § 115C-76.100.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN RESEARCH TRIANGLE HIGH SCHOOL AND STERLING MONTESSORI ACADEMY & CHARTER SCHOOL

I.   INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the North Carolina General Assembly passed House Bill 242 modifying certain provisions in the charter school law to allow a charter school to give enrollment priority to students enrolled in another charter school that does not offer the next grade level. Accordingly, North Carolina General Statute Section 115C-218.45(f)(6) now provides:

> The charter school may give enrollment priority to any of the following:
> . . .
>
>   (6) A student who was enrolled in another charter school in the State in the previous school year that does not offer the student's next grade level and both of the charter schools have an enrollment articulation agreement to accept students or are governed by the same board of directors.

This Articulation Agreement between the signatory schools, Research Triangle High School ("RTHS") and Sterling Montessori Academy & Charter School ("Sterling"), is intended to utilize this provision in this charter law to allow RTHS to give enrollment priority to students at Sterling as set forth herein. This Articulation Agreement sets forth the eligibility requirements for Sterling students to receive priority lottery positions at RTHS. It also sets forth the process RTHS and Sterling will utilize under this Articulation Agreement.

II.   PURPOSE/INTENT

Sterling Montessori is a K-8 public charter school and does not offer high school. The student population of Sterling Montessori reflects that of the Morrisville and RTP communities. The mission of Sterling is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. Sterling strives to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

RTHS is a high school offering grades 9-12. The mission of Research Triangle High School is to increase access to globally competitive Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education for students and teachers across North Carolina, by incubating, proving and scaling innovative models of teaching and

learning. Through the use of the Flipped Model as a foundation of learning and utilizing personalized learning, RTHS works to meet students where they are at and set them up for success.

The Articulation Agreement between the signatory schools, RTHS and Sterling, is intended to further the mission of each school and provide an opportunity for Sterling students who wish to continue their education at a public charter school as contemplated by North Carolina General Statute 115C-218.45(f)(6).

III.   ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive priority enrollment at RTHS, a Sterling student must meet the following requirements:

1.   Be enrolled in Sterling as an 8th grader at the time the student submits a lottery application.
2.   Academically prepared to enroll in NC Math 1 or higher as a 9th grader.

IV.   PROCESS

If a Sterling student meets the eligibility requirements set forth in this Articulation Agreement, that student will be given priority enrollment at RTHS for the academic year for which the student is applying pursuant to RTHS's priority enrollment policies. However, nothing in this Articulation Agreement guarantees that a Sterling student will be offered admission to RTHS. Representatives at each signatory school will meet either in person or via telephone to discuss any student interested in the priority enrollment set forth under this Articulation Agreement as necessary.

V.   BOARD APPROVAL/TERMINATION

In accordance with North Carolina law, this Articulation Agreement must be voted on and adopted by each signatory school's Board of Directors as set forth in their bylaws. Once adopted, the signatory schools will sign this Articulation Agreement. Each signatory school reserves the right to terminate this Articulation Agreement at any time by providing written notice to the other school.

_____   _____
Sterling Montessori   Date

_____   _____
Research Triangle High School   Date

Student & Family HANDBOOK

2025-2026

Find us on Social Media

Website: www.researchtrianglehighschool.org
Twitter: @restrihigh
Athletics Twitter: @RTHSRaptors
Facebook: Research Triangle High School
Instagram: rths_raptors

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HISTORY

The Contemporary Science Center is an educational nonprofit founded in 2002 created to adapt scientific discoveries and processes that originated in Research Triangle Park into long-format lab activities for high school students. Its focus was on experiential learning: immersing students in the process of science so as to change their thinking about science and make lifelong engagement with science more accessible. In 2011, a team of educators, professionals, and scientists collaborated to create Research Triangle High School and write a charter, which was approved in 2012. The school opened August 13, 2012 at 10 Park Drive in the Research Triangle Park, with an inaugural class of 147 ninth graders. In January of 2016, the school opened at its current location, the former Sigma Xi world headquarters in RTP. The school has since implemented a personalized learning philosophy that seeks to develop students' ability to manage their own learning beyond high school.

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

To increase access to globally competitive Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education for students and teachers across North Carolina by incubating, proving and scaling innovative models of teaching and learning.

VISION STATEMENT

To provide the tools and develop the capacity for students to intentionally determine their futures.

CORE VALUES

1. We are responsive.
2. We respect each other.
3. We find joy in learning and discovery.
4. We provide students with the tools to access power.
5. We hold high standards and encourage growth through failure.

RTHS STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Research Triangle High School is committed to having a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect, and in which each student and teacher has an equal opportunity to work, learn, and develop to his or her full potential in an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. To that end, RTHS prohibits any form of harassment or discrimination (including sexual harassment) and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, disability or handicap, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), or other protected characteristic, whether by a supervisor, administrator, co-worker, volunteer, contractor, student, or non-employee. No person shall, on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender (including actual perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), sexual orientation, disability, or handicap, be denied equal access or admission to school programs, courses, extracurricular activities and employment opportunities. In addition, under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no otherwise qualified individual, shall solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity at the school.

1. **We are responsive**. We take time and make an effort to know our students and we value their experiences, their truths, and their family context. We have built a system that recognizes and adapts to the needs of our students while still holding high achievement and effort paramount.

2. **We respect each other.** Our students, staff, parents, board, and others who deal with our school recognize the difficulty of the teaching profession and of the learning process for students. These days school is a high-stress environment, and we deal with issues extending far beyond just classroom learning. It is critical to have a school where all approach each other with a noble purpose, appreciating our backgrounds, preparation, and history, we build from responsiveness to respect, which is critical for supporting our students and our teachers.

3. **We find joy in learning and discovery.** Both students and teachers are learning every day. This is collaborative. As challenging as learning is, there must be a way to engage our emotions as well. Science tells us that linking emotion and learning is powerful and productive. We want students to be able to find joy in their work, as that joy will continue to drive them beyond school, and that joy will give them power over the challenges they meet in the world beyond school.

4. **We provide students with the tools to access power.** The world is structured in a way that controls who moves through it. Student progress is historically governed by ZIP code, and we seek to enable students to break that legacy. Our students deserve control of their lives: professional, economic, political, and social. As adults who have navigated the world, we work to pass that practical knowledge to students, so that we are addressing more than just subject matter content every day. We aspire to a society free of the tyranny and oppression of racism, classism, sexism, and the structural systems left to us by previous generations that stamp our children at birth.

5. **We hold high standards and encourage growth through failure.** Finally, we learn lessons intentionally and unintentionally. It is our goal as instructors, counselors, and leaders to support our students through those experiences, so that they become bumps rather than the end of the road. We promise two fundamental statements that underlie all we do in our daily work: provide students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and insist on high quality work. Failure, with support, leads to growth. Whatever the circumstances, though, we have the capacity to change in response to setbacks, and we are responsive.

RESEARCH TRIANGLE FACULTY & STAFF

FACULTY & STAFF

A complete list of personnel can be found on the RTHS website under About Us > Faculty & Staff, or directly at: https://researchtrianglehighschool.org/about-us/faculty-staff/

COMMUNICATING WITH FACULTY & STAFF

Faculty and staff are expected to respond to and acknowledge messages within **two business days**, and provide considered answers to questions within three days. If an issue takes more time to resolve, that will be communicated. **We want to balance meeting the needs of students and families with teacher lives with the many responsibilities of teachers**

BY TELEPHONE

All faculty and staff members may be reached at the front office number, **919-998-6757**. Each teacher has an individual extension and voicemail box. In addition, some teachers have their own private work numbers which they may share.

Can I leave a voicemail message at the main number?
Yes, and you can also leave messages directly for teachers if you know their direct extensions

BY FAX

RTHS fax number is 919-998-3402. We can send and receive faxes in color.

BY EMAIL

The faculty and staff at Research Triangle High School principally communicate by email. We do so for several reasons, including keeping records of communication, ease of tracking, and accessibility at any time or place. If you would prefer to receive paper copies of notices, please contact the front office.

BY STUDENT BACKPACK

For very important, but not time-sensitive issues, we will also send home letters. These letters will usually be sent through the Mentor, with a return signature or communication requested. Historically, asking students to take papers home to families has been problematic at every school.

BY PARENTSQUARE

ParentSquare is a platform designed to communicate with you at the school, and in your classrooms and groups. With ParentSquare you'll be able to:

- Receive all school and classroom communication via email, text or app
- View and download photos
- View the school and classroom calendar and RSVP for events
- Easily sign up to volunteer and/or bring items

How do I activate my ParentSquare account?
Parents will receive an email notification from ParentSquare to activate their account. After activating your account, parents will be able to access ParentSquare through www.parentsquare.com or through the iOS or Android app.

How do I use ParentSquare?
Parents Getting Started Video - https://vimeo.com/187431155/338cf3f348
ParentSquare Tour and Features Video - https://vimeo.com/186008987/ab5d20a52e
Parent App Video - https://vimeo.com/307587191/55b5893b30

TEACHER CONFERENCES

To request a teacher conference with the student's mentor and current teachers, parents or guardians should contact the dean of students and leave a date or possible dates convenient for the meeting. Once the conference

has been scheduled, the office staff will contact the parent. If a conference is needed with an individual teacher, the parent should contact that teacher by email.

WHOM TO CALL/EMAIL ABOUT WHAT

Who?	About What?
Teachers	Assignments Grades Class Policies Classroom concerns Student performance
Exceptional Children Mechia DuPree EC Coordinator mdupree@rthighschool.org Margaret Nelson Case Manager mmajors-nelson@rthighschool.org Ellen Apple Case Manager eapple@rthighschool.org	IEP/504 eligibility or implementation
Leadership Team Chief School Officer Akiba Griffin agriffin@rthighschool.org Assistant Principal/Testing Coordinator Priscilla Rodriguez Dean of Students and Culture Dez Thompson dthompson@rthighschool.org Chief Operations Officer Alex Drake adrake@rthighschool.org	School Policy Discipline Conflict Resolution Testing Transportation Safety
Front Office Staff office@rthighschool.org **Student Services** Deirdre Lewis dlewis@rthighschool.org	Absences Tardies Student Record Requests
School Counselors Kristen Cook kcook@rthighschool.org Vacancy	Student Schedules Transcripts Grade Records NC Virtual Public School Courses Student Well-Being
College Counselor Sarah Overman, Director soverman@rthighschool.org	College Applications Scholarships Post-high school options
Freshmen Academy Ellen Apple eapple@rthighschool.org Jessica Stokes jstokes@rthighschool.org	Freshman Concerns

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CALENDAR

School calendars are located on the RTHS's website under About Us / Calendars and Schedule or in link: https://researchtrianglehighschool.org/about-us/calendar-and-schedule/

ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

As we partner with families to best support students, it is critical that we engage in a way that allows our partnership to flourish. We understand that situations can become stressful, and we want to maintain the best support possible.

All adults entering the school or participating in school events shall adhere to the following rules of conduct:

1. Always be respectful to the staff, students, and other school community members.
2. Model appropriate behavior and be good examples to our school community.
3. Do not display dangerous or unsafe behavior when on our campus.
4. Check in and obtain clearance from the office upon entering the building.
5. Do not disrupt teaching and learning when visiting the school.
6. If you need to speak with a staff member, schedule a meeting.
7. Refrain from using threats, profanity, inappropriate or rude language/gestures, or an aggressive/loud voice.
8. Handle complaints by first seeking a resolution with the staff members involved in a positive and professional manner.
9. Ensure email communications to school staff, faculty, or students are respectful.
10. Do not harass, bully, or threaten school staff, faculty, or students on school grounds, at school events (whether or not on school grounds), or via email.

To the extent that an adult's actions/behavior fall below the code of conduct, the adult can be subjected to disciplinary action by the administration.

- Upon the first occurrence, the direct supervisor will send a follow-up email to the individual.
- Upon a second occurrence, individuals can be:
  - removed from the premises;
  - restricted from re-entry for a period of 30 calendar days; and
  - limited to pick-up and drop-off of students outside the building.
- Upon a third occurrence, individuals can be:
  - Removed from the premises; and
  - Permanently restricted from re-entry.

BANNING FROM CAMPUS
The school reserves the right to ban any person including parents, separated personnel, or those under investigation, from campus where there is a safety or security concern, actual/potential disruption to the school environment, or where it is in the best interest of the School to do so. The Chief School Officer, their designee, or the Board may issue such a ban.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
(Please See attachment B for the complete list of definitions and descriptions.)

The Research Triangle High School's expectation for student behavior is based upon the following governing principles:

1. Students will act with courtesy, consideration, tolerance, and patience in all interactions with others both at school and during school-sponsored activities.
2. Students shall treat school property and facilities with care and respect.
3. Students shall treat the property of others with care and respect.
4. Students will follow the school's Honor Code and be honest in all academic and social situations.
5. Student behavior will reflect positively upon the school.

Good discipline is imperative to the School's success and to the success of each individual student.Our goal is to help a student adjust to the requirements of their environment rather than punishment for their not having adjusted, it is turning unacceptable conduct into acceptable conduct, and it is not humiliating or embarrassing. The ultimate, unique achievement of good discipline is self-discipline on the part of the student. Each teacher/team has a plan for managing student behavior that incorporates effective strategies consistent with the purpose and principles established by Board policies regarding student behavior. Teachers are encouraged to seek positive, innovative and constructive methods of correcting and managing student behavior in an effort to avoid repeated misbehavior and suspension.

Consequences for violating the policies in this handbook, teacher/team standards, or rules may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Parental involvement
- Isolation or time-out for short periods of time
- Behavior improvement agreements (contracts)
- Limitation of technology privileges
- Individual or small group sessions with an administrator
- Silent Lunch
- Detention during lunch or before/after school
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension or exclusion.

The school is not required to engage in progressive discipline. Some offenses are so serious they warrant more severe consequences including, but not limited to, immediate suspension and/or recommendation for longer-term consequences.

This Student Code of Conduct is not to be seen as all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to amend or add to these lists as unique situations arise. The administration further reserves the right to deviate from the stated disciplinary action(s) based on unique or aggravating factors.

Failure to follow the instruction of a teacher, administrator or other school official and any conduct in violation of any written rule, policy or procedure or code of the school will result in appropriate disciplinary measures.

DEFINITIONS

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- **Short-Term Suspension:** suspension from school, school activities and school grounds for a period of up to ten (10) school days.
- **Long-Term Suspension:** suspension from school, school activities and school grounds for more than ten (10) school days, but less than exclusion.
- **Exclusion:** Permanent removal of the student from school, school activities and school grounds. A charter school student who has been excluded may return to their local educational agency pursuant to North Carolina law.
- **Expulsion:** Permanent termination of the student-school relationship. This applies only to students 14 years of age or older whose continued presence constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff.

TIER I OFFENSES

Result: Parent engagement, lunch detention, limitation of technology privileges.

- Dress Code violations
- Academic Integrity violations
- Littering on school property
- Repeatedly refusing to complete school assignments
- Violation of the Technology Use Agreement
- Cell phone/headphone use during the school day
- Violation of Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Repeatedly neglecting to bring notebook, pencil and/or other learning materials to class

TIER II OFFENSES

Result: Scheduled Detention, In School Suspension, Exclusion, or Short/Long-term Out of School Suspension, Suspension of technology privileges

- Committing repeated Tier I offenses
- Failure to comply with other assigned consequences
- Deliberately disrupting the normal educational process in the classroom
- Use of profanity and/or an obscene gesture
- Lying to or deliberately deceiving a teacher or a staff member
- Willfully leaving the classroom or school grounds without permission
- Inappropriate public displays of affection
- Failure to follow instructions of school staff
- Throwing objects in the classroom or on school grounds
- Repeated tardiness
- Use of inappropriate language
- Insubordination
- Repeated violations of the Honor Code such as cheating and/or plagiarism
- Taking unauthorized or inappropriate photos or videos of another individual
- Bullying/harassment (cyber-bullying included)
- Causing breakage to another student's school issued technology
- Failure to attend an assigned class without a valid excuse, skipping school or cutting classes
- Any conduct committed off-campus that (a) if committed on campus would constitute a Tier II offense and (b) has a reasonable relationship to school operations

- Unauthorized or inappropriate use of any electronic device while on school property not associated with the educational process during normal school hours.

TIER III OFFENSES

Result: Suspension or possible disciplinary hearing for repeated and/or severe behavior, which could include but would not be limited to a Long-Term Suspension or Exclusion from attending Research Triangle High School.

- Committing a combination of or repeated Tier I and/or Tier II offenses
- Using school technology or network to access pornographic, violent or other unacceptable content either at school or at home using school-owned electronic devices.
- Accessing, producing, posting, displaying or sending offensive message, music or images, including images of exposed body parts
- Damaging the reputation of a staff member – defamation of character.
- Trafficking, possessing and/or using tobacco/nicotine products on school property or at a school-sponsored event including the use or possession of electronic cigarettes or paraphernalia.
- Stealing or possessing stolen property
- Threatening to physically harm or attack another student, staff member or adult on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Physically striking or attacking a student, staff member or adult whether as an individual act or with the assistance of others
- Possessing, handling, transferring or bringing a weapon or ammunition (including a toy weapon; example – toy gun, toy knife) on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Creating or encouraging other students to join in a disturbance, so as to cause the disruption of normal school operations.
- Accessing or disseminating pornography, graphic content, sexual content or any other inappropriate material on an electronic device or in print.
- Possessing, selling, exchanging, distributing, attempting to purchase, using or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or any substance purported to be an illegal drug, prescription medicine or alcohol on school property or at a school-sponsored event. This includes distribution of or purposely taking more than the prescribed amount of medically necessary prescription medication. *(SEE ATTACHMENT H)*
- Touching or conduct perceived as sexual or inappropriate in nature or which is deemed offensive to that person
- Damage/destruction/vandalism/arson of or trespassing on school property
- Hazing
- Bomb threat/hoax, false alarms
- Possession or use of explosives, fireworks, sparklers, smoke/stink bombs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- Any conduct committed off-campus that (a) if committed on campus would constitute a Tier III offense and (b) has a reasonable relationship to school operations
- Creating or encouraging other students to join in a disturbance, so as to cause the disruption of normal school operations.

Note: Any student who inadvertently possesses or finds a weapon or illegal substance or stolen property, which may subject the student to exclusion, may or may not be recommended for these sanctions if the student voluntarily surrenders the property to a school staff person prior to discovery by another person. This should be done as soon as the student realizes that he/she is in possession of the weapon or substance or stolen property.

Any student who has been given out-of-school suspension three or more times in the same academic year may be recommended for exclusion.

The School and its employees shall follow applicable rules concerning the discipline of students who qualify under relevant special education laws.

The Chief School Officer shall have the authority to suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days at a time (*i.e.,* a Short-Term Suspension). There are no appeals for short term suspensions of 10 days or less.

For Tier III offenses, the school's Chief School Officer may recommend a Long-Term Suspension, and/or Exclusion, and/or participation in a Behavioral Contract. Decisions as to Long-Term Suspensions and/or Exclusion shall be made by the Director after appropriate written notice to the parties involved and a hearing if one is requested. In the absence of the Director, the Board Chair shall appoint a hearing officer. Student appeals from the decision of the Director or hearing officer shall be heard by a panel of three Board members who shall be appointed by the Board Chair. Appeals must be made in writing to the Board Chair within ten (10) days of the decision of the Director or hearing officer. The hearing of the panel will occur at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting date unless the family is otherwise notified. Decisions of the Board panel shall be final, and there will be no further appeal to the full Board of Directors.

The School's disciplinary procedures will be exercised in a manner consistent with state and federal law, including the Gun Free Schools Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The disciplinary procedures applicable to students with disabilities and those who have Section 504 accommodation plans are available on the school's website.

RESEARCH TRIANGLE HIGH SCHOOL: A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

At Research Triangle High School we are a community of learners who are responsible for our own learning, engaged in our learning, supportive and respectful to one another, and willing to be vulnerable for the sake of growing.

HOW DO WE BEHAVE AS A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

- We are productive when we need to be and relaxed when we can be.
- We treat each other with respect and recognize that our personal experiences are valid and unique.
- We value important contributions to discussion and growth of our experiences as individuals.
- We take ownership of our academic and social futures.

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- We are not afraid to criticize school practice or policy in order to make the school a better place.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTION

COMMUNITY

- All communications should be respectful, whether speaking to peers or staff members. Profanity (swearing) should not be used on school property or at school events and should never be directed at a staff member or other students.
- Students should make an effort to get to know their classmates and practice respectful tolerance towards those people who may be different from themselves. Students should look out for each other and seek to help everyone find a way to feel welcome and valued.
- Public displays of affection should not occur on school grounds or at school events.
- Bullying, name calling, and unkind behavior, whether in person or online, will not be tolerated.

TECHNOLOGY

- Academic uses for technology have first priority.
- Students should use technology to develop academic independence; they are responsible for keeping up with assignments online, checking email, and watching videos as assigned.
- Students must abide by the guidelines of the **Responsible Use Policy**. In addition, please keep the following guidelines in mind:
  - Any videos, music, or games experienced at school should be in the PG-13 or lower range. Please remember we have a diverse population and be sensitive to what may be offensive, inappropriate or distracting for the student next to you.
  - Earbuds and headphones should not be worn when staff is giving instructions or when working in classroom groups.
  - Be polite, respectful and immediately responsive if a staff member makes a request for a device to be put away.
  - Social uses of technology, such as texting, personal email, Facebook, Twitter, etc. should be kept to a minimum during the school day and avoided completely during academic instruction.
  - Sending explicit messages or photos via email or text is a crime in North Carolina. High school age children have been convicted.

CELL PHONES

RTHS allows student cell phone use during the school day. That use is subject to the school's **Technology Acceptable Use Policy** and so inappropriate use of these devices can result in loss of technology privileges at school. Additionally, as inappropriate student use of personal devices may challenge student engagement in classrooms and disrupt safe, orderly school environments, and established parameters for authorized use of such devices are set forth above, unauthorized student use of personal devices may result in consequences under the Code of Student Conduct.

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Consistent with that policy, the specific consequences will depend in part on the specific conduct at issue. The school's cell phone use policy for students is as follows:

- Students do not regularly need a cell phone or smartphone for schoolwork or activities. Most schoolwork can be done with a laptop. We prefer laptops because of screen formatting and keyboard access. We recognize the need for phones at certain times, and so we do not prohibit them outright.
- Students may use phones before and after school, between classes, and lunch without restriction. We ask that students respect others by keeping volume down, using earbuds or headphones, and choosing content that is appropriate for school. Volume on headphones should be low enough that it cannot be heard outside of one's own ears.
- Students may use phones during class time **only at the teacher's discretion**. This means that different teachers may have different rules for their use. Students should not assume that all classrooms are equal. Also, a teacher who generally allows use may choose to restrict it for certain purposes. When told, students are expected to put their phones away and devote their full attention to the teacher and class. **Put your phone away when asked.**
- School staff are authorized to temporarily confiscate a student's personal device. A confiscated device should be returned at the end of the class period, school event, or activity when the device was improperly used.
- School administration may determine that a device will be confiscated until the end of the school day if the improper use is willful, repeated, substantially disruptive, or interferes with other students' ability to focus on instruction or extracurricular programming. Parents/Guardians should be notified before the afternoon bell rings if a device is confiscated for the remainder of the school day.

DRESS CODE
- Students should dress appropriately for academic activities.
- Clothing must cover undergarments (waistbands and straps excluded).
- Breasts, genitals and buttocks must be covered with opaque (non-see-through) fabric.
- In keeping with our goals to have our students ready for internships and higher academic and business pursuits, the following items should be avoided:
  - Clothing bearing images or slogans referring to drug or alcohol use, or which are generally considered offensive to another person or group, including the swastika and Confederate flag, for example. Students will be asked to remove or cover these items. If a person or group finds a symbol or slogan offensive, the administration will entertain the student's argument and investigate if this content should be added to the list.
  - Sunglasses and novelty items worn in the classroom.
  - Pajama pants and slippers worn during the school day.
  - Some exceptions can be made for school spirit day and other specific occasions.

SCHOOL GROUNDS

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- **To ensure the health and safety of students with severe nut allergies, Research Triangle High School has designated certain classrooms and areas as nut-free zones. We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining these safe spaces for our students.**
- Students should be with a staff member and in view of the school and staff at all times.
- Please pick up trash and follow recycling guidelines.
- Do not write on walls, desks, bathrooms, or other parts of school property.
- Be mindful of power cords and backpacks in classrooms. We don't want someone's computer knocked over accidentally.
- Please keep food and drink in designated areas.
- Use the crosswalk if you need to cross Highway 54.
- Skateboarding and rollerblades are permitted in designated areas and with the use of a helmet. Engaging in these activities is at your own risk, and the school assumes no liability for any injuries or accidents that may happen.

TOBACCO USE POLICY
(See attachment H)
North Carolina laws about tobacco, illegal substances and weapons will be strictly enforced, and violations can result in criminal charges as well as school disciplinary actions. RTHS considers "tobacco products" to include cigarettes, cigars, "blunts," pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, e-cigarettes, juuls, vaporizers, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, vaping, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products. "Tobacco-free campus" refers to any building, facility, grounds, property, owned by RTHS as well as any spaces where school-sponsored or activities are held, whether on or off campus.[1] Students interested in quitting smoking are encouraged to visit the NC Quitline: http://www.quitlinenc.com/tobacco-users/just-for-you/teens

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Academic honesty is required by Research Triangle High School , and any form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the school's Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating and includes but is not limited to the following; working with another person(s) without permission, copying someone else's work, sharing your work with others without permission, unauthorized use of notes or books on examinations, tests or quizzes; giving or receiving information on examinations, tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, lab assignments, homework assignments or any other work without the approval of the instructor; forging a parent signature; and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as intentionally using another person's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without proper citation. Any act of academic dishonesty could result in loss of credit for the assignment and/or other disciplinary action.

SCHOOL HONOR CODE
The purpose of the Honor Code at Research Triangle High School   is to build a community of honor and trust among administrators, teachers, students, parents, and staff.

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[1] Thank you to Durham Technical Community College for their help with this wording.

RTHS HONOR CODE

School students are good citizens who value honor and demonstrate integrity in all that they do. They help community members by having a positive attitude and respecting other people and school property.

Honor: Having high moral standards of behavior; Being judged by other people as possessing good qualities or character.

Integrity: Possessing the quality of being honest and fair.

Lying: Purposefully being dishonest or misleading to a fellow student, teacher, or administrator.

Cheating: Receiving unauthorized help on work; copying another person's work or answers on assessments. Asking other students to provide information, such as questions posed or material covered on tests, quizzes, or other assignments already taken or completed by the other student. Plagiarizing is a form of cheating.

Plagiarism: Passing off another's work or ideas as your own or intentionally failing to cite sources for information that is not widely known. Ignorance of proper citation procedures is not an acceptable excuse for failing to cite sources. Plagiarism includes:

- Excessive parental assistance with homework or projects.
- Forgery or falsification of documents.
- Lying, outwardly and/or by omission.
- Aiding others who are violating the School Honor Code.
- Taking property that does not belong to you without permission.
- Not abiding by the School Technology Handbook's rules and/or guidelines.

Stealing: Taking another person's belongings or ideas (plagiarism) without permission or providing proper citations.

Disrespectful of People or Property: Being rude, defiant, or unkind to another person; vandalism or misuse of school property.

Inappropriate Use of Technology: Loading unauthorized programs or viewing non-approved websites on school laptops.

STUDENT HONOR PLEDGE:

"As an honorable member of Research Triangle High School, I promise to uphold the Honor Code of my school to promote honor and integrity. I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, be disrespectful of people or property, or use technology inappropriately. "

REPORTING OF HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS

Each RTHS student is honor-bound to report immediately all violations of the Honor Code of which the student has first-hand knowledge; failure to do so is a violation of the Honor Code. All students, staff, and other employees of the School are responsible for familiarity with and

support of the Honor Code. Any staff member may charge a student with a violation of the Honor Code. Charges are presented to the School Adminstration Team.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THE HONOR CODE

When a student is found to have displayed a lack of academic integrity, consequences will include the following:

- First Offense
  - Have a conversation with the teacher about their actions.
  - Be allowed to retake the assessment or redo the assignment.
- Second or Third Offense
  - Have their parent/guardian contacted and informed of their actions.
  - Have a conversation with the administration about their actions.
  - Receive reduced credit for the assignment*
- Fourth Offense
  - Have their parent/guardian contacted and informed of their actions.
  - Have a conversation with the administration about their actions.
  - Student receives a 0 for the assignment.

*Classes using the PLP reserve the right to reduce or replace a score and require a student to retake the assessment if the assignment is shown to be academically dishonest.

PERSONALIZATION

Student behavior at RTHS is addressed on an individual basis, and the context of each situation is investigated and examined by school staff to ensure that the complete picture is known. Students can expect a complete interview and that their presentation of their circumstances will be taken seriously and considered in any challenging situation. State law requires some student behaviors to be addressed in a particular way, and for this reason we present the Tiered Intervention Plan. The idea is to give examples of disruptive situations, not prescribe punishments for student actions.

RTHS TIERED INTERVENTION and RESTORATIVE PRACTICE[2]

We respect and trust each student at Research Triangle High School to exhibit exemplary behavior which contributes to the learning environment at RTHS. Should students struggle with the above expectations, appropriate interventions will be utilized with emphasis on Restorative Practices and Family Engagement. Restorative Practices are processes that proactively build healthy relationships and a sense of community to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

RTHS recognizes that parents are invaluable resources in the process of educating students. Parents play an important role as the first teachers of their children and parental support is critical to a student's success. It is the intent of RTHS to establish a collaborative partnership between

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[2] Restorative Practice at RTHS are based on the Schott Foundation for Public Education Restorative Practices Guide - http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/restorative-practices-guide.pdf

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the home and school. RTHS staff will use ParentSquare, email, telephone, and face-to-face meetings to engage parents in their child's education.

RESTORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Restorative practices focus on righting a wrong committed and repairing harm done. The goal is to place value on relationships and focus on repairing relationships that have been injured. All parties involved have the opportunity to share perspectives and how they will work to resolve the issues or conflicts.

MEDIATION

Mediation is facilitated discussion that helps students in conflict resolve their disputes and create their own solutions, using shared problem-solving within a school setting. Trained mediators serve as neutral third parties to help participants reach an agreement that is both mutually fair and reasonable.

RESTORATIVE CIRCLE DISCUSSIONS

A Restorative Circle is a community process for supporting those in conflict. Restorative circles are facilitated in three stages designed to identify the key factors of the conflict, reach agreements on the next steps, and evaluate the result. As a circle forms, they invite shared power, mutual understanding, self-responsibility, and effective action.[3]

A NOTE ON SUSPENSION

Please note that suspension of a student in or out of school is a last resort and is usually reserved for cases where safety must be preserved. At RTHS, we prefer consequences that do not remove a student from the learning environment. In some cases, where a student represents a threat to an individual or the school, out-of-school suspension may be necessary. Should a student choose to disrupt the learning environment for others, that student will be removed and placed in an environment that allows all RTHS students the best learning opportunity available.

Some more serious offenses will result in immediate long-term suspension, which include the student having received repeated short-term suspensions, and specifically those offenses outlined by General Statute 115C-391, such as possession of weapon(s) including a firearm or other weapons as dictated by General Statute. Students who are placed under long-term suspension are entitled to a hearing before the Board of Directors, or a subcommittee thereof, as prescribed in the General Statute.

Students may also require intervention for conduct not occurring on school property if that conduct violates this Code of Student Conduct and has had, or is expected to have, a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the school or the safety of individuals in the school environment. In addition, our expectations for our students during the school day apply to all extracurricular and co-curricular events, both on campus and off campus, as well as during travel on public transportation to and from the school.

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[3] https://www.restorativecircles.org/

LUNCH

Because RTHS does not have a cafeteria, students may eat lunch in galleries, designated classrooms, or outside in the patio area in the front of the school building. Students may eat in the designated lunch area (DLA) of their choice. Parents who would like to deliver lunch to their student should bring it to the front office for pick up before lunch begins.

Because classrooms are used immediately following lunch, students are expected to take extra care to make the rooms ready for the incoming class. **Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves at lunch.** Students who do not meet RTHS expectations for behavior during lunch may be assigned lunch detention.

HOT LUNCH BOX
A group of students organize hot lunch box delivery to school four (4) days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesdays, and Thursday. Orders are due by noon the day before to receive lunch on myhotlunchbox.com. If you have any questions, reach out to student leader Blake Maaske, bmaaske26@rthighschool.org

LUNCH DELIVERY POLICY
RTHS **does not** allow students to leave campus for lunch. Should students choose to have lunch delivered by a third party (parent, vendor, Doordash etc.), all business must be resolved before the end of lunch. **Additional lunch time will not be allotted to students simply because their food is delivered late.**

1. Any orders must be placed in such a way that class is not disrupted.
2. All payment must be made in advance.
3. All deliveries must be made at the front desk at the front of the building. Deliveries must be made in the presence of a member of the school staff.
4. Any delivery made before lunch starts will be held at the front office. **Students will not be called out of class to receive or resolve lunch delivery issues**.

LITTER

Students have a responsibility to help keep the facilities at Research Triangle High School clean and free of litter. This includes classroom space, bathrooms, hallways, and outdoor areas. Teachers will establish cleanup routines for their classrooms, and students may be asked to contribute to the cleanliness of the school area. We are a learning community and our environment should be kept clean.

DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICATION

If a student needs to take any medication during the school day, the student should bring the medicine, along with a form obtained from the physician (either a prescription or a note explaining the dose, medication, and circumstances in the case of over-the-counter medications), to the office. The student is responsible for coming to the office at the specified time to receive the medication from a member of the office staff. Medication must be taken in the presence of a staff member. The student should sign the medication log provided by the office staff. Students should never self-medicate. We understand that each medical situation is unique and will work with families. Please see the front office staff if you have questions.

VISITORS

Any visitors to Research Triangle High School, including parents, other family members, or guardians, should check in at the front office and receive a visitor name tag. Students who attend other schools are not permitted to visit RTHS during the school day. This includes RTHS graduates, unless by special arrangement. Parents or guardians who need to meet with teachers or administrators should make an appointment directly.

Family members or guardians who are delivering materials (including lunch) to a specific student must take those items to the front office for the student to pick up. Please do not have a student simply meet you in the parking lot.

Parents may not freely wander in the building under any circumstances. You must be escorted by an RTHS staff member at all times.

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS POLICY
Purpose: To clearly identify how registered sex offenders will be expected to respect the boundaries set forth by Research Triangle High School.

Pursuant to Session Law 2008-117, The Jessica Lunsford Act for North Carolina ("the Act"), the General Assembly of North Carolina has recognized that sex offenders often pose a high risk of engaging in sex offenses after being released from incarceration or commitment and that the protection of students from sex offenders while on School property and at School-sponsored activities serves an important governmental interest.

 Research Triangle High is committed to the following:

1. Sex offenders are banned from all School property and School events

In accordance with G.S. 14-208.18, all persons who (1) are required to register under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Program AND (2) have been convicted of certain sexually violent offenses or any offense where the victim was under the age of 16 years at the time of the offense ("Prohibited Persons";) are expressly forbidden to be present on any property owned or operated by the School system, including School buildings, athletic fields, playgrounds, parking lots, School buses, activity buses or other property of any kind for any reason, including
attendance at sporting events or other School-related functions, whether before, during or after School hours. In addition, Prohibited Persons may not attend or be present at any student function or field trip on or off of School property which is 1) School-sponsored or 2) otherwise under the official supervision or control of School personnel. This policy applies to all Prohibited Persons regardless of their relationship to, or affiliation with, a student in the School system (i.e. stepparents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc).

(a) Prohibited persons
The Chief School Officer or designee shall insure that administration is familiar with the criminal offenses that qualify an individual as a Prohibited Person under this policy. The Chief School Officer will also subscribe to electronic notification of Registered Sex Offenders and access the state database as needed.
(b) No special permission
There shall be no "special permission" given for Prohibited Persons to be on School grounds or attend events or activities in violation of this policy.
(c) Possible exceptions for students

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Students who meet the definition of a Prohibited Person may be on School property only in accordance with state law.

(d) Limited exception for prohibited persons who are parents/legal guardians of a student

(i) A Prohibited Person who is the Parent/Legal Guardian of a student may be on School property only for the following reasons:

(1) To attend a previously scheduled School conference with School personnel to discuss their child's academic or social progress; or

(2) At the request of the Chief School Officer/designee, for any other reason relating to the welfare or transportation of the child

(ii) The procedure for making a request is as follows:

(1) For each visit authorized by subsection (i)(1) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must provide the Chief School Officer with prior written notice of their registration on the Sex Offender Registry

(2) A request for presence at the School must be submitted to the Director in writing, minimally 72 hours in advance.

(3) The request must include the nature and specific times of the request

(4) The Director or designee will respond within 48 hours either authorizing or denying the request.

(5) The decision of the Chief School Officer or designee is final.

(6) The Chief School Officer will notify the Board of any such requests and the decision.

(iii) For each visit authorized by subsection (c) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must check in at the front office upon arrival and departure. In addition, during each and every visit, the Parent/Legal Guardian must be under the direct supervision of School personnel at all times. If personnel are not available to supervise the Parent/Legal Guardian during any visit then they shall not be permitted on the School property.

(iv) For each visit authorized by subsection (c) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian shall comply with all reasonable rules and restrictions placed upon them by the Chief School Officer, including any restrictions on the date, time, location, and length of meetings.

2. Enforcement
Any suspected violation of this policy shall be reported by a School administrator to the Chief School Officer and to law enforcement for immediate investigation. All School personnel should report the presence or suspected presence of a Prohibited Person to a School administrator and take appropriate action. The Chief School Officer shall immediately notify the Board Chair of any known or suspected Prohibited Person who is a student, or parent or legal guardian of a student, at their School.

3. Applicability
This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in all other Board policies regarding School safety, parental involvement, School field trips, School visitors, School volunteers and student transportation

3. Applicability
This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in all other Board policies regarding School safety, parental involvement, School field trips, School visitors, School volunteers and student transportation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Attendance in class is critical for academic success at Research Triangle High School. Students who are ill should remain at home to recover. However, parents, guardians and students should

be aware that frequent absences often result in academic difficulties. We encourage you to schedule appointments and travel during non-school hours and scheduled breaks. Additionally, continued tardiness has a negative impact on both the education of the tardy student, and on that of other members of the class. Students should arrive at class on time and be ready to participate.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE
School begins at 8:45 am. To accommodate various schedules, students may arrive at school as early as 7:45 am. Any student arriving on campus between 7:45 and 8:30 am must come into the building and sit in a first or second floor gallery or a supervised morning study hall. If teachers are available, students may meet with them during this time.

During the school day, students must stay in the immediate vicinity of our building. When students arrive at school, they must come into the building. Students must not stay in the school parking lot or in their vehicles parked anywhere before school unless accompanied by a parent. During school, <u>students are not permitted in the school parking lot</u>, other than the PE lot, or on any grounds located off school property, including the woods around the school, or the Frontier across the street. Students are not to leave the school building during the day. Students should not use the lower-level exit door except in emergencies. Students should never prop open doors.

School ends at 3:30 pm and all students not in a supervised activity must be picked up by 4:30 pm. Students may stay after school for athletics, club meetings, drama, or extra help from a teacher. After 4:00 pm all students must be in a supervised activity or silent study hall. The building will close at 4:30 pm Monday-Thursday and 2:45 pm on Friday. Unsupervised students are allowed to remain on the front patio for pick-up, but the building will be closed.

LATE ARRIVAL
Students arriving between 8:45 and 9 am should go directly to class, where the teacher will issue a penalty for the tardiness.
- <u>Students arriving after 9 am</u> must provide a **signed note from a parent or guardian** explaining the tardiness and must sign-in at the office. Office staff will give the student an admittance form to enter class.

- RTHS does not distinguish between lateness due to the fault of the student or the fault of the parent or guardian that brings the student after school has started in the morning.

EARLY DEPARTURE
- <u>Students who leave school early</u> must bring a signed note from a parent or guardian explaining the reason for the departure. When it is time to leave school, the office will phone the teacher and the student will be dismissed from class to go to the front desk for dismissal. The student must then sign out before leaving the building. Parents will be called by the front office to authenticate the call.
- <u>If a student leaves school for an appointment,</u> he or she must sign out and sign back in again when returning to campus.
- <u>If a student gets sick during the school day and needs to leave school</u>, the student should go to the office and call a parent or guardian. Office staff will speak to the parent or guardian before the student is allowed to sign out.
- In the event that a student is a part of a carpool that must leave early, the student must have permission on file from a parent or guardian in order to leave school early. The law does not allow us to check minors out to anyone who is not listed in our files as a parent.

TARDINESS TO CLASS

Students are allowed five minutes passing time between classes. If a student arrives to class tardy, the student will receive a penalty from the teacher for being tardy. If a student is frequently tardy, the Dean of Students may become involved and interventions will be put in place.

Consequences for unexcused tardies (quarterly)

Number of Occurrences	Action Taken
1st/2nd Tardy	Verbal warning
3rd Tardy	Teacher contacts parents/guardian
4th Tardy	Teacher assigned consequence/lunch detention
5th Tardy	Admin - After School Detention
Subsequent occurrences	Parent + student conference with a member of the Student Services Support team

The administration reserves the right to modify consequences on a case-by-case basis whenever appropriate. This may include the loss of campus privileges such as parking, participation in the Food Truck Rodeo, and other school activities.

*Students arriving on late buses will not be considered tardy.
*Tardiness resulting from known major traffic delays will be excused.

ABSENCE POLICY
Any absence must fit one of the seven reasons below to be excused.

North Carolina General Statutes consider absences for these reasons to be lawful:
1. Illness or injury: When absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. Quarantine: When isolation of the student is ordered by the local health official or the State Board of Health
3. Death in the immediate family: When absences result from the death of a member of the immediate family of the student.
4. Medical or dental appointments
5. Court or administrative proceedings
6. Religious observance
7. Educational opportunity*

*Educational Opportunity: If a student plans to be absent for an educational opportunity, the student should return from the absence with a note from a parent or guardian explaining the absence and the school administration will decide if the absence meets school policy for an educational opportunity. This may be requested in advance of the absence.

COMMUNICATING ABOUT ABSENCES

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- In case of an absence, a parent or guardian should *call the school before 10 am on the morning of the absence* in order to help ensure the safety of our students. Parents or guardians may leave messages on the school's voice mail (919-998-6757), or email the office at office@rthighschool.org announcing the absence. Also, parents may reply in Parent Square to the absence notification. Please do not email the administration.
- If the school does not receive a notification, the student will be marked absent and our records system will automatically contact the parents or guardians on record. Parents or guardians should expect calls from the school office in the morning if the student is absent, and we have no advance notice.
- When the student returns to school, the student must go to the main office first thing in the morning to turn in a note with a handwritten signature from a parent or guardian explaining the absence. This written confirmation is required for state auditing purposes.
- If a student returns to school from an absence WITHOUT a note hand-signed by the parent or guardian, the student should still go to the main office first thing in the morning. Absences will be considered Unexcused if a student misses school for any other reason or if the proper documentation is not provided within 7 days of the absence.
- Parents will receive notice of unexcused absences at 3, 6, and 10 day accrual. **If a student accumulates six unlawful absences, parents will be notified that they are in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law.**

Unexcused Absences will be handled in the following manner:

Number of Occurrences	Action Taken
0-2 unexcused absences	- No Action
3rd unexcused absence	- Written notice home to parent and student
6th unexcused absence	- Communication from Student Services Support Team - Written notice to parent and student
10th unexcused absence	- Communication from Dean of Students - Written notice to parent and student - The parent/guardian will be contacted by phone or by mail and will be required to come to the school for a mandatory meeting regarding the violation of the General Compulsory Attendance Law. If the absences cannot be justified the parent may be prosecuted according to NCGS 115C-378. If it is found that a good faith effort to comply with the law has not been upheld, the Lead Administrator may notify Social Services and the District attorney.

LOSS OF CREDIT DUE TO ABSENCES

Any student with **20 or more unexcused absences** in any class in a school year is subject to failure of that course or grade level. What we do during school time at Research Triangle High School is extremely important to the academic success of our students. The flipped model and Canvas LMS enables students to keep up with class content and assignments, while also creating opportunities for special class activities. Students who miss class time are not taking full advantage of the educational experience offered by Research Triangle High School.

The Chief School Officer shall have authority to waive the no-credit or retention provisions of the policy. Any review involving a child with disabilities recognized by Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 173 29 U.S.C. 702 et seq., or the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., shall be conducted in accordance with applicable laws or regulations, including review by the school based committee, if appropriate.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students are responsible for making up work when they are absent, and they are expected to keep current with assignments when not in class. Students should work with their teachers to make arrangements to complete assignments, tests, and quizzes in a timely fashion. Students may access their assignments and instruction from the Canvas LMS or by emailing their teacher. If a student does not have home internet access, assignments can be collected from teachers in advance with proper notice.

BAD WEATHER POLICY

Should the weather interfere with our normal school schedule as is sometimes the case in North Carolina please monitor local news stations, radio broadcasts, or their websites and apps for information regarding school closures or delayed openings for Research Triangle High School. In addition, information will be posted to our Facebook page, website (www.researchtrianglehighschool.org) and RTHS social media platforms. Email notification will be sent to students and parents/guardians when possible. Because our population is split between counties with often different weather results and policies, it is important to check the school's report rather than looking at the county schools themselves. **Since Research Triangle High School is not a part of any county school system, we do not necessarily follow the closing policies of other county school systems.**

Conditions may vary widely across the geographic area our students come from. It is RTHS policy to allow parents to make individual judgments about the safety of travel in their area. If the school is declared open, but a family does not feel safe about their area, the student's absence will be excused.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Teachers and students practice emergency procedures throughout the year. If students are evacuated and classes are not able to resume, students will contact their parents or guardians using cell phones to pick them up, and the front office will contact parents if possible (for example, if we cannot return to the school building, we will use cell phones and social media). The school staff will work through local news stations or their websites and apps, RTHS social media platforms, and ParentSquare to publicize emergency information as quickly as possible.

If an emergency occurs during carpool pickup or dropoff times, <u>students will be sequestered safely according to the school's safety policy</u>. Students may be released directly to parents or guardians so long as others are not endangered further by the release.

TRANSPORTATION

PARKING AND PARKING LOTS

Students who park in areas near our campus but not on our campus do so at their own risk and are subject to whatever policies the owners of those spaces enact. RTHS does not intervene to prevent towing, parking tickets, or other consequences.

Students are not allowed in the school parking lot during class time or lunch. Student drivers are expected to come into the building immediately upon arrival and leave immediately upon reaching their cars in the afternoon.

VISITOR PARKING

Visitors may use the spaces labeled "visitor" in the main parking lot. Please do not park in numbered spots since these spaces are reserved for students.
NOTE: Parking or leaving the school will be difficult during peak of carpool time, between 3:30 and 3:45. After 4:00 everyone is much more relaxed.

CARPOOL ROUTE

Research Triangle High School has developed a traffic plan in conjunction with the NC Department of Transportation designed to help ensure the safety of RTHS students and patrons of local businesses. <u>We ask **all drivers** to observe the following conventions</u>:

1. Observe the 7-mph speed limit in the parking lot.
2. Keep the center lane clear for traffic to exit.
3. Do not turn left under any circumstances when exiting the parking lot during carpool
4. Do not attempt a U-turn on Highway 54.
5. Do not use the parking lots of the surrounding businesses or organizations for school parking or to pick up students. These locations are private property.
6. Be aware of the crosswalk. It may be activated at any time.
7. Do not enter the parking lot and turn left when entering the school. You must follow the carpool lanes at all times.
8. Do not make a left turn when exiting the school. A left turn into the school is permitted.
9. Do not park in the visitor spaces or side lot (PE area) for carpool pickup.
10. Do not stop to pick up students on highway 54.
11. Be aware that students may walk anywhere on campus and their movements are not always predictable.
12. Remain in the carpool line and do not pass through the staff and student parking lot.

MORNING DROP-OFF/AFTERNOON PICKUP

- Incoming cars will be "double stacked."
- Drivers **may not turn left to exit the parking lot onto Highway 54 during carpool**. Visitors (family members or guardians) may not park in the lot to the left of the school. This is an athletic practice area.
- Student pickup and drop off should only occur on RTHS school grounds.

SPORTS PICKUP

- Drivers who will be transporting students to off-campus practices or games should get an athlete pass from the front office. These passes are good for the particular season for the sport.

Students are encouraged to walk out into the carpool line to meet their rides at the end of the day rather than waiting by the front door. This is the reason for the free-flowing center lane.

STUDENT DRIVERS

Students who wish to drive to school and park on campus must obtain a parking space through the front office. This is a lottery process and requires an application.The link to the application form will be sent via ParentSquare in early May. If a student receives a parking space, that space must be used in accordance with the student parking rules. **There are not enough spaces to meet demand. RTHS makes no promise to provide student parking. We have no arrangements with any off-campus areas for students to park. Parking off our campus is at a student's own risk and can result in ticketing or towing, and RTHS will not intervene to prevent these consequences.**

- Students may park in their own numbered spaces only.
- Upon arrival, students must leave the parking lot and enter the school building. Students may not wait in their cars before or after school.
- Student drivers wishing to leave before the end of the school day must bring a signed note from a parent or guardian to check out. Students under the age of 18 may not check themselves out of school.

BUS & CARPOOL INFORMATION
RIDING THE GOTRIANGLE BUS

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Many of our students ride GoTriangle buses to and from the school. GoTriangle serves Apex, Cary, Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Information, including smartphone apps for bus schedules and route planning, can be found here:

- Go Triangle   http://www.gotriangle.org/

RTHS students who choose to use the bus, allows for free rides between the school and any other location they serve (for school travel only). Students who ride are subject to GoTriangle rules and regulations as well as school standards for behavior. GoPasses can be revoked at the discretion of Research Triangle High School for violation of either GoTriangle or school rules.

RIDING THE RTHS SCHOOL BUS
We are very excited to be able to offer limited bus service to some of our families in parts of our community where public transportation is particularly difficult to come by.

RTHS Bus Routes and Times 2025-2026

AM RTHS Bus Stops	AM Time		PM Blue Bus Stops	Regular PM Time	Friday	Transportation # :
3021 S. Miami Blvd (World Overcomers Church/Sheetz)	7:17 AM		3021 S. Miami Blvd (World Overcomers Church/Sheetz)	3:50 PM	2:35 PM	
101 Ganyard Farms Way (Dollar General)	7:27 AM		101 Ganyard Farms Way (Dollar General)	4:00 PM	2:45 PM	984.888.7156
107 N. Driver St./Main St (Shephard's House Church)	7:39 AM		107 N. Driver St./Main St (Shephard's House Church)	4:12 PM	2:47 PM	
904 W. Chapel Hill St. (Emily K Center front Lot))	7:49 AM		904 W. Chapel Hill St. (Emily K Center front Lot))	4:22 PM	2:59 PM	
4215 University Dr. (At Home Store Parking Lot)	7:59 AM		4215 University Dr. (At Home Store Parking Lot)	4:32 PM	3:09 PM	
1305 Odyssey Dr. (Kings Park Church Parking Lot)	8:11 AM		University & Shannon (Bank Of America 2100	4:35 PM	3:12 PM	
			1305 Odyssey Dr. (Kings Park Church Parking Lot)	4:47 PM	3:24 PM	
ARRIVAL AT RTHS			ARRIVAL AT RTHS			

If you feel this bus service would be beneficial for your family, please take a moment to carefully read through the RTHS Bus Rider Expectations and Contract and complete the Transportation Request Form. A paper copy of the **Expectations and Contract**, submitted to the Front Office, will be required prior to a student riding the bus.

CARPOOLING
At RTHS, we are striving to host a more sustainable campus, but cannot do that without the cooperation of our students and their families. A great contribution that we can all do as part of the RTHS community is carpool to and from school every day. Carpooling is not only a great way to help the environment, it cuts down on time it takes for drop-off and pickup, and is a much more efficient way to get your students to and from school.

We have located several RTHS families that live close to you and wanted to connect all of you to hopefully form a carpool group. There are so many ways to arrange a carpool schedule, but here are some ideas:
1. Rotate days for who picks up and drops off
2. Chip in for gas for those willing to step up and drive
3. Meet at a central location at a designated time so pick up is smooth
4. Create a group text with your carpool group, so everyone can be aware of illnesses, doctor appointments, etc.

We would love to have RTHS become a greener campus, but we need YOU to help with that. Please let us know if you have any more questions.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

RTHS believes that learning should be personalized for each student. Personalized learning prepares students for future success in college and work environments; it is an extension of the flipped classroom that provides teachers more time to work with each student and offers students more freedom to access important information provided by teachers in a variety of ways that better suit the learning of each student.

The RTHS school culture rewards students who creatively use and demonstrate knowledge. This approach focuses on building skills students will continue to use after high school, and teaches students to understand their own learning and thinking.

RTHS defines the following as essential components of personalized learning:
1. Student agency
2. Flexible instruction
3. Immediate instructional interventions and supports for each student on-demand, when needed
4. Flexible pacing (but not "learn at your own pace")
5. Individual student profiles (personalized learning plans)
6. Deeper learning and problem solving to develop meaning
7. Frequent feedback from instructors and peers
8. Standards-based, world-class knowledge and skills
9. Anywhere, anytime learning
10. Performance-based assessments (projects, ongoing assessments) - students are given the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge

Research Triangle High School believes strongly in the importance of effective classroom teachers being present in the classroom and bringing their own classroom skills and attitude to the course. The teacher-student relationship within the context of a course is critical, and the SLP helps us add to the time needed to develop that relationship.

In our personalized classrooms,
Students:
- generate content based on instructional themes
- explore a narrow range of content focus areas deeply
- are held to a standard of quality work based on need for growth
- choose and use archived course materials as needed
- learn from others and then share their learning
- choose methods of learning from a variety of provided resources
- write and reflect on their learning
- ask questions and challenge what they see

Teachers:
- manage classrooms based on individual student needs
- work with individual students to evaluate and reflect on student growth
- design relevant real-world learning experiences through classroom projects

- conference with students to build goals and plans of action
- build relationships with students to enable a positive working environment
- provide opportunities for innovation
- provide tough challenges for students and let them find innovative solutions
- bring experts into the classroom via social media and video-conferencing

MAKING PERSONALIZED LEARNING WORK

Canvas is a web-based learning management system (LMS) that allows institutions to manage digital learning, educators to create and present online learning materials and assess student learning, and students to engage in courses and receive feedback about skill development and learning achievement.
<u>Rather than a "learn at your own pace" environment, students are expected to make progress at a certain rate, but this rate is somewhat flexible.</u>

Students, parents and/or guardians access information in the Canvas LMS through the same interface that teachers see, so all information about student progress is available, and it is expected that parents and/or guardians will help students remain on pace with their learning goals.

RTHS COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Teachers at RTHS are given latitude in how they construct and evaluate their courses and students. It is not RTHS policy to have a uniform set of standards across all classes for grading, course structure, difficulty, or expectations. It is unrealistic to expect that every environment in which a student finds him or herself will be the same outside of school, so we expect that students will be able to adapt to a different set of expectations in each class.

However, we do believe that every student is entitled to a reasonable set of expectations about the courses they are taking, and so the RTHS administration is providing this guaranteed minimum set of expectations for any course. Much of what follows applies mostly to courses *not* using the SLP, since that has a common framework and directs expectations.

Each teacher at RTHS will supply for each course, the following:

1. A detailed scope and sequence document for each course. A scope and sequence lists the entire range of topics covered in a course, the approximate time spent on each, and the order in which they will be covered. The scope should align with the NC Essential Standards for the course. If an AP course, the College Board-approved course syllabus will meet this requirement.
2. An approximate schedule of major tests, projects, quizzes, and other assignments. While these dates are not expected to be set in stone, it is expected that they will not move around without sufficient notice to students. Teachers are expected to take into account the other teachers and courses at the school in considering their assignment schedule, which is to say try not to pile on due dates.
3. A description of how course material will be taught, including how classwork and homework relate to course topics, and how those topics are instructed (videos, direct

instruction, guided practice, etc). There must be links between the material assessed and the material presented and the methods used to teach.

4. A syllabus for parents and students. This document includes a summary of the above items, as well as grading policy (weights, percentages if not in SLP), contact information, and lists of resources, including texts, websites, and other applications. Any other information you would like to include is welcome. This may be online and linked for parents elsewhere.

The syllabus will be publicly posted. The other items must be available for administration to consult. We do not plan to drop by your office and ask to see your documents, but if we have questions, expect that we will ask about these things. For example, I do not expect a detailed list for #3, but I do expect you to be able to walk me through your process for a particular test or lesson.

Students are entitled to the following:

1. Graded work that is returned permanently, unless the material is to be reused or otherwise prohibited to be distributed (eg. some College Board AP testing materials).
2. Grades that can be explained and justified by a teacher.
3. Work to be graded in a reasonable amount of time.
4. Grades to be posted in a reasonable amount of time. Students should be able to know their progress in a course on at least a weekly basis. This may mean individual progress updates when the whole class cannot be updated because of timing or grade load. The expectation is weekly as much as possible.
5. Reasonable notice for a major test or project due date. The time given to prepare must be commensurate with the magnitude of the assessment. No test should be announced less than one week before it is to be given. "Pop" quizzes may be given provided students are aware that these are possible.
6. Time to complete assignments missed due to an excused absence equal to one additional day for each day missed. The nature of the absence should be taken into account. For example, a student who is on a trip may be able to work on assignments, but a student who is sick in bed with an illness may not.
7. Access to a teacher during the teacher's office hours. Office hours must be clearly posted and the teacher must meet them. It is a good idea for teachers to keep records of their own presence at their office hours as well as the time students spend with them, should a family question the support a student receives. It is not unusual for students to say they have been in attendance when they have not.
8. Instruction in the material that is to be assessed. For example, the teacher may provide videos, provide direct instruction, work individually with students, or provide guided note packets, study guides, worked problem sets, or other resources with clear links to the material to be assessed.
9. Clear expectations for work that is to be graded. Examples may be explained or posted for student review. Teachers should be able to explain how student work may be improved for the next assessment cycle.

10. To be able to ask questions without fear of reprisal, criticism, or penalty. No matter what a student asks, or how they ask it, a teacher should be professional enough to handle the request calmly, seriously, and with respect for the question. Student questions should always be taken at face value.

MENTORING TIME

An element of RTHS' educational program is the creation of specific time for student mentoring. Students will be assigned a mentor and will meet with that mentor during the mentoring period once a week. The purpose of this period is to help students develop goals and monitor and reflect on those goals, as well as to help students connect with the school and their peers.

SEMINAR

Every student at RTHS is in a seminar group with a staff member. Seminar is a time for students to complete schoolwork in a semi-structured environment at school where they can receive help from teachers or peers, or to relax quietly without disturbing the learning of others. In addition, important announcements and special learning opportunities happen during this time. We want the environment during this time to mirror our local coffee shop; quiet, respectful, productive, relaxing.

GRADING

The grading scale for school transcripts, and thus final grades, at Research Triangle High School follows the 10-point scale as defined by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction:

Letter Grade	Percent Range	Grade Points
A	90-100	4.0
B	80-89	3.0
C	70-79	2.0
D	60-69	1.0
F	0-59	0.0

QUALITY POINTS and COURSE WEIGHTS

The North Carolina Essential Standards assign different quality point weights to courses. Research Triangle High School offers a variety of courses.

Honors, AP, and other college level classes add "quality points" to enhance GPA. Honors classes grant 0.5 quality points (i.e. a B in an honors class earns 3.5 points instead of just 3.0); AP and college level courses grant 1 quality point. These are counted as a part of the student's weighted GPA, which is reflected on the transcript.

- Standard courses receive 4 quality points for an A (3 for a B, 2 for a C, etc.).
- Honors level courses receive 4.5 quality points for an A (3.5 for a B, etc.).
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses receive 5 quality points for an A (4 for a B, etc.).

INFINITE CAMPUS

When reading the Infinite Campus grade display:
- Y1 is the grade for the year, not including the final exam.
- X1 is the grade for the final exam or End of Course exam.
- F1 is the cumulative grade for the entire year.
- Grades will be "stored" at the end of the first semester and at the end of the year. This process records grades on transcripts. The Infinite Campus grade display is a current,

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running grade. Stored grades are used for determining academic eligibility and for producing transcripts for colleges and other programs.

CANVAS LMS

For courses in the Canvas LMS, the F1 grade is the only grade permanently stored and will always be the course grade. The final exam counts as 20% of the F1 grade; the Canvas grade is the remaining 80%.

- Grade Weight ranges are as follows…
  - Major Grades: 40-60%
  - Minor Grades: 30-40%
  - Homework/Classwork: 10-25%

EXAMS

- Teachers may choose to give midyear exams. RTHS does not give a traditional, large-format exam at the end of the first semester. Regular classes will continue until the end of the semester.
- Final exams, including EOC state tests, will be held during the last week of May and the first week of June. One exam will be held each day. One day is designated as final exam make-up day. Final exams will count as 20% of the student's grade for the year.
- EOC state tests will be given for: NC Math 1, Biology, English II, and NC Math 3.
- Research Triangle High School is not required to, and chooses not to, administer North Carolina Final Exams. Teachers of classes other than NC Math 1, Biology, English II and NC Math 3, will give their own exams at the end of the year.

SENIOR EXAM EXEMPTION

In order to be exempt from a final exam, seniors must have **no more than five** unexcused absences and an average grade of C or better for the course.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS AND ACADEMIC SOCIETIES

The school uses unweighted grades to determine athletic eligibility and academic society memberships as well as other extracurricular activities.

CLASS RANK

According to NC GS 116-11(10a) and SBE GRAD-09, class rank is now required for all standardized transcripts. In order to remain compliant with the State of NC, RTHS will have to include class rank on all transcripts starting school year 2023-2024.

Seniors are recognized as *summa cum laude* (highest honors), *magna cum laude* (high honors), or *cum laude* (honors) graduates based on their weighted grade point averages.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Parents have detailed access to student grades and progress through PowerSchool and the Canvas LMS. For this reason, teachers do not send formal progress reports or report cards at the end of grading periods. Teachers are expected to contact parents and guardians before the end of the first grading period, and as needed throughout the year, if a student is not making sufficient progress in a course.

While grade information may be available twenty-four hours a day over the internet, teachers are not. RTHS faculty make every effort to enter grades as quickly as possible and to keep student

averages in a timely manner, but these can change from day to day. Grades should not be considered final until a teacher says that they are. It is our expectation that teachers will update grades in PowerSchool or the SLP at least weekly.

HOMEWORK

Personalized learning and the flipped classroom model change the way we think about homework. **Students should expect to spend approximately 20-30 minutes outside of class each day per class preparing for their next day's classes. Our internal research shows that for the majority of our students, 2-3 hours of homework each day is typical. If the courses are AP courses, this number will be higher.** <u>This amount of time will vary from student to student</u>, and it is impossible to predict the needs of an individual student. For this reason we have provided some study time during the school day. Students can complete work or consult their playlists during this time. TTA buses also feature wireless internet access, so students who have travel time can complete homework on their way to and from school.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: DEADLINE POLICY

Teachers set their own late work policies, and it is the **responsibility of the student** to make arrangements regarding any late work with the individual teacher. The student should approach the teacher at an appropriate time and discuss the time limit for turning in late work.

- **Entering Zero Grade for Missing Work:** Teachers will prioritize entering zeros for missing work, promptly alerting families to missing work and allowing intervention for missing assignments before the grade penalty becomes severe. Ideally, zeroes will be entered within 24 hours of the deadline; note that this can be automatically set up in the LMS.

- **Late Major Assignments:** Students have until the end of the quarter to submit major assignments for a partial grade. An automatic 5% will be deducted from the major assignment's grade for each late day until the grade reaches 50%.
  - **Automation:** Note that this can be automatically set up in the LMS.
  - **Clarification:** Students can receive less than 50% on work. For instance, if a student turns an assignment in two weeks late and receives a 60% score, the 50% deduction would be applied to their score, resulting in a 30%.
  - **Clarification:** A student can receive a 0% grade if they fail to submit an assignment.

- **Late Minor Assignments:** Students have two weeks to submit late work for a partial grade after the deadline. An automatic 5% will be deducted from the minor assignment's grade for each late day until the grade reaches 50%.
  - Please note the same automation and clarification sub-points for the section above.

- **Late Homework/Classwork:**
  - Required Policy: Partial work will be accepted and graded for completion.
  - Suggested Policy: We suggest that homework and classwork have an immediate deadline with no late turn-in option. However, treatment of late homework and classwork is at the teacher's discretion.

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- **Exceptions:**
  - **AP Classes** may have hard deadlines for all grades, meaning unexcused late work is not accepted for major, minor, and homework/classwork grades.

RESEARCH TRIANGLE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Mathematics	4 units (Math I, Math II, Math III, and fourth Math course)
Science	4 units (Biology, Chemistry, Earth/Environmental Science, and Physics)
History	4 units (World History, Civic Literacy, American History, Economics and Personal Finance,)
English	4 units (English I, II, III, and IV)
Foreign Language	2 units (including one course beyond the first year and must be the same language)
Healthful Living	1 unit
Electives	4 units
Total	23 units

Previous to 2020-2021 school year, the history sequence was different.

Mathematics	4 units (Math I, Math II, Math III, and fourth Math course)
Science	4 units (Biology, Chemistry, Earth/Environmental Science, and Physics)
History	4 units (World, Civics and Economics, US I and II/or AP US History+1 additional)
English	4 units (English I, II, III, and IV)
Foreign Language	2 units (including one course beyond the first year and must be the same language)
Healthful Living	1 unit
Electives	4 units
Total	23 units

A unit equals the successful completion of a yearlong course or two semester courses. In some cases, a one-credit course may be completed in a semester, such as some courses offered through the NC Virtual Public School, including summer courses.

NCVPS COURSE POLICY
RTHS uses the NC Virtual Public School to supply independent study courses to students for the following reasons:

1. Students are in need of credits in order to graduate because of failed courses.
2. Students want to take classes not offered at RTHS that are necessary for graduation.

    *NCVPS placement is prioritized on a case-by-case basis according to student needs.

RTHS does not support:
- Students taking NCVPS courses offered in classrooms at RTHS
- Students taking summer Math courses to accelerate their Math schedules
- Ninth grade students taking NCVPS courses

While NCVPS courses are rigorous and well-taught, we find that:
- Summer courses do not provide sufficient depth and length of time exposed to material for students to develop long-term mastery of math and other content

- Classroom language courses provide cultural information, personal interaction, and speaking practice that an online course does not usually offer

GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION

	To Be Promoted to Grade 10	To Be Promoted to Grade 11	To Be Promoted to Grade 12	To Graduate
RTHS units	5 Units including at least Math 1 English I	11 Units including at least Math 1 & Math 2 English I & English II	17 Units including at least Math 1 ,2, & 3 English I,II, & III	23 Units including at least 4 Math credits 4 English credits

At Research Triangle High School, as at other North Carolina schools, promotion from one grade level to the next is based on the number and type of credits earned. For example, a student is not designated as a Sophomore (or Tenth grader) unless and until the student has earned a total of five credits, two of which must be English I and Math 1. Graduation from RTHS is based on credits earned, not time spent in school. If a student wishes to be classified as a particular grade level, then the student must pass the requisite courses to advance.

A student's grade level classification, *based on the number of earned credits,* may be used in school publications (i.e.yearbook) and student participation in events such as Food Truck Rodeo. While we are aware that grade level designations of this type can sometimes be a source of frustration and disappointment for a student, we choose to prioritize progress towards graduation as the primary indicator of a student's academic standing, rather than the year during which the student entered high school.

For college counseling purposes, student credits are monitored. For example, students may be classified as 11th graders at the beginning of the fourth year at the school and may become 12th graders by the end of the first semester because of extra work they complete. The college advisor and school counselors will ensure that students in this situation will be considered for graduation, yearbook placement and other senior opportunities.

REGISTERING FOR COURSES
Registration will be discussed in seminars, and individual students will be able to discuss a four-year plan with mentors at this time. RTHS will ensure that students understand how high school courses contribute to developing a competitive college resume, exploring career interests, and how course selection impacts GPA and grade promotion.

Important Points about Course Registration at RTHS:
- Registration will take place early in the spring semester.
- The student's four-year plan should be considered when choosing courses.
- Each student will choose six courses and a selection of alternate courses.
- It is critical to choose alternates; otherwise, courses will be selected for the student.
- Student course choices will be limited in PowerSchool based on the recommendations of their current subject teachers.

- Electives can include a fine arts course, language, or another choice in the core courses (i.e. second history, science, English or math). Courses may be taken through certain outside vendors as well.
- Course offerings may change from year to year according to interest and availability of resources.

It should be noted that for a school the size of Research Triangle High School, fulfilling every schedule request of each student is nearly impossible due to demand, staff availability, and our desire to maintain low class sizes. On occasion, courses may not be available and a student may have to take a course that was not requested.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS
During the registration process, teachers in a given course provide recommendations in order to help students make appropriate course choices for the next school year. These recommendations are based on conversations and experiences the teacher has had with students, along with the ability, work habits and potential for growth that students have demonstrated over the course of the year.

RTHS works hard to ensure that students are correctly placed in courses where they will stretch themselves; we want to set students up for success, and teacher recommendations take this into account. The policy of Research Triangle High School is to defer to teacher expertise and experience in determining student placement.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES
If a parent would like to withdraw their child from Research Triangle High School, they should fill out the online Student Withdrawal Form or the Paper Student Withdrawal Form. Parents are required to list their student's next school on the form at the time of withdrawal. If the student will be homeschooled, the state-issued homeschool identification number must be provided for the student to be withdrawn.   A records request for one of our current students from a new school can be considered a withdrawal request; if a legitimate records request is received, the records will be sent, and that student will be withdrawn from Research Triangle High School..

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
Research Triangle High School offers support services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to students who are state-identified. Other students may receive special services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students experiencing difficulties are referred to the Student Support Team at Research Triangle High School who will determine into which group a student falls, if eligible.

The level of support for special education students is dependent on the student's Individualized Education Plan. For more information, contact the Department of Exceptional Children.

PROJECT CHILD FIND & TRANSFERS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) includes the Child Find mandate, under which all school districts must identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. After identifying children who may need services, all necessary evaluations must be completed on these children, at no cost to parents. RTHS participates in Child Find. General public notice signs to inform and educate the public about the need to locate and identify all children with disabilities are posted in the main lobby of RTHS, in accordance with IDEA.

DISCIPLINE
A student with a disability may be removed from a current placement for up to ten cumulative school days in one academic year for any violation of the school code of conduct. This removal may be to another setting or it may be suspension. Services are not required during the first ten days. A disciplinary change in placement may occur when a student is removed for more than ten consecutive school days. Changing a student with a disability educational placement (continuum of services) may be made by an IEP team only, and services may be provided. A functional behavior assessment as well as a behavior intervention plan may be developed to address the behavior violation so that it will not recur.

TRANSFERS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
RTHS accepts transfers of IEPs from within the state of North Carolina and from other states. Enrolling students must indicate on their enrollment paperwork that an active IEP is in place and the school will request the transfer of those records. Services from the Department of Exceptional Children will be in place from the time of enrollment with availability and access to records.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION
Facilitation - An impartial facilitator can be requested to assist the IEP team members in communicating more effectively, keeping the focus on student outcomes, and developing compliant IEPs.

Mediation - Parents or guardians have the right to request the Department of Public Instruction to provide mediation services if you and the school are unable to agree upon the identification, evaluation, educational program, placement or the provision of a free, appropriate public education of a student.

Formal Written Complaints - When informal means for solving disagreements have not been successful, more formal dispute resolution alternatives are available through the provisions of federal and state laws governing special education [the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Article 9 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes].

More information on informal and formal dispute resolution is available at the DPI web site: http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/parent-resources/dispute-resolution/dispute-resolution

The administrative (LEA) contacts for RTHS are the Chief School Officer and Assistant Principal Either can serve as the contact.

TECHNOLOGY AT RTHS

At Research Triangle High School, we use technology as one way of enhancing the mission to teach the skills, knowledge, and behaviors students will need to succeed in the global community. These technologies may include, but are not limited to, school-provided equipment as well as personal devices (computers, tablets, cell phones, laptops, chromebooks, e-readers, and more).

We recognize that there are guidelines for students to use new technologies in a meaningful, safe, and responsible way. But with these new opportunities comes great power and with great power comes great responsibility. We want students to embrace appropriate use of technology so they may become responsible, compassionate and empowered digital citizens. The information, release forms, and agreements below will govern how a student uses technology at RTHS.

STUDENT INFORMATION-MEDIA RELEASE OF INFORMATION

During the school year, Research Triangle High School will from time-to-time release information about students through the school directory, Facebook and other social media, Raptor Report, or other public and private media outlets. This information may include the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. Parents and/or guardians who do not wish to have this information released should contact the school office in writing within three weeks of the first day of school.

If you move or change phone numbers, please report any changes to the office at office@rthighschool.org or bring written notice.

RTHS TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

The statements below describe RTHS expectations for how students will use technology. Students should read and sign the policy. By accepting this agreement, students acknowledge the following rules and conditions about technology use at RTHS:

- I will use technology in a meaningful, safe, and responsible way.
- I understand that I represent the school in all my online activities. I understand that what I do on social media should not reflect negatively on my fellow students, teachers, or on the School.
- I will use technology resources productively and appropriately for school-related purposes. I will avoid using any technology resource in such a way that would disrupt the activities of other users.
- I will use digital communication (email, texting, video and photo sharing apps) with the understanding that I am creating a digital reputation.
- I understand that the school network, my school internet traffic, school communications, and my school accounts are property of RTHS and anything that I do can be monitored.
- I understand that RTHS administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.

As an RTHS student, I will use technology in accordance with the laws of the United States and the State of North Carolina, including those described below:

- Criminal acts – These include, but are not limited to, "hacking" or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, harassing email, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, child pornography, vandalism, and/or unauthorized tampering with computer systems.
- Libel laws - Publicly defaming people through the published material on the Internet, email, etc.
- Copyright violations - Copying, selling or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (users should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright), engaging in plagiarism (using other's words or ideas as your own).

If I choose to use social media:

- I understand all my online actions leave a permanent record and remain online, even if deleted.
- I understand personal use of social media may have an effect on current and future educational institutions, employers, and others that may impact my future opportunities.

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD) AGREEMENT/PROTOCOL FOR USE
DEFINITION OF "DEVICE"
For purposes of BYOD – Bring Your Own Device, "Device" means privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic handheld equipment that includes, but is not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies such as IoT (internet of things) devices, cell phones, smart phones, augmented reality glasses, portable internet devices, video gaming systems, handheld entertainment systems or portable technology devices that can be used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

INTERNET

It is the policy of Research Triangle High School to:

(a) Prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
(b) Prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;
(c) Prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors;
(d) Comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Only the internet gateway provided by the school may be accessed while on campus. Personal internet connective devices including, but not limited to, cell phones/cell network adapters are not permitted to be used to access outside internet sources at any time.

ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, and access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors,minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK USAGE

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes:

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(a) Unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking', and other unlawful activities;
(b) Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

EDUCATION, SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the IT Department.

The IT Department will provide age appropriate training for students who use the Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote the commitment to:

(a) The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Internet Safety Policy;
(b) Student safety with regard to:
(i) Safety on the Internet
(ii) Appropriate behavior while online, on social networking websites, and in chat rooms
(iii) Cyberbullying awareness and response
(c) Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Ace ("CIPA")
Following the receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the School's acceptable use policies.

SECURITY AND DAMAGES
Responsibility to keep the personal technology secure rests with the individual owner. RTHS is not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus. RTHS can NOT replace or provide financial restitution for any stolen or damaged personal technological device. If any technological device is stolen or damaged, the issue will be handled through the administrative office similar to other personal artifacts that are impacted in similar situations. It is recommended that skins (decals) and other custom touches are used to physically identify your personal technology from others. Additionally, protective cases for technological devices are encouraged.

BYOD STUDENT AGREEMENT
The use of technology to provide educational material is a privilege. When abused, privileges will be taken away. When respected, they will benefit the learning environment as a whole.

Students and parents/guardians participating in BYOD must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all Board policies, particularly the Responsible Use Principles (RUP).

Students and parents/guardians agree that technology:
- Must be in silent mode while on school campuses
- May not be used to cheat on assignments or tests, or for non-instructional purposes (such as making personal phone calls and text/instant messaging).
- May not be used to record, transmit, or post photographic images or video of a person, or persons on campus during school activities and/or hours for non-instructional purposes.
- May only be used to access files, applications or internet sites which are relevant to the classroom curriculum.

As a student at RTHS, I acknowledge that:

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- The school's network filters will be applied to my connection to the internet and I will not attempt to bypass them (via VPNs, proxy servers, etc).
- Bringing on premises or infecting the network with a virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information is in violation of the RUP.
- Processing or accessing information on school property related to "hacking", altering, or bypassing network security policies is in violation of the RUP.
- The school has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing problems or is the source of an attack or virus infection.
- Printing from personal technology will not be possible at school.
- The school is NOT responsible for:
  - stolen or damaged personal technological devices
  - the maintenance or repair of any personal technology or any costs incurred due to use of personal technology.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT-STUDENT

As a student at RTHS, I _____understand
(printed name)
and will abide by the above Responsible Use Principles. Should I commit a violation, I
understand that consequences of my actions could include suspension of computer
privileges, disciplinary action, and/or referral to law enforcement.

_____
Student Signature   Date

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT-PARENT/GUARDIAN

As the parent or guardian of this student, I _____
(printed name)
have read the Responsible Use Principles. I understand that technology is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of the School, and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate. I recognize it is impossible for the School to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the school network. I understand that children's technology activities at home should be supervised as they can affect the academic environment at school.

I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources at Research Triangle High School.

_____
Parent or Guardian's Signature   Date

DRIVER'S EDUCATION AND ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATES

Research Triangle High School does not offer driver's education classes. Students who are residents of Wake County may take courses through Jordan Driving School (http://www.jordandriving.com/). For Durham County residents, a similar arrangement can be made through Durham Public Schools (http://www.dpsnc.net/programs-services/driver-ed). At the present time all classes in Durham and Wake County are offered at public schools throughout the counties and students can attend whatever site they like; however, these sites fill quickly, so planning ahead is a must.

DROPOUT PREVENTION/LICENSE REVOCATION

North Carolina has established legislation that reflects a coordinated statewide effort to motivate and encourage students to complete high school. This legislation, effective August 1, 1998, requires that a student's driving permit or license be revoked if a student is unable to maintain adequate progress or drops out of school. Adequate progress is determined by first semester grades and end-of-year grades and is defined as passing 70% of courses. At Research Triangle High School, this means a student must be passing five of six courses they are currently enrolled in, including Math and English[4]. A student is exempt from this law upon reaching the age of 18 or obtaining a high school diploma, GED, or an adult high school diploma. RTHS is required to notify the Division of Motor Vehicles after each semester if a student fails to meet this requirement.

A student's driving permit or license must be revoked for one year if a student is given a suspension for more than 10 consecutive days or an assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than 10 consecutive days for: 1) possession or sale of alcoholic beverages or illegal controlled substance on school property, 2) possession or use on school property of a weapon or firearm, or 3) the physical assault on a teacher or other school personnel on school property. School property includes the physical premises of the school, including the parking lot, any vehicles under the school's control that are used to transport students, and school-sponsored or school-related activities that occur on or off the physical premises of the school.

DRIVER'S ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATES

A Driver's Eligibility Certificate (DEC) will be issued to a student when the student completes the driver's education class and meets the above requirement. The student and a parent or guardian should present the form stating that the student has completed the class to the office staff at RTHS. After grades have been verified, the DEC will be issued. The DEC is only good for thirty days from the date issued.

In the event that the school or office is closed, students needing a DEC can send a photo or scan of the completion certificate to the Chief School Officer and they will prepare the DEC for the student to pick up at the front office when it is open. If school is closed for a long period of time, the DEC will be mailed to the student's current home address as listed in PowerSchool.

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[4] State law requires passing 70% of courses taken in the previous grading period and allows schools to add their own requirements.

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EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

STUDENT CLUBS

Clubs at RTHS vary a great deal in terms of the time commitment for the students, allowing most students to find some activity that fits their schedule. Club meetings are held before school, during lunch, or after school. Clubs may vary slightly from year to year to suit the interests of our students and faculty. Clubs require students to commit to attendance and being engaged in activities.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activities at RTHS occur weekly and allow for students to attend as interested. Activities allow students to attend when possible, and to experiment with ideas and activities to determine where their interests lie.

CLUB FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES FOR RTHS
Objectives
- To ensure that all fundraising done on the behalf of a club is in compliance with IRS rules and regulations.
- To ensure proper accounting for all funds and gifts received by the club.
- To identify club priorities.
- To ensure that prior approval is given for fundraising activities.
- To ensure that the funds raised benefit the entire club and not just a few individuals.
- To ensure that club activity does not exceed what the club can afford.

Fundraising Plan
Before any fundraising can commence, a fundraising plan must be approved by the club sponsor and then submitted to the Chief Operations Officer for final approval. This plan must include:
- Proposed budget (how much you intend to raise, supplies needed, expected overhead costs, etc.).
- Strategy for fundraising.
- Fundraising goal (what is this money for?).
- Proposed dates for fundraising.

Procedure for After Fundraiser
- All funds collected during the fundraiser must be turned into the school within 24 hours for deposit into the club account.
- In order to use club funds for the desired fundraising goal, the staff sponsor must submit a check request with the front office. These forms are available at the front desk of RTHS.

Note: Please understand that RTHS clubs and their fundraisers are all subject to audit as part of the RTHS community. All club activities must be approved by the club sponsor and those activities are up to their discretion. If the club sponsor is unwilling to participate in more activity

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than the club desires, club members are able to seek further club support to accomplish those goals. Club members are not allowed to participate in outside school activities (conferences, field trips, etc.) without a club sponsor being present.

RAPTOR ATHLETICS

(Please see attachment G)

Research Triangle High School offers a limited number of sports. Tryouts are open to students of all grade levels. Below are the sports offered at Research Triangle High School:

FALL
Cross Country (M/W)
Golf (W)
Soccer (M)
Tennis (W)
Volleyball (W)

WINTER
Basketball (M/W)
Indoor Track (M/W)
Swimming (M/W)

SPRING
Golf (M)
Soccer (W)
Tennis (M)
Track & Field (M/W)

RTHS is a member of NCHSAA and the Central Tar Heel Conference, which includes local charter schools.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES:
Required Information:
1. Student-athlete information form
2. Medical History and Physical Examination, signed by a doctor (valid for one calendar year)
   a. For 2025-26, any physicals completed since March 1, 2025 are valid through the end of the 2025-26 school year.
3. Concussion Awareness Statement
4. Eligibility and Authorization Statement
5. Sportsmanship Pledge

Forms are available through the Athletic Director's Office and ParentSquare

Playing a sport at Research Triangle High School is not a right, but a privilege; in order to have that privilege, student-athletes must meet the following requirements:

ACADEMICS REQUIREMENTS
- Must have passed five out of six classes in the previous semester
- (Fall semester) Must have met the requirements to be promoted to the next grade:
  o 10th grade - 5 credits; must also pass Math I and English I
  o 11th grade - 11 credits; must also pass Math II and English II

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- 12th grade - 17 credits; must also pass Math III and English III
- Must have a weighted grade point average of 2.00 or higher in the previous semester

ATTENDANCE
- Must be present in school in order to take part in a practice or game that day

BEHAVIOR REQUIREMENTS
- Ejection from a game: two-game suspension (four games for fighting)
- Two ejections in one school year: Student is ineligible from all sports for the remainder of the school year
- Out-of-school suspension: Student is ineligible to participate in any practices or games during the suspension time (if no games occur during the suspension, the student will be suspended for the next game, whether or not the student's sport is in season at the time of the suspension)
- Two in-school suspensions = one out-of-school suspension (min. one-game suspension)

APPENDIX 1. STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS

1. Permits are issued at designated times established and announced by school administration. Until students possess their assigned tag to display, they are not permitted to park on campus.
2. The parking fee established by RTHS for the 2025-2026 school year is $115. Permits issued for less than the entire school year will be subject to a prorated fee.
3. Parking permits will be available only to students who have a valid North Carolina Driver License.
4. All students who park a motor vehicle on the school campus must display the current hanging-tag permit. The tag must be hung from the inside rear-view mirror, facing the front of the vehicle. Students who fail to properly display the tag may have their parking privileges revoked.
5. Vehicles must be parked in assigned spaces. Students remaining on campus for school activities after school are to leave cars in the assigned spaces until exiting campus. The only places available for student parking are the marked student parking spaces. Students may not park on the road, driveway, in intersections, or in any other place. Parking in any of the business parking lots near the school is strictly prohibited. Vehicles parked in the wrong space or in unauthorized areas may be towed or "booted" at the expense of the owner and the permit will be subject to revocation without refund.
6. Loitering in the parking lot is prohibited. Students should lock their cars and leave the parking lot immediately upon arriving at school. Students should take all materials/items needed for the school day and not use vehicles as a storage area. Students need written permission from an administrator to be in student lots during school hours, including class changes and lunch time.
7. Students are prohibited from leaving the campus during lunch time.
8. Vehicles should be parked front-end first. Backing into spaces is not permitted.
9. The safe operation of motor vehicles is required. Vehicles must not travel in excess of 7 miles per hour in the school parking lot. Seat belts are required for driver and all passengers. Speeding and reckless driving are prohibited.
10. RTHS is not responsible for damages to or theft from vehicles.
11. Students are cautioned NOT to leave valuables in their vehicles. Parked vehicles should be left with windows closed and doors locked.
12. Disabled vehicles may not be left on campus overnight. If necessary, towing should be arranged by the student.
13. Only one tag will be issued per space. Students may register up to two of their family vehicles. The tag may be moved from one registered family vehicle to another, but may NOT be sold, given, or loaned to another student to use with another vehicle not registered with the parking space. The penalty for so doing is revocation of parking privileges.
14. Carpooling is encouraged and parking spaces may be shared by students. If students apply to share a parking space and are approved to share, only one tag will be issued for the shared space. Both students must submit a completed application and each will be placed in the lottery. The student using the space must display the tag. If the permit is revoked, neither student driver may park on campus during the revocation period
15. Students shall inform the office immediately of any changes in vehicle or license plate.
16. Lost parking tags will be replaced for a $10 fee. Report losses to the office.
17. The possession and/or use of tobacco products are prohibited on campus. Students may not possess tobacco products or smoke in cars at any time while on the school campus. Weapon and drug charges will result in automatic revocation of parking privileges.
18. Attendance and tardy policy violations may result in revocation of parking privileges. Specifically, chronic tardiness to first period may result in revocation of parking privileges.

19. Students who operate a motor vehicle on campus should fully understand their duties and responsibilities. Students who violate parking regulations are subject to any or all of the following consequences
    a. Revocation of parking privilege
    b. Ticketing
    c. Towing and storage of the vehicle at the owner's expense
    d. Disciplinary action
    e. Criminal charges as prescribed by law
20. Handicapped parking is available as needed on an assigned basis only. After exiting parked vehicles, students should exercise caution around other vehicles.
21. Students are not to leave the student parking lot until 15 minutes after dismissal in order to avoid safety issues with the carpool line.
22. When student drivers are exiting their parking space, they should back out of their assigned spaces only when there is an opening in the line of traffic. Creating a double line of traffic is a violation.
23. In order to be eligible for a parking permit, the student must have passed five of their six academic classes in the prior semester. If a student becomes ineligible, their parking pass/space will be saved and they will have one quarter to bring their grades up to eligibility. If the grades are not raised, that parking pass/space will be provided to the next student on the waitlist. If a loss of parking privilege occurs, the student will not be reimbursed for any portion of the fee.
24. Refunds for parking fees will be made only if the student moves out of the area (away from RTHS). Parking fees will NOT be refunded for:
    a. voluntary withdrawal from school (changing schools or dropping out).
    b. long-term suspension from school.
    c. school-based disciplinary action related to loss of parking privilege.
    d. loss of driving privilege due to revocation of operator's license.
    e. All other refund requests are at the discretion of the Chief Operations Officer.
25. Parking a vehicle on school property is a privilege, not a right. Please review all parking regulations with your parents/guardians and communicate with school administrators for clarification of any matter about which there are questions.
26. Submitting a complete electronic or paper application does not guarantee that a space will be granted. Parking spaces will be assigned randomly through a lottery. Only applications received by the published deadline will be included in the lottery. Once all available parking spaces have been assigned, the lottery will continue in order to build a waiting list with the remaining applications. Any application received after the published deadline will be added to the end of the waiting list in the order in which they are received, no exceptions.
27. All applicants will be notified by email of their status within one day of the lottery. Students who receive a parking permit are expected to submit their payment for the entire school year and a hard copy of their driver's license at the time that they pick up their parking tag. (Student is responsible for making the copy.) Parking pass pickup will be on the first day of school.
28. Failure to follow or complete a step in the application/parking pass collection process will cause the application to become null and void and the application will have to be resubmitted.
29. Applications will be kept on file in case spaces become available during the school year. Those spaces will be assigned based on availability and original lottery order. Additional applications may be filed during the school year and will be added to the bottom of the waiting list.

NOTE: *Students who do not pick up parking permits after the lottery/notification and the first day of school are not allowed to park on campus until the parking tag has been obtained from the school office.*

APPENDIX 2. ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

State and Federal environmental protection and health regulations require that all families be notified about the presence of asbestos in school buildings and be given information about what plans the school has to continue inspection and management of any materials in the building.

No asbestos containing materials were used in the construction of Research Triangle High School and none were present on the premises prior to its upfit in 2015.

Documentation supporting this, including inspection forms and reports from the inspectors and management agencies, along with a copy of this letter and documentation sent to NCDHHS in support of establishing compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986, is available at the school front desk for review.

The current Chief Executive Officer is the designated person assigned responsibility for this plan.

APPENDIX 3. MCKINNEY-VENTO

The McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act The McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth. McKinney-Vento provides federal funding to states for the purpose of supporting district programs that serve homeless students. Defining Homeless The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The act provides examples of children who would fall under this definition:

- Children and youth sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
- Children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
- Children and youth living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Children and youth abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc)
- Children and youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- Migratory children and youth living in any of the above situations

The McKinney-Vento Program also meets the needs of "a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian" (42 USC §11434a(6), 2001). Youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and lacking a fixed, regular and adequate residence are referred to as unaccompanied homeless youth. Youth who run away are also eligible for services even if the parent/guardian/caregiver wishes the student to return home.

Some reasons a youth may be on his/her own include, but is not limited to,family dysfunction, parental neglect and abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, or substance), incarceration, illness and deportation. Runaway youth and unaccompanied homeless youth are eligible to be enrolled immediately without a legal guardian. Under the McKinney-Vento Program, there is no age limit for an unaccompanied homeless or runaway youth as long as the student is eligible for K-12 public education in NC.

Schools must immediately alert the School McKinney-Vento Liaison or the District McKinney-Vento Liaison if presented with a possible runaway or unaccompanied homeless youth. The provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act supersede any state law or local policy that may conflict with this act.

Homelessness Data
Due to smaller student populations, we cannot post school specific data counts. Please visit the NCHEP website to learn more about homelessness across North Carolina To learn more about parent's rights visit: Parent's Rights

To learn more about unaccompanied homeless youth rights visit: Unaccompanied Youth

Contact Information
Research Triangle High School, McKinney-Vento Liaison
Kristen Cook
kcook@rthighschool.org

919-998-6757 ext. 225

Additional McKinney-Vento contact information
NC Homeless Education Program
Lisa Phillips, State Coordinator
lphillip@serve.org
336-543-4285

APPENDIX 4. ATTACHMENTS
Links to attachments:

Attachment A McKinney-Vento
Attachment B Code of Conduct
Attachment C Service Animal Policy
Attachment D Available Upon Request
Attachment E Omitted
Attachment F Admissions Policy
Attachment G Athletic Policy
Attachment H Alcohol and Drug Policy

Coversheet

Academic Excellence Business

Section: VII. Academic Excellence Committee Report
Item: A. Academic Excellence Business
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: Academic Excellence.pdf

Academic Excellence

Discipline Data

Why Discipline Data Matters for Academic Excellence?

- Every discipline incident represents a potential loss of instructional time

Key Academic Connections
- Fewer incidents = more time on task and stronger classroom routines
- Behavior trends often act as early indicators of academic risk/MTSS intervention

Strategic Value
- Identifies patterns
- Supports equity
- Evaluates effectiveness of school-wide practices

Bottom Line
- Effective discipline systems protect instructional time, strengthen engagement, and support academic excellence for all students

Offense Trends

2022–2023

Most common behaviors:

- Aggressive behavior
- Inappropriate language/disrespect
- Bullying / harassment
- Fighting
- Assault on student
- Controlled substances

2023–2024

Most common behaviors:

- Harassment (verbal, racial, sexual orientation)
- Inappropriate language/disrespect
- Aggressive behavior
- Fighting
- Sexual activity / pretext medical treatment
- Controlled substances

2024–2025

Most common behaviors:

- Tech misuse (091-UB)
- Disruptive behavior
- Aggressive behavior
- Cutting class
- Inappropriate behavior

2025-26

Most common behaviors:

- Skipping/Cutting Class
- Off Campus inicdent

Raw Count Trend

School Year	Incidents	Unique Students	Repeat Offenders
2022–23	43	27	9
2023–24	18	15	2
2024–25	15	11	3
25-26 to date	3	7	0

Raw Count Trend (Number of Students per Race per Year)

Race	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	25-
Black or African American	10	4	7	0
Hispanic	6	3	1	4
White	6	4	1	2
Asian	3	2	2	1
Two or More Races	2	2	0	
Total Students	27	15	11	7

Race	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Black or African American	**37.00%**	**26.70%**	**63.60%**
Hispanic	22.20%	20.00%	9.10%
White	22.20%	26.70%	9.10%
Asian	11.10%	13.30%	18.20%
Two or More	7.40%	13.30%	0%

What this chart shows

- Even as total incidents fell sharply (43 → 18 → 15), the racial makeup of discipline did not shift dramatically.
- Black students continue to represent the largest share, Hispanic students remain around one-fifth, and Asian students rise slightly in proportion only because the overall number of incidents dropped.
- This indicates that discipline reduction occurred across all groups — not by shifting who is disciplined.

Percentage Trend (Proportion of Students per grade per Year)

Grade	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
9th	18	7	6
10th	12	5	5
11th	8	4	3
12th	5	2	1
Total	43	18	15

Grade	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
9th	41.90%	38.90%	40.00%
10th	27.90%	27.80%	33.30%
11th	18.60%	22.20%	20.00%
12th	11.60%	11.10%	6.70%
Total	100%	100%	100%

What this chart shows

- Across three straight years, the pattern is nearly identical:
  - 40% of all discipline happens in 9th grade
  - 28–33% happens in 10th grade
  - 20% happens in 11th
  - 12% happens in 12th

- About 70–75% of all discipline at RTHS comes from 9th–10th graders — every single year.

This suggests a transition + adjustment problem.

✔ **Improvement**

- Total disciplined students dropped from **43 → 18 → 15**
- That's a **65% reduction** over three years

✔ **Stability**

- Racial proportions stayed consistent
- No group suddenly spiked or dropped disproportionately

✔ **Equity Focus**

- Black students remain the largest group represented
- But the *number* of Black students involved has dropped dramatically
- This is a positive trend, but still an area to monitor

Discipline

- Discipline incidents decreased from **43** to **15** over two years, a **65%** reduction.
- This trend coincides with the implementation of grade-level assemblies to establish expectations, consistent application of schoolwide policies, a hall-pass system to reduce hallway traffic, and increased administrative presence through duty posts and follow-up.
- Together, these changes increased student accountability and consistency of consequences, which is associated with fewer incidents and reduced repeat behavior.