

# VAN RENSSELAER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## 2023-2024 HANDBOOK

"Success Starts Here"



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# ***Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools***

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Chad Wynn  
Principal  
Van Rensselaer

Jennifer Norris  
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Michelle Wilmington  
Guidance Counselor

Terra Neidigh, Van Secretary  
Kathy Wilmington, Primary Secretary  
Danae Render, Van Treasurer

August 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!

"Success Starts Here!" is our core belief and drives everything we do. It is our mission to create a safe and positive learning environment for our students. A major part in creating that environment is understanding our handbook as it details our school procedures and the rights and responsibilities of elementary students in the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation.

Although there are two elementary schools, our goal of promoting student excellence in a safe, positive environment is shared. Both schools implement a Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), which emphasizes students being safe, respectful, and responsible during the school day. This unified approach to addressing the needs of our students is an example of what makes our elementary schools so successful.

The success of our schools also depends on positive collaboration between home and school. We invite you to take part in school activities and show an interest in your child's progress. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or principal if you have any questions or concerns. It is our sincere wish that we all work together in fostering positive learning experiences for students.

We wish your family and you an outstanding school year and look forward to the journey together!

Sincerely,

Chad Wynn  
Van Principal

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

## **SUCCESS STARTS HERE!**

### **VISION STATEMENTS**

#### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- As a Bomber community, we will support, trust, respect, collaborate and communicate to build positive school, student and parent relationships.
- We will have compassion and patience while encouraging students to reach their full potential.

#### **RESPECT**

- As a Bomber community, we will provide a safe, caring and developmentally appropriate environment for all.
- We will provide an environment where individuals are treated with fairness and mutual respect.
- We will share and value our differences and work together using our strengths.
- We will work as a team to trust and support one another.

#### **POSITIVITY**

- As a Bomber community, we will accept the differences of every individual to promote pride, acceptance and confidence.
- We will build our students' self-confidence through open, encouraging, and accepting classrooms.
- We will maintain a motivational learning environment that promotes risk-taking.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- As a Bomber community, we expect a community where students, staff and parents are dedicated to the development of growing the total child.
- We will ensure student growth by being data-driven to foster high expectations and establish classroom and student goals.
- We will consistently communicate student progress and results.
- We will serve as role models of lifelong learners through constant professional growth.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

**Chad Wynn**

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## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

August 10	First Day for Students
September 4	Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
October 12	End of the First Nine Weeks
October 20 & 23	Fall Vacation - NO SCHOOL
November 22-24	Thanksgiving Break - NO SCHOOL
December 219	End of Second Semester/First Semester
December 20 – January 3	Christmas Vacation - NO SCHOOL
January 3	Students return to school
January 15	Flex Day (Weather Make-up, if needed)
February 16	Flex Day (Weather Make-up, if needed)
February 19	President's Day – NO SCHOOL
March 12	End of Third Nine Weeks
March 22-29	Spring Break – NO SCHOOL
April 19	Flex Day (Weather Make-up, if needed)
May 10	Flex Day (Weather Make-up, if needed)
May 24	End of Fourth Nine Weeks/Second Semester
May 24	Last Student Day
June 2	Graduation

## **School Hours**

Doors open: 7:30 a.m.

Breakfast Begins: 7:45 a.m.

Tardy Bell: 8:05 a.m.

End of Day: 3:00 p.m.

## **Academics**

### **ELEARNING**

#### Definition

Rensselaer Central School Corporation utilizes eLearning days and the corporation's weather make-up days to make up canceled school days. eLearning is learning conducted via an electronic device while at home.

#### Academic Work on eLearning Days

Students are required to complete the work on an eLearning day just as they would on a typical school day. Students will be given two days after the eLearning day to complete the work. If the work is not completed or turned in after the two days, then it will be marked as a zero in the gradebook and disciplinary consequences may be assigned.

For more information, visit the Corporation page and it is in the "Essentials" tab.

### **EVERY STUDENT ACHIEVES ACT**

The "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Act was passed to reauthorize programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for four years.

The Rensselaer Central School Corporation's focus on delivering a strong standards-based educational program is in line with the goals of the Every Student Achieves Act. We believe that this approach will improve student achievement in the gateway skills of reading, writing, and mathematics.

The federal government provides assistance to schools serving students through the Title I Program. As part of the change to federal law, parents may request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher.

Rensselaer Central Elementary School teachers are "highly qualified" professionals teaching core academic subjects. Teachers are fully certified or licensed and demonstrate competence (as determined by the state) in subject matter knowledge and teaching skills. In addition, new elementary teachers have demonstrated, on a rigorous state test, subject knowledge in reading, writing, math, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum.

School patrons may view specific teacher qualifications, as so documented on Teacher Profile Forms, located at the Rensselaer Central School Corporation Administration Office, 900 East Washington Street, Rensselaer, IN 47978 or in the Van Office.

### **HIGH ABILITY PROGRAMMING**

The REACH (Rensselaer Enriched, Accelerated, Curriculum for High Ability) Program is a high ability program that includes students who perform at or show the potential to perform at outstanding levels of accomplishment in at least one domain (language arts or math), when compared to other students of the same age, experience or environment. Rensselaer Schools, in accordance with Indiana Code, may service high ability students whose academic needs may not be met adequately in the general education classroom setting with specially designed programs and services that may challenge, accelerate and enrich the learning of current grade level curriculum.

Identification will take place in the spring of each school year for kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Data from assessments is used by the Selection Committee when determining placements in the program. If a student/parents/guardians wish to appeal the non-selection of their child, he/she may complete an appeal form and submit it to the coordinator, Mr. Craig, within fourteen (14) days of the posting of classroom placements.

### **HOME SCHOOLING**

Any parent or guardian reserves the right to home school their student. If this decision is made, please contact the principal ASAP. A statement in writing of your intent will be needed to place in the student's permanent file. More information on home schooling can be found on the Indiana Department of Education's website.

In the event that a student who has been home schooled returns to public school, any and all educational records will be needed to assess where the student's needs can best be met academically. Consideration of the student's academic record, the administration of a placement test(s), and a conference with the parent/guardian will be the procedure in determining the best placement for the students.



## **HOMEWORK**

We encourage students to utilize their time, both at school and home, in order to complete assignments. At home activities should not exceed 60 minutes per night.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. The teachers will make every effort to help students complete assignments due to the student being absent from school. If you wish to pick up work for your student, in the event that they are absent, please call the school office prior to 9:00 A.M. The work will be available in the school office between 3:15 and 3:45.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE**

Scheduled parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the second nine-week grading period (end of January). If you feel an additional conference is necessary, please contact the school office.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports and grades are the method used to keep parents and students informed of progress relative to Indiana academic standards. They should not be considered as score cards for comparing students, teachers, or parents.

Assessing student progress is an on-going, constant and imperfect task. It is our hope that the progress reports are used to keep parents and students up to date periodically on progress. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to check PowerSchool often for updated grades and missing assignments.

Progress reports will be issued at every midterm and end of nine weeks.

### **Grading Scale - Grades 3, 4, 5**

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

## **STUDY SKILLS AND WORK HABITS**

A student who studies well:

1. Brings notebook, paper, pen or pencil, and other materials necessary to class.
2. Is an active participant in the classroom, listens well, and takes part in discussion.
3. Asks questions if the discussion is not understood.
4. Plans and schedule time for homework each day, making sure the assignment is understood before leaving class.
5. Using what is learned and seeing how each subject applies to the others.
6. Strives to do personal best, not just get by. Remember - Success has many measures and many routes, but the only place success comes before work is the dictionary.

# **ATTENDANCE**

*Per School Board Policy 5200*

## **REGULAR CLASS ATTENDANCE**

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Learning results from active participation in classroom and other school activities, which cannot be replaced by individual study. The school is also concerned about helping students develop a high quality work ethic, which will be a significant factor in their success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers seek when hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the school wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school career. To receive the best possible instruction, regular class attendance by students is necessary. It is the responsibility of the school district to enforce the compulsory attendance laws established by the state of Indiana.

When the student is absent from school, a parent or guardian is to phone the school office within one hour of the start of classes on the day of the absence. This ensures the safety of the child, and it documents the reasons for absence. Parents are asked to call each day the student is absent. If a parent is unable to call the day of the absence, the student is to present a not from the parent upon return to school explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to follow these procedures may result in the absence being unexcused and the consequences associated with an unexcused absence applied. Students arriving at school after the tardy bell must first sign in at the office.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Half-Day Absence- this is to be recorded when a student is in attendance for less than one-half of the school day as defined by the following: 8:05-11:30 and 11:30-3:00

## **Exempt Absences**

Under certain circumstances, the law requires the school to authorize the absence and excuse of a student. In these circumstances, the student is excused from school and is not to be recorded as absent, and is not to be penalized in any way by the school.

1. General Assembly: Serve as a page or honoree of the General Assembly shall be recorded as being present at school when such service is properly verified (IC 20-33-2-14)
2. Election Day Worker: With parental permission, students on Election Day may serve on election boards, as a candidate helper, or as political party helpers. Prior to the date of the election, the student must submit a document signed by one (1) of the student's parents or guardians giving permission to participate in the election. The student must also verify to school authorities the performance of services by submitting a document signed by the candidate, political party chairman, campaign manager, or precinct officer. The document must describe generally the duties of the student on the date of the election. The student will be recorded as being present at school (IC 20-33-2-15)
3. Required Court Appearance or Probation Appointments: Such an absence must be verified by a proper court summons or by the individual's probation officer. A student who is subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding will not be counted absent from school. (IC 20-33-2-16)
4. Active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days a school year. The student will be recorded as present at school. (IC 20-33-2-17)
5. Members of, and students who participate in the Indiana wing of the Civil Air Patrol for not more than five (5) days a school year, will be counted as present. (IC 20-33-2-17.2)
6. Indiana State Fair: If a student or a member of the student's household exhibits or participates in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes, that student may receive up to five (5) days a school year and will be counted as present. (IC 20-33-2-17.2)
7. The governing body of a school corporation may authorize the absence and excuse of a student who attends any educationally related non-classroom activity. (IC 20-33-17.5)

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

The term “excused” will refer to any absence from school or class based on the following:

1. Personal Illness: The approving authority may require certification by a physician, dentist, or psychologist. The student/parent has 2 school days, from the date of the appointment, to provide a doctor’s note to the school. If a note is not provided, it will be documented as unexcused.
2. Death of a relative: The absence arising under such circumstances is limited to a period of three (3) days.
3. Religious observances: advance notice to the principal is required.
4. Absences approved by the principal for good cause. Extraordinary or extenuating circumstances as documented and approved by the principal.
5. A family trip/planned activity that conflicts with the school calendar shall be considered for an excused absence as determined by the principal of his/her designed based upon the following criteria:
  - a. Notification by the parent or guardian and a signed request form must be completed prior to the student absence.
  - b. The length of the absence should not put the student in the position of exceeding the maximum number of absences allowed (eight (8) per class periods per semester – high school; eight (8) days per semester elementary/middle school).
  - c. Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or a poor academic record will be considered.
  - d. Family trips will not be considered for excused absences the first or last week of each semester or if the absence would prohibit a student from completing state assessments or tests.
  - e. It is unlawful for a parent to fail or refuse to produce a certification of illness or incapacity not later than six (6) days after the certificate is demanded by the principal. For example, a principal may demand a certificate of illness or incapacity before or after vacations.
  - f. The school corporation encourages families to schedule trips during non-school times.

*Parents may periodically be informed of the student’s class attendance patterns.*

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- A. An unexcused absence from school or class is defined as truancy or any other absence not included in the items above; or a violation of an attendance contact.
- B. Truancy is an absence from school or class without the knowledge or consent of the parent and the school, or an absence from school where there is an attempt to evade the State Attendance Law.
- C. Under IC 20-33-2-25, the “Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer or the juvenile court of the department of child services.”
- D. IC 20-33-8-8 defines habitual truancy to include student absent ten (10) days or more from school within a school year without being excused or without being absent under a parental request filed with the school.
- E. Chronic absenteeism includes students absent from school for ten percent (10%) or more of a school year for any reason.
- F. An undocumented doctor’s appointment.

## LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

- A. Arriving to school late may constitute a tardy or a half-day absence, depending on arrival time. Late arrivals due to appointments must be documented by a doctor’s certificate.
- B. Departing early before the end of the school day for appointments may constitute an early dismissal or a half-day absence, depending on departure time. Documentation by a doctor’s certificate will be required.
- C. All schools have a closed campus during the school day and students are to remain on school grounds from arrival in the morning until dismissal time in the afternoon. However, should a student find it necessary to leave the school for any reason, he/she must receive permission from the building principal or his/her designee before signing out. If permission is given, the student must then sign out and sign in immediately upon his/her return to school. Students who do not follow this procedure will be considered truant and dealt with accordingly.

## **PROJECT ATTEND - EXPLANATION OF ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Succeeding in school requires good habits, and attendance is one of the most important. For all children, learning to attend school regularly can help them develop the skills that can help them succeed in school, and ultimately, in life. Project Attend, a partnership among the RCSC schools, Jasper County Circuit Court Judge John Potter, Jasper County Prosecutor and Probation, and the Rensselaer Police Department, has been created specifically to assist students and their families with developing the positive habit of attending school. There are three steps to Project Attend which include the following:

Step 1: Three Unexcused Absences or Seven Total Absences (without a doctor's note) or Six Tardies Per Semester

Phone Call to Parent/Guardian

Step 2: Five Unexcused Absences or Eleven Total Absences (without a doctor's note) or Nine Tardies Per Semester

Phone Call to Parent/Guardian

Principal & School Resource Officer (SRO) Meeting with Parent

Attendance Contract signed by Parent & School

Copy of Attendance Report given to Prosecutor & Probation

Step 3: Seven Unexcused Absences or Thirteen Total Absences (without a doctor's note) or Twelve Tardies Per Semester

Phone Call to Parent/Guardian

Copy of Attendance Report given to SRO

SRO referral to Probation and Dept. of Child Services

SRO referral to Prosecutor for Formal Educational Neglect Charges

Documentation of all phone calls, meetings and paperwork will be kept on file within the school.

## **MAKING UP WORK AS A RESULT OF ABSENCE**

The following statement of policy regarding student absence and make-up work will apply for those absences falling within the categories named below. For those cases not listed below, the principal or his/her designee has full authority to handle each case according to his/her own best judgment.

- A. When a student has an excused absence, he/she will be given every reasonable help and consideration after his/her return to school in completing assignments given during the period of absence. If possible, teachers should give the student a statement of the assignment to be covered during an anticipated absence. The length of time for completion of make-up work shall be approximately equivalent to the number of days missed, unless scheduled otherwise with the teacher. When work is not made up within this time, a zero shall be given for each assignment not completed.
- B. When a student has assignments, which were given at least four (4) days prior to the student's absence, such as, but not limited to, term papers, book reports, or special projects, the assignment shall be due on the established due date even though the student is absent on that date. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange to have the assignment turned in on the established date. Extensions of time for the completion of such assignments and waiver of penalty may be granted at the discretion of the teacher or building principal.
- C. When a student is truant, no credit will be given for make-up work and detentions will also be assigned for students in grades six (6) through twelve (12)
- D. When a student is assigned in-school suspension, he/she will be required to make up all class work for full credit and complete any other assignment(s) given by the supervisor.
- E. When a pupil is to be absent from school for non-health reasons and the dates of the absence are known in advance, the parent/guardian should pre-arrange the absence with the school as follows:

- a. The student's parent/guardian should notify the principal in advance of the absence.
- b. The student shall be responsible for such tests of other written work as the teacher may require concerning these assignments. Tests are to be administered within a reasonable time of the student's return, at the discretion of the teacher.
- c. The teacher is not required to tutor the student in advance of an absence or after his/her return.
- d. The length of time for complete of make-up work shall be approximately equivalent to the number of days missed, unless scheduled otherwise with the teacher. When work is not made up within this time, a zero shall be given for each assignment not completed.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

The Principal or his/her designee shall determine exceptions to the above policies and procedures due to extensive illness, hospitalization, or other extenuating circumstances.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- A. Parents/guardians are to call to report or verify an absence. This ensures the safety of the child, and it documents the reason for absence. Failure to notify the school may result in an unexcused absence for the student.
- B. Every effort should be made to schedule medical, dental or other such appointments outside the regular school day. Such appointments which result in an absence for one or more periods at the high school will count toward the eight-day limit in those classes missed and toward the eight-day absence limit in the elementary and middle school.
- C. Families should plan their vacations at times when school is not in session to avoid student absences. School days missed because of vacations will count toward the eight-day class period high school limit and toward the eight-day absence limit in the elementary and middle school.
- D. During the school year, parents will be advised on any problems their child might be having with school attendance either by phone or in writing by the building principal or designee.
- E. Regular school attendance is required from the beginning of the fall term for the school year in which a child becomes seven (7) years of age until the child graduates, reaches eighteen (18) years of age. If a child is enrolled before the age of seven (7), parents are required to comply with school attendance law. Under Indiana law, any student who is at least sixteen (16) years of age but is not yet eighteen (18) years of age, may withdraw from school prior to graduation after an exit interview is conducted by the appropriate school employee with the student's parent or guardian and the student's principal. A student may not withdraw from school unless the withdrawal is due to 1.) financial hardship and the student must be employed in order to support the family; 2.) the student's illness; or 3.) an order of a court with jurisdiction over the student.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **APPEARANCE GUIDELINES**

- 1. The faculty and administration assume that the students and their parents will accept the major responsibility for their student's appearance.
- 2. It is the belief of the administration that individual responsibility and self-direction are characteristic of students attending Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools. A few unfortunately will not develop a high degree of self-discipline until later in life. For these students, the following guidelines are established:
  - a. Students should not wear clothing or hairstyles that can be hazardous or disruptive to them or others during their school activities.
  - b. Dressing styles and haircuts that create, or are likely to create, a disturbance of classroom order shall not be tolerated.
  - c. No hats, caps or headwear shall be worn inside the building during the school day.
  - d. Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times. Midriffs and hips should be covered. Halters, see-through blouses, spaghetti-strap tank tops, and muscle shirts shall not be worn during the school day as well as other apparel, which may be deemed inappropriate for educational purposes.
- 3. Articles of clothing that could cause excessive maintenance problems shall be unacceptable (cleats, etc.) Also, clothing with vulgar or distasteful printing or pictures is unacceptable.
- 4. Students at Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools are expected to exhibit cleanliness, good taste, and pride in their personal appearance.

Action to be taken for inappropriate dress or grooming:

- a. Student will be asked to change clothing
  1. By changing into anything available from school storage items.
  2. Turning shirt inside out for inappropriate writing.
  3. Parents will be called to bring clothes
- b. Student will not be allowed to return to class until problem is rectified.

## **CELL PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Communication devices such as cell phones and tablets are allowed at school, but must be turned off and kept either in the student's locker or given to the teacher for safe-keeping. Students who are found using these electronic devices during school hours without permission will have the items confiscated by staff and/or Administration. These items will be returned to the student's parent(s). Further offenses can result in further disciplinary action as described in the section of this handbook titled Insubordination. These rules may apply when students are on field trips or other school sponsored events during the school day. Van Rensselaer Elementary School will not be responsible for personal devices lost, stolen or damaged at school or other school sponsored events.

## **DETENTION**

Students could receive recess or lunch detention as a result of poor academic or behavioral choices. Administration handles the detention for behavioral choices, while the teachers will handle the consequence for academic choices. The expectations for detention are as follows:

- A. Students are expected to be respectful towards the staff and students and follow the rules.
- B. Students are expected to work on the assigned tasks.
- C. If students do not behave or complete their work, they may be assigned detention.
- D. Students assigned detention may not go to recess. They must stay and work the entire time.
- D. Parents may have to sign a detention slip demonstrating they are aware of the consequence.
- E. If a student receives an excessive amount of detentions, there will be an additional consequence(s).

## **DISCIPLINE SYSTEM**

1. IC-20-8.1.1 through and including IC-20-8.1-5-17, enacted by the General Assembly of Indiana, outlines in detail the procedures to be followed when a student is disciplined by expulsion or suspension. So that the rights of the student are protected, a copy of the Act is on file in the principal's office and is available on request for reading in the office.
2. If a student is guilty of any of the following severe disciplinary offenses, the student will be taken to the office immediately. If removal to the office is resisted by the student or is not possible, the Crisis Team will be called for assistance.
  - A. Willfully inflicting harm or threatening to do harm to another individual
  - B. Directly refusing to do what student is told
  - C. Abusive/profane language or gestures
  - D. Spitting on another individual
  - E. Destroying/defacing or attempting to destroy/deface school property
  - F. Possessing drugs, alcohol, tobacco, a weapon, or any item for the use of these.
  - G. Leaving school grounds
  - H. . Bullying behavior

Any behavior that seriously impedes the ability of an instructor/supervisor to promote knowledge, maintain laws and keep order (INDIANA CODE) shall be sent directly to the principal's office. The principal shall administer appropriate discipline according to the nature of the violation.

3. When a student is sent to the office by a teacher or supervisor, the following alternatives may occur as deemed necessary by the

administration:

- a. Conference with student
  - b. Writing project during student's time
  - c. Loss of recess
  - d. Isolated lunch
  - e. Parent, teacher, administrator conference
  - f. Isolated instruction
  - g. In-school suspension
  - h. Suspension or expulsion
  - i. Other deemed appropriate by administrator
4. Defacement or other damage to school property shall require clean up time or repair time after school. Financial payment will be required if damage is beyond repair.

School officials may find it necessary to discipline students when their behavior interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school corporation. In accordance with the provisions of I.C. 20-33-8, administrators and staff members may take the following actions:

1. REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR ACTIVITY - TEACHER:
  - a) An elementary teacher may remove a student from the teacher's classroom or activity for a period of up to one (1) school day if the student is assigned regular or additional work to be completed in another school setting.
  - b) If a teacher removes a student from class under the above, the principal may place the student in one of the following settings: another appropriate class, another appropriate setting, or in-school suspension. The student may not be placed back into the original class until the principal has a meeting with the teacher, the student, and the student's parents to determine an appropriate behavior plan for the student. If the parents do not attend this meeting within a reasonable time, the principal may place the student in another class or educational setting.
2. SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL: A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school and/or take part in any school function for a period of up to ten school days [*not to exceed 10 days*].
3. EXPULSION: A student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester. In cases where the student is being expelled for possession of a firearm, a destructive device, or a deadly weapon, the maximum length of the expulsion period is listed under the Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion, Section C and Section D.

#### GROUND FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in Section A below apply when a student is:

- a. On school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
- b. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

A school activity, function, or event includes e-Learning, virtual instruction, and remote learning days.

A violation by a student of a rule listed in Sections A and B is subject to a range of disciplinary consequences imposed by teachers or administrators intended to be progressive in nature and move to a more serious consequence with each violation of the same or similar rule. In recognizing that violations of certain rules and the resulting consequences will be dependent upon the age of the student, the

number of prior violations and the severity of the violation, the principal of each building level shall develop the minimum and maximum consequences for each rule for their building that is to be approved by the board annually and published in the student handbook for each building. The appropriate consequence should be the least severe that will adequately address any danger to the student and other persons, prevent further disruption of activities, and promote student achievement.

#### **A. Student Misconduct and/or Substantial Disobedience**

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience. The following rules define student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience for which a student may be suspended or expelled:

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this rule:
  - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
  - b. Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
  - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or school property.
  - d. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or education function, or of any meeting or assembly on school property.
  - e. Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any other person to conduct or participate in an education function.
2. Engaging in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urging of other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes coercion, harassment, hazing, or other comparable conduct.
3. Engaging in violence and/or threat of violence against any student, staff member, and/or other persons. Prohibited violent or threatening conduct includes threatening, planning, or conspiring with others to engage in a violent activity.
4. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property.
5. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing or attempting to steal private property.
6. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect oneself and/or another person is not a violation of this rule.
7. Threatening or intimidating any person for any purpose, including obtaining money or anything of value.
8. Threatening (whether specific or general in nature) injury to persons or damage to property, regardless of whether there is a present ability to commit the act.
9. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
10. Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, is represented to be a weapon, or looks like a weapon.



11. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by any controlled substance, prescription drug, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant or depressant of any kind, or any paraphernalia used in connection with the listed substances. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event. *[Low THC Extract products as defined by state law are included in this rule and/or violations of the school corporation administration of medication policy are included in this rule.] [Low THC Extract products as defined by state law are excluded from this rule.]*
  - a. Exception to Rule 11: a student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's parent has filed a written authorization with the building principal. The written authorization must be filed annually. The written authorization must be done by a physician and must include the following information:
    1. That the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication.
    2. The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication.
    3. The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication.
    4. The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication.
12. Possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind.
13. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by caffeine-based substances other than beverages, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), stimulants of any kind, or any other similar over-the-counter products.
14. Possessing, using, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco or nicotine-containing products of any kind or in any form. These products include e-cigarettes, vaping devices, any type of look-alike products or other related products or devices associated with tobacco or nicotine use or electronic nicotine delivery systems.
15. Offering to sell or agreeing to purchase a controlled substance or alcoholic beverages.
16. Failing to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
17. Failing to completely and truthfully respond to questions from a staff member regarding school-related matters including potential violations of the student conduct rules or state or federal law.
18. Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or of violating a school rule, and/or a state or federal law.
19. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
20. Aiding, assisting, agreeing or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules or state or federal law.
21. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
22. Taking, recording, displaying and/or distributing pictures (digital or otherwise), video or audio recordings without the consent of the student or staff member in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
23. Possessing sexually-related materials which include images displaying uncovered breasts, genitals, or buttocks.
24. "Sexting" or using a cell phone or other personal communication device to possess or send text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexual in nature. In addition to taking any disciplinary action, phones will be confiscated and any images suspected to violate criminal laws will be referred to law enforcement authorities.

25. Engaging in pranks or other similar activity that could result in harm to another person.
26. Using or possessing gunpowder, ammunition, matches, lighters, or an inflammable substance.
27. Violating any board policy or administrative rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function, including, but not limited to:
  - a. engaging in sexual behavior on school property;
  - b. engaging in sexual harassment of a student or staff member;
  - c. disobedience of administrative authority;
  - d. willful absence or tardiness of students;
  - e. engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry or hair style, that is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or refers to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, sex, or illegal activity;
  - f. violation of the school corporation's acceptable use of technology policy or rules;
  - g. violation of the school corporation's administration of medication policy or rules;
  - h. possessing or using a laser pointer or similar device.
28. Possessing or using an electronic device (e.g., cellular phone, tablet computer, digital camera, electronic equipment) in a manner which constitutes an interference with a school purpose or educational function, an invasion of privacy, or an act of academic dishonesty, or is profane, indecent, or obscene. In addition to being disciplined, students who use an electronic device in a manner which is inconsistent with this rule may have the device confiscated by school administration. Such device will be returned to the parent.
29. Possessing or using on school grounds during school hours an electronic device, a cellular telephone, or any other telecommunication device, including a look-a-like device, in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function or using such device to engage in an activity that violates school rules. This rule is not violated when the student has been given clear permission from a school administrator or a designated staff member to possess or use one of the devices listed in this rule. In addition to being disciplined, students who use an electronic device in a manner which is inconsistent with this rule may have the device confiscated by school administration. Such device will be returned to the parent.
30. Any student conduct rule the school building principal establishes and gives notice of to students and parents.
31. Harassing by using extreme or inappropriate communications (verbal or written) or expressive acts that are intended to harass, intimidate, or humiliate a person on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, alternative lifestyle, or physical characteristics are forbidden.

## **B. Bullying**

1. Bullying committed by students toward other students is strictly prohibited. Engaging in bullying conduct described in this rule by use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, computer network, or cellular telephone or other wireless or cellular communication device, is also prohibited.
2. For purposes of this rule, bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass,

ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
  - has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
  - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
  - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
3. This rule may be applied regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when a student committing bullying behavior and the targeted student attend a school within the school corporation and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of other students to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
  4. Any student or parent who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this rule or any student who feels he/she has been bullied in violation of this rule should immediately report the conduct to the principal who has responsibility for all investigations of student misconduct including bullying. A student or parent may also report the conduct to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the principal. This report may be made anonymously, but must be in a written form.
  5. The principal shall investigate immediately all reports of bullying made pursuant to the provisions of this rule. Such investigation must include any action or appropriate responses that may be taken immediately to address the bullying conduct wherever it takes place. The parents of the bully and the targeted student(s) shall be notified of the reported bullying incidents within five business days of the report of such incidents, and on a regular, periodic basis of the progress and the findings of the investigation and of any remedial action that has been taken. During the investigation, the school's priority will be the safety of the victim.
  6. The principal will be responsible for working with the school counselors and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the school administrator and school counselors will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief. Such determination should be made as soon as possible and once this determination is made, the report should be made immediately to law enforcement.
  7. False reporting of bullying conduct as defined in this rule by a student shall be considered a violation of this rule and will result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions if the investigation of the report finds it to be false.
  8. A violation of this rule prohibiting bullying may result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanction, including suspension and/or expulsion.
  9. Failure by a school employee who has a responsibility to report bullying or investigate bullying or any other duty under this rule to carry out such responsibility or duty will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment with the school corporation.
  10. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the bullying.
  11. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying. Parents will be allowed to review any and all materials used in the school corporation's bullying and/or suicide prevention programs.

12. All schools in the corporation are encouraged to engage students, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through parent organizations already in place in each school.
13. The superintendent or designee will be responsible for developing detailed administrative procedures consistent with the Indiana Department of Education guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of this rule.

### **C. Possessing A Firearm or A Destructive Device**

1. No student shall possess, handle or transmit any firearm or a destructive device on school property.
2. The following devices are considered to be a firearm under this rule:  
any weapon that is capable of expelling, designed to expel, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by means of an explosion.
3. For purposes of this rule, a destructive device is:  
  
an explosive, incendiary, or overpressure device that is configured as a bomb, a grenade, a rocket with a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, a Molotov cocktail or a device that is substantially similar to an item described above,  
  
a type of weapon that may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant through a barrel that has a bore diameter of more than one-half inch, or  
  
a combination of parts designed or intended for use in the conversion of a device into a destructive device.

A destructive device is NOT a device that although originally designed for use as a weapon, is redesigned for use as a signaling, pyrotechnic, line throwing, safety, or similar device.

4. The penalty for possession of a firearm or a destructive device: suspension up to 10 days and expulsion from school for at least one calendar year with the return of the student to be at the beginning of the first semester after the one-year period. The superintendent may reduce the length of the expulsion if the circumstances warrant such reduction.
5. The superintendent shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when a student engages in behavior described in this rule.

### **D. Possessing A Deadly Weapon**

1. No student shall possess, handle or transmit any deadly weapon on school property.
2. The following devices are considered to be deadly weapons for purposes of this rule:  
  
a weapon, taser or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substance, or other material that in the manner it is used, or could ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury;  
  
an animal readily capable of causing serious bodily injury and used in the commission or attempted commission of a crime; or  
  
a biological disease, virus, or organism that is capable of causing serious bodily injury.
3. The penalty for possession of a deadly weapon: up to 10 days suspension and expulsion from school for a period of up to one calendar year.
4. The superintendent may notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when a student engages in behavior described in this rule.



# RCES School-wide Behavior Matrix

	Be Kind	Be Safe	Be A Learner
Hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a 0 voice</li> <li>Keep hands and feet to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use walking feet</li> <li>Watch where you walk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use listening ears</li> </ul>
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep hands and feet to self</li> <li>Invite others to play</li> <li>Take turns and share the equipment</li> <li>Use kind words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use equipment appropriately</li> <li>Stay within playground area</li> <li>Ask adult for help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line up when bell rings</li> <li>Dress for the weather</li> <li>Follow the rules</li> </ul>
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use "please," "thank you" &amp; "excuse me."</li> <li>Use good table manners.</li> <li>Use kind words</li> <li>Use a 2 voice</li> <li>Ask to share</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a calm, quiet body while waiting in line.</li> <li>Use two hands on tray while walking.</li> <li>Stay seated while eating &amp; until dismissed.</li> <li>Clean up your space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to adults.</li> <li>Try new foods.</li> <li>Eat a balanced diet.</li> </ul>
Restroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give privacy to others</li> <li>Use a 1 voice</li> <li>Keep hands and feet to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash hands with soap and water</li> <li>Keep water in sink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep the bathroom clean</li> <li>Be timely</li> </ul>
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect others (property/thoughts/feelings)</li> <li>Keep hands and feet to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a calm, quiet body</li> <li>Use classroom materials appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>Be a problem solver</li> <li>Be a thinker</li> <li>Use time wisely</li> </ul>
Transportation			
Bus Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use kind words</li> <li>Keep hands, feet and objects to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watch for traffic</li> <li>Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop</li> <li>Stay at least 10 feet away from the bus until the driver invites you on</li> <li>Watch for driver directions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrive 10 minutes before pickup</li> <li>Check for all belongings</li> </ul>
Loading & Un-loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a 2 voice</li> <li>Keep appropriate space between yourself and person in front of you (Respect Personal Space)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enter and exit in an orderly manner</li> <li>Make sure you can see the driver</li> <li>Report unsafe bus behavior to the driver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What you bring on the bus, take off the bus</li> <li>Report bus damage to the driver</li> </ul>
While the Bus is Moving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a 2 voice</li> <li>Keep hands, feet and objects inside the bus</li> <li>Use kind words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain seated at all times facing forward</li> <li>Keep the aisle clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set a positive example</li> </ul>

# RCES STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Violation	First Infraction	Second Infraction	Third Infraction
<b>Bomb Threat</b>	Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest		
<b>Bullying</b>	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Suspension / Expulsion	Expulsion
<b>Bus Conduct</b>	Detention / Bus Suspension / ISS / OSS / Expulsion	Detention / Bus Suspension / ISS / OSS / Expulsion	Bus Suspension / ISS / OSS / Expulsion
<b>Cheating / Plagiarism</b>	Zero for assignment / Detention / Loss of Privilege	F for 9-week grading period / Detention / Suspension / Loss of Privilege	F for 9-week grading period / Detention / Suspension / Loss of Privilege
<b>Computer / Technology Policy</b>	Detention / Suspension / Payment / Replacement / Loss of Computer / Technology use	Detention / Suspension / Payment / Replacement / Loss of Computer / Technology use	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Disrespect / Threats to Staff</b>	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Disruptive Behavior</b>	Detention	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Electronic Devices</b>	Warning / Detention / Device turned into office	Detention / Suspension / Device turned into office	Detention / Suspension / Device turned into office
<b>Electronic Dishonesty</b>	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Fighting</b>	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Harassment</b>	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Improper Affection</b>	Detention	Detention	Detention / Suspension
<b>Inappropriate Comments</b>	Detention/ Suspension	Detention/ Suspension	Detention/ Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Insubordination</b>	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Lying</b>	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Non-compliance</b>	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Physical Aggression</b>	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion	Detention / Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Possession / Use of Alcohol</b>	Suspension / Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest	Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest	
<b>Possession / Use of Explosives</b>	Suspension / Expulsion	Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest	
<b>Possession / Use of Flammable Gas or Solid</b>	Suspension / Expulsion	Suspension / Expulsion	Expulsion
<b>Possession / Use of Tobacco Products</b>	Detention / Suspension / Ticket issued to student or Vape Education Course (vape products only)	Ticket issued to student / Suspension / Expulsion	

<b>Possession / Use of a drug / drug paraphernalia with (or without) drug residue</b>	Suspension / Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest	Expulsion / Charges filed / Arrest	
<b>Possession of Weapon</b>	Suspension / Expulsion	Expulsion	
<b>Possession of Weapon: Look Alike</b>	Suspension / Expulsion	Expulsion	
<b>Profanity / Obscenity</b>	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension	Detention / Suspension
<b>Theft</b>	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest
<b>Threatening Statement</b>	Detention / Suspension	Suspension / Expulsion	Suspension / Expulsion
<b>Vandalism</b>	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest	Replacement / Restitution / Detention / Suspension / Charges Filed / Arrest

## HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Rensselaer Central School Corporation to maintain learning and working environments that are free from sexual, physical, psychological, verbal, or any other form of harassment. Any student deemed harassing another person on school property, during regular school hours, or at any after-school activity, will be subject to suspension and/or due process for expulsion. Violations include reported allegation(s) of improper speech, writings, drawings, gestures and/or physical contact. Reported allegations will be fully investigated by school officials and disciplined accordingly. School officials will maintain victim confidentiality. Complaints of harassment should be reported immediately to any school official. School personnel will quickly investigate allegations of harassment. School officials' determination and/or punishments will be explained to the parent/guardian and student and the appeal process outlined.

## IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

1. All in-school suspensions are to be served in silence.
2. Do not leave the room you have been assigned to without permission.
3. You must study or read. It is the student's responsibility to stay busy.
4. Office personnel will arrange for your lunch to be delivered to the office.
5. Failure to follow the in-school suspension rules will result in time being added to the suspension.

## INSIDE RECESS RULES

1. Running, jump ropes, and playing with balls will not be allowed.
2. Use indoor voice level.
3. Do not leave the classroom without permission.
4. Do not play in the closets.
5. Follow additional rules as determined by the classroom teacher.

### Consequences:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Time Out from Recess
3. If group gets too noisy, they will sit quietly at seats.

### Severe:

1. Referral to office.



## **INSUBORDINATION BY A STUDENT**

RCSC defines insubordination as defiance of authority or refusing to do what an adult requests. Insubordination interferes with the education of all students. Therefore, insubordination offenses can and will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, after-school detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or even expulsion.

## **ISOLATED INSTRUCTION**

Students may be removed from their classroom to the office for part of a school day. Academics will be provided in an isolated setting. Positive behavior may allow an early return to the classroom.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools have always pledged to create a safe and caring environment for all students. In an effort to continue to improve our schools, our staff has worked together to implement a framework called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a system of tools and strategies for defining, teaching, acknowledging appropriate behavior and correcting inappropriate behavior. PBIS is for the whole school and changes the focus from negative behaviors and exchanges to positive expectations and interactions.

Our framework is based on three basic expectations of **Be Safe, Be Kind and Be A Learner**. We have created a matrix of what this behavior would look like for students when they are in the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, on the playground and while riding the school bus. Posters of this behavior are in these areas and teachers have committed to teaching their students the positive behaviors they are expected to demonstrate at school. Additionally, we have a school-wide behavior management system.

## **RESPECT FOR PROPERTY**

Everyone using the building should show genuine respect for it by keeping the building in excellent condition. Each student has the responsibility to report anyone observed showing disrespect for any school facility. Students who exhibit disrespect, damage, or destroy school property will be subject to disciplinary action. In the case of theft or destruction of school property or private property on school grounds, the individual student is responsible for restitution and seeing that it is carried out within a 6 week period. Defacement or other damage to school property shall require clean up or repair time outside of school hours. Financial payment will be required if damage is beyond repair. Consequences can include suspension and/or expulsion and possibly referral to the police.

## **RESPECT TOWARD STAFF**

ALL students are expected to be respectful to teachers, administrators, or any staff member (bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria personnel, etc.) at all times. Profanity, threatening remarks, posturing, obscene language or gestures, and any other inappropriate writings or actions by students directed toward a staff member can result in suspension and request for expulsion. Physically assaulting a staff member can result in suspension, request for expulsion, and prosecution by authorities.

## **RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT**

It is important that all students and parents understand and realize that if a student causes bodily injury to a student or staff member or damages another person's property, the student and parent may be held accountable (financially and legally) for said action. When a student is involved in a fight the parents will be required to come to school for a conference with the principal. Thus, it is best to keep your hands and feet to yourself and keep your hands off of other people's property.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools will follow the Rensselaer School Board Policy 5771, pages 1-3, found in By-laws and Policies of the School Board and policy 5771, pages 1-4, found in the Administrative Guidelines.

Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools will also follow all of the Federal, State, and local laws and policies that are in effect at the time mandated by the different agencies.

The By-laws, Policies, and Administrative Guidelines adopted by the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation Board of Trustees will

also be followed even though they may not be stated in the Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools Handbook.

## **SMOKING-TOBACCO**

The School Board recognizes that the use of tobacco presents a health hazard that can have serious consequences both for the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the Board.

For purposes of this policy, use of tobacco shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, as well as electronic, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes.

In order to protect students who choose not to use tobacco from an environment that might be harmful to them, the Board prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco by students at all times within any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board. The Board also prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco anywhere on the campus of any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, including, but not limited to, practice fields, playgrounds, football fields, baseball fields, softball fields, pool areas, soccer fields, tennis courts, and all open areas and will remain in effect at all times. Furthermore, the Board prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco in all vehicles owned or operated by the Board, including, but not limited to, school buses, special purpose buses, vans, trucks, and cars.

The administration of each school building will take appropriate action in cases involving students who use and/or possess tobacco in violation of this policy.

The Superintendent's administrative guidelines shall include a comprehensive plan to communicate the prohibitions set forth in this policy regarding the use of tobacco, as defined herein, by students, staff, parents, vendors and any other individuals in the Corporation's schools, offices, and/or other Corporation facilities, as well as on the grounds of the schools, offices and other Corporation facilities. The plan shall also communicate the prohibitions set forth in this policy regarding the use of tobacco as defined herein by those who drive, or are passengers in, Corporation vehicles of any type.

Students found using tobacco or tobacco-less chew in the school building, parking lots, school grounds, and the vicinity of the school grounds:

- a. First offense – Up to three days out of school suspension and a citation or ordered to complete an educational course.
- b. Second offense – Up to ten days out of school suspension, citation and possible recommendation for expulsion from school
- c. Control of a lighted cigarette shall be considered smoking.

Students shall not have cigarettes, vapes, tobacco, or tobacco-less chew in their possession during the normal school day or during school sponsored activities:

- a. First offense – In school or out of school suspension and a citation or ordered to complete an educational course.
- b. Second offense – Up to three days out of school suspension and administrator removes tobacco product.

## **THEFT/STEALING**

Theft/stealing will not be accepted in any fashion. Students who involve themselves in this criminal act will receive suspension (in or out-of school) and may be reported to the Rensselaer Police Department.

## **COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY/ INTERNET POLICY**

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

*Per School Board policy 7540.03*

Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation offers Internet access for student and staff use. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for staff and student use of Corporation's Internet Access and Computer Access. Rensselaer Central uses Internet filtering as required by law. This is a measure to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

Students are encouraged to use the Corporation's computers/network and Internet connection for educational purposes. Use of such resources is a privilege, not a right. Students must conduct themselves in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Unauthorized or inappropriate use, including any violation of these guidelines, may result in cancellation of the privilege, disciplinary action consistent with the Student Handbook, and/or civil or criminal liability. Prior to accessing the Internet at school, students must sign the Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Agreement. Parent permission is required for minors.

#### Educational Purpose

1. The Corporation's Internet has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational Purpose" includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.
2. The Corporation's Internet has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Corporation has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material students and staff access or post through the system. They are also expected to follow the rules set forth in the disciplinary code, and the law, in the use of the Corporation's system
3. Students and staff may not use the Corporation's Internet for commercial purposes. This means students and staff may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the Corporation Internet, unless approved by an administrator.
4. Students and staff may not use the Corporation's Internet for political lobbying. But it may be used to communicate with elected representatives and to express personal opinion on political issues.

#### Internet Access

1. All students are encouraged to use the Internet World Wide Web information resources through the classroom, library, or school computer lab, unless written exemption is given from the parents.
2. Staff will use an individual school sponsored e-mail account.
3. The acceptable use policy is printed in the Student and Faculty Handbooks. By signing for this handbook the student agrees to the rules and regulations set forth in the Acceptable Use Policy. This includes Internet use, computer use, posting of information on the school web page (including group picture without names), and broadcasting or participating in videoconferences.

#### Teleconferencing

1. Students will have access to teleconferencing via Google Meet. Google Meet will be utilized by teachers to teach students remotely.
2. Students are expected to use Google Meet appropriately. School rules apply when students use their school-issued Google Meet account and/or the school iPad.

#### Unacceptable Uses

*The following uses of the Corporation's Internet and Computers are considered **UNACCEPTABLE**.*

1. Personal Safety
  - Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes one's address, telephone, school address, work address, etc.
  - Students will not meet with someone they have met online.
  - Students will promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message received that is inappropriate.
2. Illegal Activities
  - Students and staff will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the corporation's Internet or to any other computer system through the Corporation's Internet or go beyond an authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purpose of "browsing."
  - Students and staff will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.
  - Students and staff will not use the Corporation's Internet to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for the purchase or sale of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs (ATOD), engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of person, etc.

3. System Security
  - Students are responsible for their individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should one provide his/her password to another person.
  - Students will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Do not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
4. Inappropriate Language and Material
  - Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, email, and material posted on Web pages.
  - Students will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
  - Post information that could cause damage, a danger, or disruption.
  - Engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - Harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. When told by a person to stop sending them messages, it must be stopped.
  - Knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
  - Visit sites deemed unacceptable. The term "unacceptable" is any material viewed as obscene, pornographic, gambling or otherwise inappropriate. See section 8.
5. Respect for Privacy
  - Students will not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
  - Students will not post private information about another person.
6. Respecting Resource Limits
  - Students will use the system only for educational and career development activities and limited, high-quality, self-discovery activities.
  - Students will check e-mail frequently, delete unwanted messages promptly, and stay within network storage limits.
  - Internet bandwidth is a limited resource. Download materials as needed being mindful of others' needs for bandwidth concurrently.
7. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement
  - Students and staff will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own.
  - Students will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when one inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, one should follow the expressed requirements. If one is unsure whether or not a work can be used, one should request permission from the copyright owner. Copyright law can be very confusing. If a student has questions he or she should ask a teacher.
8. Inappropriate Access to Material
  - Students and staff will not use the corporation's Internet to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), gambling, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature). A special exception may be made for hate literature if the purpose of the access is to conduct research and both the teacher and parent/guardian have approved.
  - If the student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should IMMEDIATELY tell the teacher or another corporation employee. This will protect him/her against a claim of intentionally violating this policy.
9. Your Rights
  - Free Speech-- the Corporation's Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to a school newspaper, and therefore the Corporation may restrict speech for valid educational reasons. The corporation will not restrict speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions being expressed.
  - Search and Seizure—
    - Students should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the corporation system.
    - The situation is similar to the rights students have in the privacy of their locker.
    - Routine maintenance and monitoring of the Corporation's Internet may lead to discovery that one may have violated this policy, the handbook, or the law.
    - An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy, the handbook, or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.
    - Parents/guardians have the right at any time to request to see the contents of their student's network account
    - Logs of internet use will be kept for a non-specified time and deleted by the system administrator
  - Due Process
    - The Corporation will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through Corporation's Internet.

- In the event there is a claim that a student has violated this Policy or handbook while using the corporation's network, the student will be provided with a written notice of the suspected violation and
- an opportunity to present an explanation before a neutral administrator.
- If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of the handbook, it will be handled in a manner described in the handbook. Additional restrictions may be placed on ones use of his/her account.
- Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary measures set forth in the student handbook. All disciplinary consequences will be based on comparable violations, subject to review, and at the discretion of the building administrator.

*Negligent, knowing, or intentional violations of this Policy may result in the suspension or expulsion of a student or volunteer, or discipline including termination of an employee.*

### Limitation of Liability

The corporation makes no guarantee that the functions of the service provided by or through the Corporation system will be error-free or without defect. The Corporation will not be responsible for any damage one may suffer. Including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The Corporation is not responsible for the accuracy of quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The Corporation will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

The Board designated the Superintendent and the building administrators responsible for initiating, implementing, and enforcing this policy and its accompanying guidelines as they apply to the use of the Corporation's Network and the Internet for instructional purposes.

## iPADS

### Beliefs

Rensselaer Central School Corporation will provide each student access to digital content to provide a robust learning environment. Doing so will provide our students the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessary be prepared for life after school.

### Digital Citizenship

Students will practice digital citizenship skills to become responsible citizens. Positive behavior is expected while on an iPad. Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools use iPad Infraction Forms for students that do not exhibit proper behavior while on the device. The infraction forms could lead to iPad restrictions or other consequences as determined by an administrator.

### Discipline

Administrators and teachers have the right to keep the iPad at school (versus sending it home) at their discretion as long as the student does not need the iPad to complete homework. Severe incidents could result in the loss of certain features of the iPad.

### Responsibility

The iPads are property of the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation. Damage that occurs to the iPad is assumed by the student as per the iPad Assurance form. Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation reserves the right to restrict student-usage and iPad availability.

## EMERGENCY PROCEEDURES

### EARLY DISMISSAL

In the event of early dismissal, the teacher/school will follow the "Early Dismissal Instructions" in the "Parent/Student Information" section of Forms on PowerSchool. This is to be completed when registering for school. If it not filled out, the school will send students home via their normal route. It is the parent's obligation to notify the school if there is a change. Parents/guardians will be notified of an early dismissal via School Messenger so long as the phone number is provided at registration or updated through the Van office in the case of a phone number change.

### FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held regularly to acquaint students with the system of clearing the building as safely as possible. During a fire drill, students are to observe the following rules:

1. Leave all materials and go without delay on the route from your room or area. ALWAYS WALK!!
2. All students will move away from the building until they reach their designated area.
3. Do not enter the building until the all-clear signal has been given.
4. Do not talk during the drill. Absolute quiet is needed in case further instructions need to be given. If you speak, you may be putting someone else in danger.

## **LOCKDOWN DRILLS**

Van Elementary classroom doors are locked during times of student instruction. To further student safety, we practice Emergency Lockdown situations. This drill includes the students hiding quietly out of plain-sight in a locked classroom with the lights off.

## **SEVERE WEATHER OR TORNADO DRILLS**

Tornado drills are practiced a few times throughout the year.

During the drill, there is to be absolutely no talking during drills. The students are to be quiet until the all clear is given and the students are back in their rooms.

Instructions for fire and severe weather drills are posted in each classroom.

Any drill is designed to help us be prepared in case of an actual emergency. In order for all of us to be well prepared, everyone needs to cooperate.

## **TELEPHONE USAGE**

The office telephone is to be used only in emergency situations. The use of the telephone to make plans that could or should have been made in advance will not be allowed. Students must seek permission from their classroom teacher to use the phone. Forgetting homework, a toy, or making arrangements to spend the night are not considered emergencies. These are responsibilities that need to be taught by both home and school.

Phone messages will be delivered in an emergency. Please do not expect to have a student called to the phone from class.

Parents are encouraged to call teachers when they have questions. Teachers will return calls when they have planning time.

## **RIGHTS AND POLICIES**

### **CORPORATION POLICIES**

A full listing of the Rensselaer Central School Corporation policies can be found at [www.rensselaerschools.org](http://www.rensselaerschools.org).

### **DISABILITY POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation not to discriminate against any person with a qualified disability, solely by reason of his/her disability, in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, any program or activity sponsored by this corporation.

Inquiries regarding compliance with this policy should be directed to the Superintendent of the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation, 900 E Washington Street, Rensselaer, IN 47978 or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

A copy of all-applicable policies and laws concerning students' and parents' educational rights can be obtained at the Superintendent's Office, 900 E Washington Street, Rensselaer, IN 47978.

## **STATE LAW WILL TAKE PRECEDENT OVER ANY OF THE ABOVE PROCEDURES**

### **FULL NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA,

its Agencies, offices, and employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print audio tape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested on the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1) mail: U.S.Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY NOTIFICATION STATEMENTS**

It is the policy of the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its education programs or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act (I.C. 22-9-1), I.C. 20-8.1-2, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Education Amendments), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act should be directed to the Superintendent of the Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation, 900 East Washington Street, Rensselaer, IN 47978 or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA**

For Elementary and Secondary Institutions

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational record within 45 days of the day the School Corporation receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the Rensselaer Central School Corporation to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the School Corporation decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School Corporation will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

An exception permitting disclosure without consent would be disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the School Corporation as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School Corporation has contacted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. Upon request, the School Corporation discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school corporation in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School Corporation to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

600 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 202-4605

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

We encourage parents to volunteer at the school. Because the safety of our students is so important, RCSC has implemented certain policies to insure the safety of all students. All prospective volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application and criminal background check prior to assisting at the school or accompanying students on field trips. This form is available at the main office.

Once approved, all volunteers must wear a visitor's pass when in the building. When entering the building stop by the office to sign in and obtain your visitor's pass. This is a must and is meant only for the protection of your students. If you need to talk to a teacher, please make arrangements beforehand.

If you wish to take your child home early, please sign your student out at the office. Your student will be called to the office.

## **VISITS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **PER CORPORATION POLICY - 9150**

1. Persons wishing to visit the School are to make arrangements in advance through the school office. Any person who comes onto School property without registering at the office is trespassing and may be reported to the authorities.
2. No visitor may see a student in school unless it is with the specific approval of the principal. If an emergency situation requires that a student be called to the office to meet with a visitor, a member of the administrative staff must be present during the conference. A student will not be permitted to leave the School with anyone who is not clearly identified as his/her parent or an appropriately-authorized person.
3. Students may not bring guests to School unless permission to do so has been granted by the principal.
4. No staff member is allowed to transact business with a visitor who has not duly registered at the School office and received authorization to be present for the purpose of conducting business.

## **Classroom Visitations**

Because classroom visitations can be distractive to the students, it has been necessary to establish the following guidelines:

1. Parents, other than those who have been asked by a teacher to be in the classroom, who wish to observe learning activities taking place in their child's classroom are to confer, in advance, with the principal and the teacher and state the purpose of the visitation.
2. Visitations will not be allowed during examinations and independent study periods.
3. A visitation should be no longer than sixty (60) minutes or one class period.
4. The number of visitors at any one (1) time should not exceed two parents.



5. The frequency of visits for any student's parents should be no more than five (5) every eighteen (18) weeks and the aggregate number of visits per week should not exceed one (1).
6. Parents are to be silent observers and are not to create any type of disturbance or disruption to the learning process.
7. Copies of instructional materials being used by the students or teacher may be requested of the teacher but not always be immediately available during the visitation.
8. Any comments made by individual students are to be maintained in confidence by the visitor to the activity.
9. Use of audio or visual equipment to record classroom activities must be approved by the principal and the teacher. No visitor shall be allowed to videotape students in the classroom as it violates the privacy rights of students unrelated to the visitor.
10. If a visitor wishes to tape record a conversation or meeting with a teacher or the principal, s/he should request permission from the teacher or principal.
11. Any comments or concerns are to be discussed with the teacher before or after the school day when students are not present.
12. Visitors are encouraged to meet with the principal and teacher during non-instructional hours to discuss the observation and to obtain answers to their questions. If a parent has a concern about what may be transpiring in his/her child's classroom, s/he should discuss the concern first with the teacher and, if the concern is not satisfied, make arrangements to discuss the matter with the principal.

## **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELFARE**

### **AIR QUALITY**

Forms are available in the main office for parents to complete if they have concerns about air quality in the school building.

### **CHILD CARE – BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL**

The Adventure Club provides childcare before and after school for students attending Rensselaer Central Elementaries in grades pre-school through fifth grade. Please contact the office for more information or visit [www.theadventureclub.com](http://www.theadventureclub.com).

#### **Time**

Morning care begins at 6:30 a.m. All Van Elementary students are picked up at RCPS by a bus prior to 8:00 a.m. and transported to Van. Students cannot be dropped off before 6:30.

After care begins after school and ends at 6:00 p.m. All Van Elementary students are bused to the Primary School. Students must be picked up by 6:00 p.m.

### **COOPERATIVE SCHOOL SERVICES**

Cooperative School Services provides services to eight school corporations, which includes Rensselaer Central. Services provided include psychoeducational evaluations, administration of special education programs, therapy services for students enrolled in special education, technical assistance and training programs to parents and school personnel, along with early childhood special education programs. The Cooperative staff works closely with parents and school personnel on assessment teams and in determining student programs.

### **COUNSELOR**

The Counselor will be available in both Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools. She will do individual, classroom and group counseling at both schools.

Elementary students may be referred to the counselor by their teacher, administrator, parents, or at their own request. Parental involvement is encouraged and appointments can be made by calling the school office.

Counseling focus will be on helping students develop positive relationships, succeed in school, and establish effective work habits. Students interacting with the counselor will build positive self-concepts, learn to respect and appreciate others, and will learn how to resolve conflict and maintain self-discipline.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Each year the Superintendent shall provide public notice to students and their parents of the intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as “directory information”. The Board designates as student “directory information”: a student’s name, address; photograph; major field of study; grade level; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; honor rolls; and scholarships. For additional information on student records refer to RCSC Board Policy 8330.

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the Corporation to disclose any or all of such “directory information” upon written notification to the Corporation within thirty (30) days after receipt of the Superintendent’s annual notice.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is available to EVERY STUDENT for FREE on a daily basis.

### **Lunch**

Money should be put in an envelope with the student and teachers name on it and placed in the box in the cafeteria.

Lunch prices may be changed due to central office directives.

If you believe you may qualify for free/reduced lunch services, you may pick up a form in the office.

### **Lunch Charges**

In order to maintain the success of our Computerized Lunch Program it becomes extremely important that a student’s Bank-A-Meal account remain open. Therefore when a student’s lunch account is overdrawn, it will be closed until a deposit has been made. There is a **no charge policy** so please help your students keep their accounts open. Students are repeatedly reminded when their accounts fall to \$3.00 or less. Please make sure your student’s first and last names are on the envelopes.

If there is a balance at the end of the year, it will be carried over to next year, even the 5th graders. Parents are welcome to consult with the principal concerning special circumstances.

## **MEDICATION**

There may be a time when your child needs to take medications at school. Whenever possible, medications should be taken at home. If your child needs to take medications at school please follow these steps:

1. Send in or bring in the medication in the original container. No medications will be accepted in plastic baggies or envelopes.
2. If the medication is “over the counter”, a note must be sent in by the parent/guardian and contain the following:
  - a. Student’s first and last name
  - b. Name of the medication
  - c. The date the medication is to be started
  - d. The date the medication is to be stopped
  - e. The dosage
  - f. The time to be given
  - g. What the medication is being given for
3. If the medication is prescribed by a doctor/physician:
  - a. Prescription medication must be in original container with a current prescription label attached.
  - b. A doctor must complete the proper school form for the medication to be distributed to the student.
  - c. A parent/guardian must complete the proper school forms for the medication. If the forms are not completed, the school will not distribute the medication to the child. The forms are available in the office.

\*The school nurse will send a medication form home to be filled out by the parent and sent in the next school day.

4. Medications will NOT be sent home with any student. If medications are not picked up by the end of the school year they will be safely thrown away.
5. RCSC encourages parents/guardians to exhibit caution when sending medication to school with their student. RSCS is not responsible for the medication until it is turned in to the nurse or front office.

## **MORNING RULES FOR ENTERING THE BUILDING**

1. The building opens at 7:30 to students. Non-bus students should plan to arrive no earlier than 7:30.
2. Breakfast is served between 7:45 and 8:05 at Van Rensselaer. Students participating in the breakfast program may go to the cafeteria during this time.
3. Students may use the restroom at this time with permission from the supervisor.
4. The tardy bell rings at 8:05 at Van Rensselaer. Any student arriving after the tardy bell will be marked tardy.

## **PEANUT SAFE SCHOOL**

Rensselaer Central Elementary Schools are PEANUT SAFE SCHOOLS. We have removed all peanut and peanut oil products from our kitchen area. Any students, attending Van, with peanut allergies will be provided a peanut free zone, including, but not limited to, the classroom and the cafeteria settings.

Please do not pack peanut butter sandwiches, peanut butter cookies or peanut crunch bars in lunches provided for classroom or grade level field trips. When bringing class treats all items must be PEANUT FREE.

## **PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

\*No toys are to be brought to school except on special occasions and with permission from the classroom teacher. The school will not take any responsibility for lost, stolen, traded, or destroyed personal equipment.

\*No matches, cigarette lighters, guns, knives, or weapons of real or of toy nature are allowed.

\*No dolls, balls of any kind, laser lights, or recording devices are allowed at school.

\*No roller blades, skateboards, roller skates or any other item that could cause injury are allowed at school.

\*Bikes will be placed in the bike rack when ridden to school. Motorized bikes or mopeds are not to be ridden to school. Remember that riding a bike is a privilege, not a right. If you, as a student, abuse this privilege, it will be lost.

## **PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)**

Students with pediculosis (head lice) will not be sent home per the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). Parents will be notified by the school nurse.

## **PEST CONTROL AND USE OF PESTICIDES**

Periodically throughout the year, it may be necessary that pesticides be applied to external and internal areas of the school building and grounds. Pesticides will be applied only by certified pesticide applicators or individuals operating under their supervision. If you wish to be given notice of such pesticide applications, please notify the principal of the building. You will be given a form to fill out requesting notification of pesticide application. Prior to the application of pesticides within any building or on school grounds, the parents and staff members who have registered for prior notice shall receive a mailing to be received no later than two (2) school days prior to the application unless an emergency is declared. When possible, pesticide applications will be done during non-instructional time or during vacation periods. Any pesticide application is prohibited when in the presence of children while they are in the room or on school grounds in or near the area to be treated. Refer to RCSC School Board Policy 8432 for additional information.

## **REASONS TO SEND HOME**

Each school year, children are excluded from school for various medical reasons. This is done for the welfare of the child. According to the Jasper County Health officer, teachers may be required to exclude children from school who have any of the following conditions:

1. Elevated temperature of 100 degrees or higher, accompanied by other symptoms such as headache, sore throat, rash and other symptoms of communicable disease. A child must be fever free for twenty-four (24) hours before returning to school.
2. Any rash thought to be contagious
3. Any sore or inflamed throat.
4. Discharging ears.

5. Inflammatory eye conditions (pink eye).
6. Nausea and vomiting.
7. Diarrheal illness.

Before a child is allowed to return to the classroom, the parent will be required to obtain a note from their physician or, in certain cases the county health department, stating that the child is no longer contagious. This is to help insure that a minor problem does not turn into an epidemic.

## **SCHOOL CASE MANAGEMENT**

The case management program is designed to be an intensive, short-term treatment option for students who are at risk or in crisis due to mental health related issues. The goal of school case management is to stabilize or improve students' social, behavioral, and academic functioning in the school environment. Treatment focuses on developing problem-solving skills, utilizing appropriate conflict resolution, modeling parental intervention techniques, and educating the family and essential others about mental health. This program is provided through cooperation with Valley Oaks and Four County. The elementary school assistant principal handles referrals.

## **SCHOOL NURSE**

Our School Nurse splits her days between RCPS and Van. She is also on call if needed for the other schools. The nurse provides assistance whenever needed. Minor injuries or ailments may be cared for at school and general first aid will be administered. If any question concerning an illness or injury exists, parents will be contacted if at all possible.

## **STUDENT SICKNESS AND RECESS**

Parents often want their child(ren) to stay in when we have outside recess. This presents a supervision problem. We do not want to require a doctor's note for a student staying in at recess, however, we do not agree with a child staying in because he has a cold. Fresh air and warm protective clothing will do the child good in most cases.

For a student to stay in at recess, they must have been sick the day before and give the teacher a note from their parent stating why they are staying inside. This note is good for only one day.

Please call the principal if special situations arise regarding your child(ren) staying in for recess.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

Rensselaer Central School Corporation believes in protecting the health, welfare, and safety of all students, staff, and visitors. Each school building has video surveillance approved per corporation policies to help ensure this.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL AUTOMOBILE PROCEDURES**

#### **Van: Before School**

To speed up student drop-off please follow the following procedures:

- **Students should be dropped off at the rear (north side) of the building in the east parking lot (Angelica Street).**
- The first car in line should stay to the right side of the parking lot and pull up four or five car lengths to the east. This will allow five or six cars to unload at a time and speed up the exiting procedure.
- Students should exit on the right side of the vehicle and go directly to the entrance doors.
- No cars should park on the south side of the parking area. Students will be using this area for exiting cars and entering the building.
- Parents needing to park should park at the east end of the parking area to relieve congestion at the drop off zone.

#### **Van: After School**

- Parents are to park their cars in the east parking lot behind the school (north side/Angelica street). At 3:00 the doors will be unlocked and parents may gather by the gym doors. Parents will provide the name of the student that is being picked up to a Van staff member. That student will then be called out to meet their parent.

## **BICYCLE RULES**

Students should not ride bicycles to school unless their parents consider them capable of riding safely in automobile and pedestrian traffic. In accordance with state laws, bicycles should be ridden under the same rules that govern automobiles.

Bicycles should be parked at the east-end of the building upon arrival and should not be moved until dismissal time. Van Rensselaer Elementary School will not be responsible for bicycles lost, stolen or damaged while parked on school property.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL WITH PARENT PERMISSION**

All students who leave school during the day **MUST DO SO THROUGH THE OFFICE**. Parents should report to the office to pick up students and sign them out. Students will be called to the office before leaving. If the parent is sending someone other than the legal guardian to pick up a student, please notify the office by phone or note before the time the child is to be picked up. This way, we will know someone other than the parent is authorized to pick up the child.

## **TRANSPORTATION NOTES**

The policy of Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation is to not allow transfers, changes, or alternative routes/stops. Students are allowed to have one bus in the morning and one bus in the afternoon. These must be the same Monday through Friday. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to contact the transportation department to update route information to implement this new policy.

Parents/Guardians should not contact the bus driver directly about a schedule or pick-up or drop-off change. All changes must be made and documented through the Van office.

If there is a change in the way a student is going home (i.e., being picked up, needs to ride the bus, etc.), parents/guardians are to call before 2:00 on day to ensure their child is aware of the change.

Students should bring all notes to the office for approval.

**EXCEPTIONS TO THE ABOVE ONLY WITH APPROVAL OF THE PRINCIPAL. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS**

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Indiana Code 20-27-10-2 Discipline on bus (2014 Indiana School Laws and Rules), Sec. 2

The mission of Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation is to transport students safely to and from school and extracurricular activities. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Riding the bus is part of the school day and all rules and procedures outlined in RCSC policy and respective student handbooks apply.

When students are being transported on a school bus, the students are under the supervision, direction, and control of the school bus driver and are subject to disciplinary measures by the school bus driver and the governing body of the school corporation.

Parents are responsible for the safety of their child while going to or from the bus stop and while waiting for the school bus. Parents are also responsible for damage by their child to school buses, personal property, or public property.

### **Transportation Related Information**

#### **A. Arrival of busses in the morning:**

The student should be waiting at his/her boarding station when the school bus arrives. In case of an emergency causing late arrival by the student at his/her station, the school bus driver will be required to wait no longer than one (1) minute for the student. If a student is continually late arriving at his/her boarding station, the Transportation Secretary and/or the bus driver will contact the parents of the student. Parents should notify the driver if their child/children are not riding on a day or week or longer.

#### **B. School Closing or Delay at the start of the school day:**

If RCSC should be closed or delayed due to bad weather, etc., the announcement will be made via School Messenger, RCSC website, TV-18 (Lafayette), WLQI (97.7 FM), WRIN (1560 AM) WASK (98.7 FM), WVLI (95.1 FM), WIVR (101.7 FM) and WFAV (103.7 FM) radio between 6:00-6:30 A.M. If students have boarded buses in the morning and school must be closed, the busses will return the students to their homes immediately.

#### **C. High School/Middle School Bus Shuttle Parking Lot:**

If a parent must take his/her child off a bus in the afternoon, the parent should not drive into the bus shuttle lot. Please park your vehicle along the curb on Bomber Blvd. and walk into the lot. It is dangerous to have vehicles in and out of the shuttle lot while the students are changing and boarding busses.

**D. Guidelines Concerning Bus Transportation:**

**Guidelines Concerning Bus Transportation:**

1. Students will be transported from their homes to school and back to their homes.
2. Students will not be able to be transported on a bus other than his/her assigned bus (one stop in the a.m. and one stop in the p.m.)
3. In the event of an emergency, the parent/guardian must contact the Transportation Office for permission for deviation from the assigned bus.
4. Buses will NOT travel on any roads other than those that are presently assigned as the designated route by the Transportation Office.
5. At the Shuttle Lot, students will be released to other busses when all busses have arrived and are parked.

**E. Assigned Bus:**

Students will ride only assigned school buses and will board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency.

**F. Use of Electronic Devices on School Buses:**

Students are allowed to use MP3 players, CD players, iPads, iPads, cell phones and other similar electronic devices on school buses. Electronic devices must be kept at an acceptable volume level and headphones are encouraged. Students will be asked to put distracting devices away. Failure to do so may result in the item being confiscated. The use of electronic devices is a privilege. Students may lose this privilege if they fail to follow safety instructions from the driver. RCSC will not be held responsible for the loss/theft of portable electronic devices that are not on school buses. To help meet safety requirements, the following bus rules and discipline procedures are established for all RCSC transportation. Students may be subject to other sanctions as covered in their respective RCSC Student Handbooks.

**G. Balloons**

For the safety of everyone on the bus, celebration or birthday balloons are not permitted on the bus. If balloons are delivered to the student at school, the balloons must be picked up by an adult at the end of the day.

**Level I Violations**

1. Leaving seat/standing without permission from driver
2. Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or possession of unacceptable material
3. Disobedience to the driver
4. Eating/drinking/littering on bus
5. Riding unassigned bus or using unassigned bus stop
6. Opening window past safety line
7. Other offenses as reported by the driver or principal
8. Excessive noise.
9. Serious offenses may result in other consequences deemed appropriate by school administration. Corporation policy and rules in respective student handbooks may supersede the above consequences.

**Level II Rule Violations and Disciplinary Consequences**

- Hanging out of windows
- Throwing/shooting of any object
- Physical aggression against any person
- Possession/use of tobacco or any controlled substance
- Vandalism to bus (restitution will be made)
- Holding onto or attempting to hold onto any portion of the exterior of the bus
- Lighting of matches, lighters or any flammable object or substance
- Unauthorized entering or leaving bus through emergency door/tampering with the bus equipment
- Possession or threat of weapons/explosives/flammables
- Possession/use of laser pens or pointers

	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense	4 <sup>th</sup> Offense	5 <sup>th</sup> Offense
Level I	Written Warning	1 day suspension	3 day suspension	5 day minimum suspension	Loss of bus service
Level II	5 day suspension	10 day suspension	10 day minimum suspension	Loss of bus service	

*The bus is an extension of the school day. Bus consequences may be superseded by RCSC Board Policy or individual school handbook policies.*

1. **Any Other Action** that is considered dangerous to any individual on the bus may result in the loss of bus riding privileges for an indefinite period of time and will be decided by school officials.
2. **Students and Bus Drivers:** Students who interfere in any way with the bus driver's commands or ability to drive are subject to the above stated disciplinary policies. And in addition, may be subject to immediate suspension from the school bus.

**\*\***The school bus is part of the school day and, as such, all rules and procedures outlined in Corporation Policy and school handbooks are in force. Bus consequences may be superseded by RCSC policies.