

River Forest Community School Corporation Elementary School Handbook

Henry S Evans Elementary School



Home of the Panthers
Mrs. Dawn Swanson, Principal

John I Meister Elementary School



Home of the Vikings
Mrs. Kelli Panthi, Principal

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SECTION I: WELCOME/FORWARD

Welcome to the River Forest Elementary Schools, Evans and Meister. All the members of the staff and we, the principals, are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it. To help provide a safe and productive learning environment for students, staff, parents and visitors, the Board of School Trustees publishes this updated Student/Parent Handbook annually to explain students' rights, responsibilities, and consequences for misbehavior.

Parents are encouraged to take a few minutes to review and discuss the information in this Handbook with their school-age children. Teachers will also review this Handbook with students at the beginning of the school year. Thank you for taking the time to become familiar with the important information in this Handbook. If you have any questions, please contact:

Mrs. Dawn Swanson, Principal Evans Elementary School 219-962-1608
Mrs. Betsy Shadley, Confidential Secretary 219-962-1608

Mrs. Kelli Panthi, Principal Meister Elementary School 219-962-1103
Mrs. Melinda Verduzco, Confidential Secretary 219-962-1103

Mr. Kevin Trezak, Superintendent 219-962-962-2909
Mr. Mark Juszczak, Director of Facilities 219-545-5578

Adopted by the Board of School Trustees on July 19, 2022
Discipline Code adopted by the Board on July 19, 2022`

FORWARD

This Student Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that students and parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain board policies and guidelines. Please take time to become familiar with the following important information contained in this handbook and keep the handbook available for frequent reference. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to any administrator, who you will find listed above. This Handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the board's policies and the school's rules as of June 12, 2018. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 12, 2018, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current board policies and administrative guidelines are available from the building principal and on the corporation's website.

1.1 ELEMENTARY OFFICE HOURS

The office hours during the school year are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Since there is no supervision before 8:00 a.m., **NO STUDENTS** should be present unless bused.

1.2 STUDENT HOURS/LATE START

Revised June 2023

Students that walk to school are to arrive at school **NO** sooner than **8:00 a.m.** since there is **NO supervision.**

Grades K-5.....8:45 – 3:10
Tardy Bell Rings at 8:45

Wednesday Late Start.....9:15 – 3:10
Tardy Bell Rings at 9:15

*****On late start Wednesdays, students are not to arrive before 8:45***

No student may leave school prior to dismissal time without either

- a.) A written request signed by the parent or a person whose signature is on file in the school office, or
- b.) The parent comes to the school office to personally request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) without a permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or other legal authorization.

1.3 SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

Summer hours may vary in each building. Please call your school to check hours.

1.4 ELEMENTARY VISITATION PROCEDURES

In order to volunteer in the classroom, to attend a field trip, or to eat breakfast/lunch with your child, parents/guardians must have a current background check on file with the school office. Upon entering the elementary schools, visitors must use the front doors, stop in the office to sign in, receive a nametag, and have the office staff verify the background check. Volunteers will then be permitted to proceed to the classroom where they will be helping. If visitors are here to pick up or give messages to children, they will be instructed to remain in the office while the secretary contacts the student and has them sent to the office. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE ALLOWED.**

1.5 Equal Education Opportunity

It is the policy of this school corporation to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that the corporation, a school, or any staff person has discriminated against a student on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information, has the right to file a complaint. A formal complaint may be made in writing to the school corporation's Compliance Officer listed below:

Title I, Title IX Coordinator and
Section 504 Coordinator
Dr. Ryan Pitcock, Assistant Superintendent
River Forest Community School Corporation
3250 Michigan Street
Hobart, IN 46342
(219) 962-2909

Any other information concerning the above policies may be obtained by contacting the corporation superintendent at:

Mr. Kevin Trezak
River Forest Community School Corporation
3250 Michigan Street
Hobart, IN 46324
(219) 962-2909

1.6 DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF DISABILITY

The River Forest Community School Corporation is committed to the enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If any student and/or employee believe that they have been discriminated against because of any disability, they should contact the ADA Coordinator:

Mark Juszczak
Working Supervisor of
Buildings & Grounds
River Forest Community School Corp.
3300 Indiana Street
Hobart, IN 46342
219-962-7551

Any other information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act may be obtained by contacting the coordinator.

1.7 SPECIAL EDUCATION

Persons with a Disability

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but all individuals who have access to the Corporation's programs and facilities.

The law defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- A. Has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- B. Has a record of such an impairment; or
- C. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

The Corporation has specific responsibilities under these two laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

Free and Appropriate Public Education

Students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education in the “least restrictive environment.” The school provides a variety of special education programs for students identified as having a disability as defined by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A student can access special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedure. Parent involvement in this procedure is required. More importantly, the school encourages the parent to be an active participant. To inquire about the procedure, a parent should contact the Assistant Superintendent at 219-962-2909.

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for IDEA may be served within the regular education program with an accommodation plan developed through an interactive dialogue between the school, the student, and the student's parent(s). Parents who believe their child may have a disability that interferes substantially with the child's ability to function properly in school, should contact the Assistant Superintendent at 219-962-2909.

SERVICE ANIMAL

A student's need for and use of a service animal must be addressed in the student's individualized education program (IEP) and or Section 504 Plan. A service animal that meets the definition set forth in Policy 8390 shall be permitted to accompany the student anywhere on the school campus where students are permitted to be; however, the service animal must be at all times under the control of the student or the service animal handler. The principal will review and determine whether the documentation required by board policy has been provided for the student's service animal.

1.8 HOMELESS STUDENTS

Homeless students will be provided with access to educational opportunities in the same manner as other students served by the corporation in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act. Homeless students are eligible to receive transportation services, participate in education programs for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, participate in high ability programs, and receive meals under school nutrition programs. Homeless students will not be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency. For additional information contact the Assistant Superintendent at 219-962-2909.

1.9 SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT

The Principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and the program in which the student will be participating. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

1.10 SAFETY AND SECURITY

- A. All visitors must report to the office when they arrive at school.
- B. All visitors are given and required to wear a building pass while they are in the building.
- C. Staff is expected to question people in the building whom they do not recognize and who are not wearing a building pass, and to question people who are “hanging around” the building after hours.
- D. Students and staff are expected to immediately report to a teacher or administrator any suspicious behavior or situation that makes them uncomfortable.
- E. All outside doors as possible are locked during the school day.
- F. Portions of the building that will not be needed after the regular school days are closed off.
- G. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, she/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to assure availability.
- H. Students may not bring visitors to school without first obtaining written permission from the building administrator.
- I. All corporation employees are to wear photo-identification badges while in corporation schools and offices or on Corporation property.
- J. The corporation may utilize video surveillance and electronic monitoring in order to protect corporation property, promote security, and protect the health, welfare, and safety of students, staff, and visitors.
- K. All students must adhere to guidelines issued by the administration regarding safety protocols and practices to prevent the spread of disease and illness including but not limited to wearing protective coverings, required spacing in school facilities, property and buses. Students who violate such protocols are subject to discipline, up to and including recommendations for expulsion.

1.11 FIRE, TORNADO, AND SAFETY DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Tornado drills will be conducted regularly using the procedures prescribed by the state.

Safety drills will be conducted twice per school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedure to follow in situations where students must be secured in their building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

1.12 STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights will be protected and that they will be treated with fairness and respect. Likewise, students will be expected to respect the rights of their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow staff members' directions and obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (notice and a fair hearing) before a student is disciplined because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver that information. If necessary, the U.S. Mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to establish constructive communication channels with their child's teachers and support staff and to inform the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals

The staff expects students to arrive at school prepared to learn. It is the student's responsibility to arrive on time and be prepared to participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the building administrator.

1.13 INDOOR AIR QUALITY AND PEST CONTROL CONTACT INFORMATION

In accordance with Title 410 IAC 33 and Board Policy 8405, if you have questions or concerns about any indoor air quality issues or pest control management within the district please contact the Director of Facilities for the River Forest Community School Corporation, Mr. Mark Jurszczak at 219-545-5578.

SECTION 2: ACADEMICS

2.1 CURRICULUM

The elementary school's curriculum provides a strong foundation upon which the child may build a future in education, vocation, and effective membership in society. It takes into account the growing, changing society and ensures that the courses of study are relevant, meaningful and aligned to support college and career readiness. The curriculum areas are reading, writing, grammar, spelling, handwriting, mathematics, social studies, science, health, music, art, and physical education.

2.2 HOMEWORK

Parents can reasonably anticipate that their child will have homework. It is a student responsibility to have their homework each day. Privileges may be lost for non-completion of homework.

2.3 GRADING POLICY

Ongoing evaluation of student work and activities provides information to the student and parent about progress and growth toward course objectives. It identifies a student's strengths, weaknesses, and direction for improvement.

2.4 REPORT CARDS

There are four grading periods for grades K - 5. At the end of the grading periods, report cards will be sent home on the Wednesday following the end of the grading period. At the end of the year, report cards are sent home with the students on the last day of school. Report cards are not to be sent home with anyone other than the owner unless a note is sent to school by the parent. Report cards will not be available until the last day of school. No advance distribution.

Parents/Guardians can track student progress on-line through the Harmony Student Management System. Student grades are updated every two weeks.

TO ACCESS HARMONY

1. Go to your child's Elementary School's Web page:

Example- <http://www.rfcsc.k12.in.us/Meister>
www.rfcsc.k12.in.us/Evans

2. Under **Site Shortcuts** (on the right side of the screen). **For Parents**, click on **Harmony** then click **Parent Portal**.

3. If you do not have an account, click on **Create New Account** then enter the required information.

4. Once your account has been created, you will add students using their **Registration Code**. Parents may get this code from the school secretary.

2.5 E-LEARNING PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

A: GENERAL PROCEDURES

During the 2022-2023 school year, the River Forest Community School Corporation (RFCSC) will not be utilizing planned eLearning days. RFCSC may use eLearning Days in the event of inclement weather, on a make-up day for inclement weather, or an emergency school closing (such as a water main break or power outage).

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Two types of eLearning days exist; the default will be Teachers providing Directed Synchronous Instruction live and in real time to students for at least 50% of the given period and/or day. Teachers will review eLearning day procedures and classroom expectations with their students. Teachers will be available online during the entire eLearning day to answer questions or clarify assignments when not providing Directed Synchronous Instruction. Students that are not present will be expected to submit their work no later than one day after the eLearning day. In order to not be counted as unexcused and have a day to submit any work, parents must call/email the school that the child is (1) sick or (2) getting access to wifi is an impossibility for the day. Teachers will have their instruction available to the students via video to make up for missed learning.

Should an emergency closing occur not allowing the delivery of instruction to occur to a significant portion of our school community, the eLearning day will consist of posting an assignment and teachers maintaining office hours in order to be available for the students; during office hours, teachers should be actively communicating with students and parents. Parents and students are encouraged to email and/or communicate via Google Classroom (if possible). Students will be expected to submit their work no later than three days after the eLearning day. These days may need to be made up and added onto the school calendar.

Classwork will align with the lessons that will be taking place in the classrooms. Teachers will review and ensure that all students are able to access Google Classroom prior to the eLearning day.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

Students requiring technical support are encouraged to send a support request to www.thinkhelpdesk.com/rfcsc. This link is for technical support only. Questions regarding classwork, assignments, and eLearning days should be directed to your student's teacher.

IEP STUDENTS

Special Education staff will communicate and provide assistance as needed during office hours through their IEP Google Classroom. Services for students with IEPs will be administered as outlined in the student's Continuous Learning Plan located within the IEP.

B: VIRTUAL LEARNING:

The purpose of Virtual Learning is to provide a self-paced curriculum, utilizing technology to remediate and accelerate when mastery is demonstrated. The learning environment is designed to ensure student growth, assisting students toward the mastery of academic standards, which will lead to graduation/progression to next grade. It allows students to obtain credits to maintain their status with their cohort.

Students in virtual learning will miss out on many important components their peers learning within the traditional school setting will have the ability to utilize. Factors presented by the parent will be considered by the Principal to determine if Virtual Learning will be afforded as an opportunity. If allowed, the Principal may revoke Virtual Learning at any point for violations of the student handbook, performance, and pace of learning.

The number of virtual students MAY NOT exceed the legal thresholds established in Indiana Code.

2.6 PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND ASSIGNMENT POLICY

The River Forest Community School Corporation is dedicated to providing an appropriate school environment that meets the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs of its students to the highest degree possible. Each of the following factors shall be considered in the retention, assignment, or promotion of a child:

- A. Achievement on Benchmark and Standardized assessments (IREAD, NWEA)
- B. Grade level expectations
- C. Age and physical size
- D. Maturity

THE DECISION CONCERNING THE PLACEMENT OF A STUDENT RESTS WITH SCHOOL AUTHORITIES.

PROMOTION

A child will be promoted when he/she has met the grade level standards established by the school corporation and the Indiana Department of Education.

RETENTION

A child may be retained when he/she has not met the grade level standards established by the corporation. Retention is never considered a "consequence" for not doing well in school. It is

the philosophy of the elementary principals that retention provides students “the gift of time” to grow and learn at a pace that is necessary and appropriate for him/her.

A child may not be retained more than twice in the elementary school and never more than once in any grade level.

As per the requirements of the Indiana Department of Education, students who fail the IREAD-3 Test are subject to retention unless it is stated in their IEP, ILP, or they have already been retained twice.

ASSIGNMENT

A child is assigned to the next grade level when he/she is not performing at grade level standards but cannot be retained if the following apply:

- A. He/she has repeated the same grade and is still doing unsatisfactory work
- B. He/she is too old or the physical size would negate the advantage of retention
- C. Retention is not the appropriate intervention strategy for the student

2.7 TESTING PROGRAMS

Kindergarten: Screening prior to the start of the school year

Grades K-5 (3x/year)	NWEA and Benchmark Assessments-- Fall, Winter, Spring Reading, Lang. Arts, Math & Writing
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Grades 3-5 (Spring)	Indiana’s L earning E valuation A ssessment R eadiness N etwork ILEARN IAM (Indiana Alternate Assessment Measure) for identified students
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Grade 3	IREAD-3 Testing Program: IREAD is administered to students in Grade 2 AND Grade 3. Students <u>must pass</u> the IREAD-3 in 3 rd grade to be promoted to Grade 4 unless there is an exception made in their IEP, ILP, or they already have been retained twice.
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While the foregoing tests and results are used to evaluate our system - wide instructional program, there are many other tests, which the staff uses to measure instructional growth in the individual classrooms. If you are in need of additional information or interpretation of any test data, please contact the teacher or principal.

2.8 FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school’s co-curricular and extracurricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

Attendance rules apply to all field trips.

While the Corporation encourages the student's participation in field trips, alternative assignments will be provided for any student whose parent does not give permission for the student to attend.

Students who violate school rules may lose the privilege to go on field trips.

SECTION III: STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

3.1 SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

The school provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. A curricular-related activity may be for credit, required for a particular course, and/or contain school subject matter.

The school has many student groups that are authorized by the school. It is the Corporation's policy that only authorized groups are those approved by the Board of School Trustees and sponsored by a staff member. Authorized groups include:

- Spell Bowl
- Math Bowl
- Student Patrol
- Student Council
- Co-ed Softball
- Co-ed Basketball
- Co-ed Track
- Cross- Country

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the school curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like. These include: Garden Club, Coding Club, Student Newspaper, Girls on the Run

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

3.2 NON SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the Principal. The application must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. School rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Revised June 2023

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society is not permitted. All groups must comply with school rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

Non-corporation-sponsored organizations may **NOT** use the name of the school or school mascot.

SECTION IV: CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

4.1 STUDENT DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

The success of the River Forest Community School Corporation hinges upon the quality of student discipline as well as the quality of education and learning. The maintenance of order in a school environment is a prerequisite to learning. The reason for all disciplinary rules is to allow students to learn in a safe and productive environment. This environment relies on the self - discipline of individual students.

However, in those instances where student self - discipline does not meet the school standards, school personnel are authorized to take reasonable actions to restore order and prevent interference with the educational process. These measures must comply with Indiana Code 20 - 8 - 1, as amended and other rules and regulations established by individual schools regarding student discipline.

The board recognizes that in the school environment the teacher has the closest relationship with the student and has the primary responsibility for establishing appropriate student discipline in the classroom. Students shall be under reasonable supervision at all times.

Discipline will be administered in a fair and consistent manner with equity for all students. A disciplinary measure will be selected for its effectiveness in modifying the child's behavior. Disciplinary action may include conferences with the student, parents, or the principal; loss of privileges; isolation; appropriate duties around the building; academic assignments related to misbehavior; detention, recommendation for professional counseling; suspension and expulsion.

4.2 VANDALISM

Because such incidents of willful or malicious abuse, destruction, defacing, and theft of the property of the school district are clearly contrary to the best interests of the school district and injurious to the rights and welfare of the entire community, it will be the policy of the board to seek all legal redress against person(s) found to have committed such acts.

Adults who are apprehended can be held responsible for payment for any loss or damage. Parents and guardians of juveniles under the age of 18 are responsible under Indiana law for vandalism caused by their children (I.C. 34 - 4 - 31 - 1). The superintendent and/or designee will institute legal procedures.

4.3 TOBACCO/VAPING

Revised June 2023

The State Law for students prohibits smoking/vaping. Indiana Law 35-46-1-10.5
Any student smoking on school premises, or having tobacco in any form (this includes chewing tobacco products and liquid or solid tobacco extracts) shall receive the following:

First offense: 3-days suspension **Second offense:** 5-days suspension **Third offense:** expulsion.

A person less than eighteen (18) years of age who:

1. Purchase tobacco; or
2. Accepts tobacco for personal use, commits a Class C infraction.

4.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The River Forest Community School Corporation recognizes that the use of mind - altering substances (controlled substances) also results in negative effects on behavior, learning, and development of the individual.

In order to assist the student, parent, and educator, the River Forest Community School Corporation shall provide building - based RTI teams to inform and aid the student and his/her family. All students returning to school after a semester's expulsion shall be referred to the RTI team.

The River Forest Community School Corporation, therefore, adopts the following policy for all students, K - 12, who attend school in the corporation.

DEFINITIONS:

Controlled Substance is any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant of any kind, or any item that resembles or is represented to be any of the foregoing items. A drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not considered a controlled substance under this policy.

Confirmed Violation is a voluntary admission by a student that he/she was in possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled substance, or a finding by a hearing examiner, based upon evidence, that a student was in possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled substance.

Pusher/Dealer is a student who agrees to supply or supplies a controlled substance.

User is a student who is in possession of or under the influence of a controlled substance.

Assessment is an instrument of evaluation provided by a drug abuse/mental health facility.

Referral is the referring of a student to the RTI team by the principal, teacher, counselor, parent, student (self), or others.

Revised June 2023

Look - Alike Substance is an item, which closely resembles, or is represented to be a controlled substance.

RTI Team is a student assistance support group formed by school personnel.

A First Offense is a situation defined as the first substance offense in a student's school career.

First Offense

- The student is suspended from school for five (5) days and recommendation of two (2) semesters expulsion is sent to the superintendent.
- Proper legal authorities will be notified. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- A student who is found to be a pusher/dealer is entitled to the rights of due process but is not eligible for one semester expulsion.
- Parents and students must meet with the designated principal and building - level RTI team for discussion/evaluation of the situation upon their return from a one semester expulsion and make possible recommendations to the principal to help the student.
- A contract that defines expectations of the student's academic, behavioral, and attendance performance as he/she returns to school must be initiated by member(s) of the RTI team.
- Students must have a completed chemical use assessment from a professional drug/alcohol counselor, and compliance with recommendations, which may include inpatient or outpatient treatment. Parents are responsible for enrolling the child and providing all transportation and financial responsibility.

The RTI team and the principal will serve as monitors of the student's progress.

Second Offense

- The student is suspended from school for ten (10) days and recommendation of two (2) semesters expulsion is sent to the superintendent.
- Proper legal authorities will be notified. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- RTI committee will be advised of the violation and must prepare a statement for the principal.
- The student is entitled to the right of due process through the Hearing Officer.

4.5 RFCSC STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Recognizing that the behavior of some students of River Forest Community School Corporation may be so disruptive that it interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school corporation, school officials may find it necessary to discipline a student. In this event and in accordance with the provisions of IC 20-8.1-5.1, administrators and staff members may take the following actions:

Revised June 2023

1. REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR ACTIVITY-TEACHER: 1) A River Forest Community School Corporation teacher will have the right to remove a student from his/her class 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.

2) An elementary teacher will have the right to remove a student from his/her 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.
2. SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL-PRINCIPAL: A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to ten (10) school days.
3. EXPULSION: In accordance with the due process procedures defined in this policy, a student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester, with the exception of a violation of rule 13 listed under the Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy.

GROUND FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience. Examples of student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience for which a student may be suspended or expelled include, but are not limited to:

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable 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 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. Continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner to interfere seriously with the ability of any teacher or any of the other school personnel to conduct the education function under this supervision.

2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing or attempting to steal private property.
4. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally 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 some other person does not constitute, however, a violation of this rule.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for any purpose, including obtaining money or anything of value from the student.
6. Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, or is represented to be a weapon. "Any object" includes any item that is considered a weapon but is not a firearm as defined in rule #13 below.
7. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Use of drugs authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this rule.
8. Engaging in the unlawful selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
9. Failing in a substantial number of instances 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.
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
11. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function and are established in accordance with Indiana law, including, but not limited to:
 - a. engaging in sexual behavior on school property
 - b. disobedience of administrative authority
 - c. willful absence or tardiness of students

- d. 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;
 - e. possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of caffeine-based substances, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), or stimulants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription.
 - f. engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry, or hairstyle, which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or offensive to school purposes.
12. Knowingly possessing or using on school grounds during school hours an electronic paging device or a handheld portable telephone in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
13. **POSSESSION OF A FIREARM**
- a. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.
 - b. The following devices are considered a firearm under this rule:
 - any weapon that will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
 - the frame or receiver of any weapon described above
 - any firearm, muffler, or firearm silencer
 - any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or any similar device
 - any weapon that will, or that may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
 - any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
 - an antique firearm
 - any airsoft gun, bean bag gun, paintball gun, or look-alike firearm
 - a rifle or a shotgun, which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes.

- c. The penalty for possession of a firearm: 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.
- d. The superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed above (#1-13) 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
 - b. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event
 - c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event
14. In addition to the grounds listed above, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order to protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria, which takes place during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.
15. Expulsion - Legal Settlement. A student may be expelled from school if the student's legal settlement is not in the attendance area of the school corporation where the student is enrolled.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:

- 1. A meeting will be held before the suspension of any student. At this meeting this student will be entitled to:
 - (a) a written or oral statement of the charges;

- (b) if the student denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against the student will be presented; and,
 - (c) the student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct.
- 2. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of the suspension.
- 3. Following the suspension, the parents or guardian of a suspended student will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension; describe the student's misconduct and the action taken by the principal.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following procedures will be followed:

- 1. The superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following persons to conduct the expulsion meeting:
 - a. legal counsel
 - b. a member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.
- 2. An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parent are asked to appear at an expulsion meeting conducted by the superintendent or the person designated above. Failure by a student or a student's parent to appear at this meeting will be deemed a waiver of rights administratively to contest the expulsion or to appeal it to the school board.
- 3. The request to appear at the expulsion meeting will be in writing, delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting.
- 4. At the expulsion meeting, the principal (or designee), will present evidence to support the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student, and to present evidence to support the student's position.
- 5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parents.

The student or parent has the right to appeal the decision of the person conducting the expulsion meeting to the school board within 10 days of the receipt of notice of the action

taken. The student or parent's appeal to the school board must be in writing. If an appeal is properly made, the board must consider the appeal unless the board votes not to hear the appeal. If the board hears the appeal, it will consider the written summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of the school administration and the student and/or the student's parents. The board will take any action deemed appropriate.

LEGAL REFERENCE: 20 U.S.C. 8001
20 U.S.C. 8002
I.C. 20-8.1-5.1-1 et seq.

EXCLUSION: A student may be excluded from school for the following reasons:

- A. If he/she has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts that poses a substantial threat to the health or safety of the school community.
- B. If he has not complied with the Indiana State Immunization Law 20-8.1-7-10
- C. If his/her immediate removal is necessary to restore order to protect persons on school corporation property. This shall include conduct off school property where on account thereof the student's presence in school would constitute an interference with school purposes.
- D. Where a student is mentally or physically unfit for school purposes, subject, however, to the procedures set up under the provisions of IC 1971 20-8-8-5 and to the limitations and regulations authorized to be established hereunder by the State Board of Education.

OTHER REMEDIES: The superintendent, or principal, or any teacher of the school corporation shall be authorized to take any action in connection with the student behavior in addition to the actions specifically provided, reasonably desirable or necessary to help any student to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with school purposes, such actions including such matters as counseling of a student or group of students, conferences with parent or group of parents, assigning students additional work, rearranging class schedules, requiring a student to remain in school after regular school hours to do additional school work or for counseling, or a restriction of extra - curricular activities.

Amendment Adopted 2/16/88

4.6 GANG ACTIVITY / SYMBOLS

Any student who aids, encourages, or participates in a disruptive activity, which could be construed as a gang activity is subject to suspension and possible expulsion from school. Students are not allowed to wear clothing, jewelry, or have in their possession any other items that are known to be gang related. Students should neither draw gang symbols on their papers, notebooks, clothing, or skin nor use any hand gestures that are known to be gang symbols.

4.7 BULLYING

Revised June 2023

The River Forest Community School Corporation will not tolerate bullying of any type that occurs on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or using school property or equipment provided by a school.

Bullying means overt, repeated acts or gestures, including:

1. verbal or written communications transmitted
2. physical acts committed
3. any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student.

The Board of School Trustees expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to students that bullying in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions or on school owned computers will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Each school principal shall place in their student handbooks rules prohibiting bullying of students and including education, parental involvement, reporting, investigating and intervention.

4.8 STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The school recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, noncommercial written material, buttons, badges, or other insignia; and the like. All items must meet school guidelines.

- A. A material cannot be displayed or distributed if it:
 1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent, or vulgar
 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law
 3. is intended to be insulting or harassing
 4. tends to incite fighting
 5. presents a clear and present likelihood that either, because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it will cause or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the building administrator twenty-four hours prior to display.

- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch

periods and/or before or after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

4.9 STUDENT SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The school is here to educate and benefit the students. The staff is here to assist a student in becoming a responsible citizen. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, she/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the Principal.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. As with suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the Principal.

If the student believes she/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard, the student may file a grievance with the Principal. That grievance will be investigated promptly and findings will be shared with the student. A student may not use the grievance procedure to change a grade.

4.10 CHROMEBOOK INTENTIONAL DAMAGES

Students enrolled in River Forest Community School Corporation elementary schools are provided with the use of a Chromebook device for blended learning in the classroom. Routine repair is expected and understood. However, intentional damage of school devices will not be tolerated. The River Forest Community School Corporation Department of Technology evaluates each device and determines if damages have occurred due to normal wear and tear or due to intentional actions. The progression of disciplinary actions for intentional damage are as follows:

1. Parent/Phone Conference and fee for repair and/or replacement
2. Parent/Phone Conference and fee for repair and/or replacement, Chromebook will remain at school
3. Parent/Phone Conference and fee for repair and/or replacement, Chromebook will remain at school, ACP (1 day) and Penalty Box
4. Parent/Phone Conference and fee for repair and/or replacement, Chromebook will remain at school, OSS (1 day) and Penalty Box

Internet/Technology Misuse (Offenses- not damage)

1. Parent/Phone Conference, after school detention
2. Parent/Phone Conference, after school detention, Chromebook stays at school
3. Parent/Phone Conference, Chromebook stays at school , ACP (1 day)
4. Parent/Phone Conference, Chromebook stays at school, OSS (1 day)

SECTION V: RULES AND REGULATIONS

5.1 ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY AND INTENT

The River Forest Community School Corporation supports the philosophy that the instructional program is a vital part of a formal education. We further believe that it is necessary to require that students attend school a maximum number of days for instructional purposes during each school year. Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students out of school for any reason other than family emergencies. Students are required to maintain a level of attendance, which enables them to meet their responsibilities as learners and teachers to fulfill their obligations to the students. Students and their parents or guardians hold the main responsibility for school attendance and for following the attendance policy. We ask for the cooperation of both students and parents or guardians in these matters so that the student can receive the best education possible.

The Indiana Department of Education has made student attendance a component of each school's annual accountability grade. Five percent (5%) of the elementary school letter grade depends on addressing chronic absenteeism. Students are expected to attend at least 95% of the 180 instructional days throughout each school year. To meet this expectation, this requires students to have **8 ABSENCES PER SCHOOL YEAR**.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH DAY OF A VALID ABSENCE WILL COUNT TOWARD THE 8-DAY ABSENCE LIMIT PER SCHOOL YEAR.

The following circumstances will count toward the 8-day absence limit per school year. These circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Illness in cases where the student is sent home by the school nurse or an administrator.
- Medical, dental, and orthodontics appointments. **We encourage parents to make appointments outside of school hours.** (For appointments made during school hours, students are expected to attend school before and/or after the appointment. Example: Appointment is at 9 am and is concluded by 10 am. The student would be expected to attend school until time to leave for the appointment and to return to school after the appointment is concluded at 10 am.)
- Emergency illness in the family (e.g., father/mother taken to the hospital)
- **Prearranged extended absence** and/or extended religious observance, which must be pre-approved by the principal at least 30 days before departure.
- The principal must approve "Take Your Child to Work Day" at least one week prior to the date of absence.
- Students who have 3 or more consecutive days of absence may be required to have a physician's note in order to be readmitted to school
 - If a child has been absent due to a communicable disease, a doctor's release may be required before the child is allowed to return to school.

The following special circumstances will NOT count toward the 8-day absence limit per school year:

- Students participate in school-related activities or educational trips approved by the principal and/or superintendent.
- Subpoenaed court attendance. A copy of the subpoena must be submitted to the school at least 24 hours before the absence.
- Student is quarantined due to exposure to a contagious disease. (Pediculosis or head lice – 2 consecutive days of absence ONLY) Families that present with a chronic problem will be referred to Lake County Dept. of Family and Children.
- Death or funeral of a member of the household or immediate family.
- Student serves as a Page in the Indiana Legislature
- Elementary Students may be excused from school to work at the election polling places.
- All suspensions and expulsions are considered excused absences and shall be conducted in accordance with Indiana Due Process Procedures.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN ABSENT

1. Parents must call the school every day that the student misses school by 10:00 a.m. Failure to do so may result in school personnel calling the student's residence and/or guardian to verify the absence. The school's telephone number is **219-962-1608/Evans or 219-962-1103/Meister** . If your child is ill, please state/describe the symptoms so we can accurately track illness trends. When your child returns to school from any absence, you must send a note from home to the main office. The **note should contain**:
 - ✓ Date(s) student was absent
 - ✓ Reason for absence
 - ✓ Parent's signature
2. A sign-in/out register is located in the Main Office. When visiting the school nurse or leaving school grounds for any reason, permission to sign out must be obtained from school personnel. If a student returns to school the same day, he/she must sign in before attending classes.
3. Funeral-Students should present a memorial card from the funeral home, or a letter from the funeral director indicating the situation.

CONSEQUENCES OF ABSENCE

- **Five (5) days absent**: Parents will receive a letter from school.
- **Eight or more days absent**: May include all or any of the following:
 - Referral to Department of Child Services, Community Partners
 - Home visit from school personnel
 - Referral to Lake County Prosecutor's office/**Lake Station Truancy Court**
 - Legal notices
 - Requirement of Certificate of Incapacity form from physician

- Student may be considered for retention
- Any absence over the eight day limit: each and every absence will require a doctor's note

5.2 TARDINESS

A student is considered tardy if they are not in school by 8:45 a.m. (9:15 on Wednesdays).

Every effort should be made to have students at school on time. Being in school "on-time" is a priority for the River Forest Community School Corporation.

Excessive tardiness is considered educational neglect and may result in notification to Department of Child Services and/or legal authorities ie: Lake Station Truancy Court.

5.3 ENROLLMENT POLICY

All school-age children who live in the district with parents or a legal guardian shall be admitted to the public schools of River Forest. In order for a child to enroll in the River Forest Community School Corporation, the parent/ guardian must complete an information sheet provided by the school office. After this information is provided, school officials will verify the following information:

- Proof of Residence - The parent/guardian will be asked to verify the legal residence (Board Policy JR4-17-79) of the parent/guardian through four proofs of residency. Acceptable proofs of residency include a current utility bill or notice to initiate service, mortgage or rent statement and a lot/lease bill. If the parent/guardian is living with someone, proof of residency must be shown in that person's name along with a notarized letter/affidavit supporting residency.
- Proof of Immunizations - Parents must furnish, no later than the first day of school attendance after enrollment, proof of the student's immunization status, either as a written document from the health care provider who administered the immunization or documentation provided from the State immunization data registry. Students whose parents do not provide the required documentation by the opening day of school may be admitted to school provided the documentation is received within twenty (20) school days. If the student remains unimmunized or the proper documentation has not been provided, the student may be excluded from attending school.
Exemptions to the immunization requirements shall be granted, in accordance with State law, only for medical, religious, or other reasons allowed by the State.
- Communicable Diseases - All new students will be screened by the school nurse /nurse's aide for such conditions as head lice and other communicable diseases before being admitted to class.

- Guardianship - A court-ordered guardianship issued by a judge is the only acceptable proof of legal guardianship. This includes court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- Birth Certificate - or similar document

In some cases, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another accredited school must have an official transcript from the sending school in order to receive credit from that school. The school secretary will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the Corporation Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

EXCEPTIONS

Students in elementary school must attend the school within their residential boundary. Parents/guardians who have a specific reason to request an exception to this policy must file such a request with the principal of the elementary school district in which they reside. The final decision rests with the Superintendent. A decision to grant an exception to attendance boundaries will depend upon the class size and other factors. **TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS CANNOT BE PROVIDED.**

5.4 PRE - ENROLLMENT

During the second semester of each school year, the school district will pre- enroll kindergarten students for the coming school year. The child should enroll at the school in his/her attendance area. The parent must present a State Board of Health Birth Certificate at the time of the enrollment of the child. Physical and dental examinations must be completed before the opening of the school year.

In compliance with the regulations of the State of Indiana, River Forest Schools will follow the mandated guidelines for age requirements for kindergarten enrollment. Students entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before August 1. Students entering first grade must be six years old on or before June 1 and have successfully completed a certified kindergarten program to enroll.

5.5 TRANSFERS

1. In the event of a grade level being closed due to current class size, the parent will be directed to enroll their child in another school in the corporation. Transportation will be provided.

2. Students who have started the school year but move to another school within River Forest Community School Corporation during the school will be allowed to finish the current semester. Transportation may be provided if available otherwise the parent will have to provide transportation.

3. Students who have started the school year but move to another school district during the school year will need to withdraw from River Forest Community School Corporation and enroll in their new school district. A student may face possible expulsion if they do not withdraw from school while living outside of the district. Students who have completed the eleventh grade and have moved into another school district may complete the twelfth grade at River Forest. Transportation will not be provided.

5.6 ADMISSION OF NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS

Transfer Students

Transfer of non-resident students will be considered for admittance by the RFCSC Board of School Trustees at the start of a new school year and after the first semester, through the dates identified by the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) for the student count submitted for Average Daily Membership (ADM).

1. Non-resident students are defined as those whose parents reside outside the boundaries of the River Forest Community School Corporation. Acceptance of non-resident students is a discretionary matter for the Board. When the Board chooses to accept non-resident students, it shall be done on the following conditions:
 - a. The student needs to be of suitable character, have a good discipline record, and hold a C average in a graded system.
 - b. Space must be available in the grade level at the requested school. No section or class will be overcrowded by their attendance.
 - c. No increase of staff will be required
 - d. The student will accept placement in the grade and school designated.
 - e. Acceptance of transfer students is for one school year only. To continue attendance at RFCSC, students need to apply annually.
 - f. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students will be required to take an English proficiency test prior to consideration for admission.
 - g. Exceptional circumstances, other than those listed here, may be considered in accepting students for admission to RFCSC.
 - h. Parents are required to provide transportation for transfer student(s).
2. Foreign exchange students who are part of a recognized foreign exchange program and who are placed with families who reside in our school district will be admitted without transfer tuition fees. Foreign exchange students who reside with families outside the school district will be required to pay transfer tuition fees.
3. Students whose parents are in the process of moving to the River Forest Community School Corporation district may be enrolled under exceptional circumstances.

4. Exceptional circumstances:

- Changes in Legal Settlement

If a resident student's legal settlement is changed after the start of school, s/he may finish the current school year even if the legal residence of the parent/guardian changes prior to the end of the student's junior year. Transportation responsibility must be assumed by the parent/guardian

- Transfer of Students Without Legal Settlement

In addition to students with legal settlement in the Corporation, students without legal settlement in the Corporation will be enrolled in compliance with I.C. 20-26-11-32 and pursuant to Board Policy 5111 Determination of Legal Settlement and Eligibility for Enrollment of Students without Legal Settlement in the Corporation.

- Hardship Cases

Non-resident children who are living with district residents may be enrolled at any time pending receipt of transfer from the Department of Public Welfare or the Court.

Admission of Non-Resident Students (Transfer)

- Temporary Disruption in the Legal Settlement of a River Forest School District Resident

A River Forest School District resident whose legal settlement in the River Forest School District is temporarily interrupted by an unforeseeable physical housing problem and who plans to reestablish his/her legal settlement in the River Forest School District may be allowed to enroll on a temporary basis -with the approval of the Superintendent, without payment of tuition. A denial can be subject to appeal to the School Board. Documentation of the nature of the problem and plans to reestablish legal settlement in the River Forest School District shall be required. Transportation responsibility must be assumed by the parent/guardian.

Procedures for Acceptance of Transfer Students

1. Parents write a letter to the Principal of the school of choice requesting that their child be accepted as a transfer student.
2. The Principal investigates and determines whether that student is acceptable.
We do not accept students who are not in good standing in their resident district.
3. The parent will complete the RFCSC enrollment packet and the Student Transfer Request form.
4. The Principal will complete the Student Transfer Investigation Sheet and inform the parent in writing that the student will be accepted or not accepted. A copy of the entire packet will be sent to the central office.

5. The student, once approved for enrollment, will be permitted to attend classes. If there is no room at the requested school, our other elementary school *may* be offered.
6. It is the responsibility of the building Principal to monitor all transfer students.

5.7 TRANSPORTATION (IC 20-9.1-5-19)

All students in grades K-5, who live within busing areas, are provided free transportation to and from school. Students who are assigned to ride school buses must have a note from home and signed by the principal or designee before they may ride another school bus or walk home.

The safe and orderly transportation of children is of the highest importance to us. It must be remembered that the bus driver's job is one of great responsibility, and he/she needs the complete cooperation of the passengers - for safety's sake.

Listed below are the more obvious rules, which should be discussed by parents and students. However, this list is not all-inclusive. Any activity that would be considered dangerous for the children or the driver could result in the loss of bus privileges.

5.8 BUS RULES/SUSPENSION OF BUS PRIVILEGES

1. Students should not have open food, gum, or drinks. *Exceptions will be made for approved medical necessity.*
2. Students should not engage in any behavior that is harmful to another student such as fighting, hitting, tripping, name-calling, etc.
3. Students should not throw any objects on the bus, in, or out of the windows of the bus.
4. Students should be seated immediately after boarding the bus and remain seated at all times until the bus comes to a complete stop. Students should stay in assigned seats and not switch seats at any time without the permission of the bus driver.
5. Students should speak in soft voices so as not to distract the driver. Profane language will not be tolerated.
6. Students should not smoke/vape on the bus. Lighters, matches, or other related items should not be brought onto the bus.
7. Students must have a note signed by a parent/guardian to ride another bus. This practice should be used for emergency supervision situations only. Please keep changes to a minimum.
8. Students should not open or close windows or doors without the permission of the bus driver.
9. Students should be waiting at the bus stop when the bus arrives.
10. Students' behavior on the way to the bus stop, at the bus stop, and on the way home from the bus stop falls under the jurisdiction of the school. Inappropriate behavior will result in the suspension of, and possibly the loss of, bus privileges.
11. Upon the recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities will deny the privileges of riding the bus to any student who refuses to conduct himself/ herself in an acceptable manner.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The bus driver will have the responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on school buses and will report misconduct to the student's principal.

Buses carrying school children will be considered as extensions of the school situation, and any pupil whose conduct on a school bus is improper or jeopardizes the safety of other pupils may have his privilege to school bus transportation suspended for such period of time as may be deemed proper by the school principal. Uniform rules of conduct and disciplinary measures will be enforced.

Installed on each school bus will be a video box that may contain a video camera for assisting the transportation drivers monitoring student behavior. The transportation driver, building principal and assistant to the superintendent will review disruptive and/or dangerous student behavior, which has been identified through video monitoring.

Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of school bus riding privileges as well as suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with the student discipline code and state statute.

SUSPENSION OF TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES

THE FOLLOWING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR MAY RESULT IN A **MINIMUM** 3-DAY SUSPENSION OF BUS PRIVILEGES:

- Physical harm to a student
- Physical harm or threat of physical harm to the bus driver
- Failure to give a correct name
- Damage of school property, including any part of the bus
- Refusal to obey the driver
- Obscene language or gestures
- Fighting
- Continued failure to heed the 10 ft. rule. This rule pertains to the distance that students are to be when crossing in front of the bus or walking alongside.
- Throwing objects from, or onto the bus through windows, doors, etc.
- Additional offenses will result in longer suspension of bus privileges or loss of all bus privileges.

5.9 BASIC SCHOOL RULES

The following examples of unacceptable school behavior will result in disciplinary action ranging from an initial conference and hearing to suspension from school, depending on the severity and frequency of the violation. This list is not to be considered all-inclusive, and students and parents should be aware that any activity/behavior, which could be disruptive to the school environment, could result in disciplinary action in accordance with Indiana Law and School Board Policy (see Sec. 2.1, 2.3):

1. Refusing to obey reasonable requests or directions from a teacher, principal, or other staff member
2. Fighting or instigating fighting by others, this includes intimidating behavior such as physical and verbal abuse

3. Throwing rocks, sticks, or any other potentially dangerous objects.
4. Using obscene language or gestures
5. Stealing
6. Willfully damaging school property
7. Leaving the school grounds during the school day without the permission of the principal or his/her designee
8. Behaving in a manner that is disruptive to the school program
9. Truancy
10. A student may be expelled or suspended for engaging in unlawful activities, including but not to be limited to the following: drugs, alcohol, look-alike drugs or any substance purported to be a drug or illegal commodity, paraphernalia, pornography, theft, stalking, using or possessing tobacco in any form on or off school grounds, if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered an interference with school purpose or an educational function
11. In order for birthday party or event invitations to be passed out in class, invitations must include all students. Treats **must be** store bought.
12. A Camera System is in place at all schools and students are subject to discipline.
13. The items named below are examples of things that are not to be brought to school. They take up space, can be stolen, and are distractions to the educational process. Students who bring such items to school will have those items impounded. The school will work with the parent on how such items are to be returned to the home. Students who bring such items to school also face disciplinary action. The following are prohibited on school grounds at any time for students:

- Energy Drinks
- Electronic Games
- Skateboards
- Roller blades
- Heelies
- HoverBoards
- iPods/iPads/tablets
- Toys

****Cell phones are discouraged because they are distractors to the educational process and can be lost or stolen.**

If your child must bring a cell phone to school in the event of an emergency, the **phones are not to be used during the school day** and must be **kept in the student's locker from the start of the school day until dismissal**. During this time, the cell phone must be turned OFF (no tone or vibrating features should be on). A student's school day starts the moment the child enters the building.

Cell phones found stored in the **ON** position OR being used/displayed/held by a student during the instructional day will be confiscated and will be returned only to a parent. It will be the parents' responsibility to establish a time to meet with the appropriate administrator to collect the phone. The student may be issued an administrative consequence for violating the policy.

Please note: The school assumes no responsibility for personal cell phones. Parents assume all responsibility for phone charges and the cost of the lost or stolen phones. The school corporation is not responsible for the loss or theft of any phone or electronic device brought to school.

5.10 PLAYGROUND RULES AND REGULATIONS

Basic school rules should also be followed on the playground. Refer to the Basic Rules List (3.9) in this handbook.

Additional playground rules are:

1. Students will speak respectfully to playground supervisors and comply with their directives the first time given.
2. Students should play only in the designated areas.
3. Students should never leave the school grounds without permission.
4. Students should share playground equipment.
5. Students should observe all safety rules as designated by the supervisor.
6. Students should not throw snowballs at anyone or anything.
7. Students should not engage in any behavior that is harmful to another student such as fighting, hitting, tripping, name-calling, etc.
8. Students should report any problem arising on the playground directly to one of the playground supervisors.
9. Students should not bring toys, balls, games, radios, playing or trading cards, etc. to school. The school will not be responsible for these broken, lost, or stolen items.

5.11 LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES AND RULES

Basic school rules should also be followed in the lunchroom. Refer to the Basic Rules List (3.9) in this handbook.

Additional lunchroom rules are:

- Students should line up in an orderly fashion.
- Students are responsible for picking up their lunch tray, and going to their table.
- Students should speak as they would in normal conversation. Yelling and shouting will not be tolerated.
- Students should not exchange, share, or throw food.
- Students should not leave their seats without the permission of the cafeteria supervisor.
- Students should not take any food or drinks from the cafeteria.
- Students should be dismissed only under the direction of the cafeteria supervisor.
- Students, including those eating both hot and cold lunches, are responsible for keeping their table area clean. Floors and tables should be as clean as possible upon leaving the cafeteria.
- After leaving the table, students should take their trays to the dirty dish window, put their paper products in the garbage can, place silverware in the silverware tray, and line up or leave quietly.

- Students should not bring carbonated beverages, such as pop, for lunch. Drinks should not be in glass containers or cans.
- Gum is not allowed in the cafeteria or anywhere on the school grounds.

**SUPERVISING LARGE NUMBERS OF CHILDREN IN THE LUNCHROOM AND ON
THE PLAYGROUND IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SUPERVISORS
AND REQUIRES THE COOPERATION OF ALL STUDENTS.**

5.12 TORNADO DRILLS/MAN-MADE DRILLS

Tornado drills are conducted at least two times a year. A plan for each room is given to the teacher. When the signal is given, all students immediately stand and proceed to their assigned wall areas in the hallway. There should be no talking or running. Students should get down on their knees and cover their heads with a book or their hands to protect themselves. They will remain in this position until the all-clear signal is given.

5.13 FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis throughout the year. A plan for each room is given to the teacher. When the signal is sounded, all students immediately stand and proceed out of the building to their designated areas. There should be no talking or running. Students remain outside until the all- clear signal is given.

SECTION VI: HEALTH SERVICES

6.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The Health Services Team at River Forest Community School Corporation is dedicated to the care and well-being of our students. Our mission is to support student health and enable students to feel safe and cared for while at school. We believe that this supports excellence in the classroom and contributes to healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

6.2 KEEPING SCHOOL INFORMED

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep the school informed regarding any health concern that may need special consideration in the student's activities or education. In addition, student information must be accurately completed and kept updated with the school; medical needs/concerns, allergies, phone numbers, addresses, emails, etc.

A student in need of special accommodations (i.e., the use of crutches due to injury, permission to leave class early due to injury) must submit a Doctor's note, indicating the accommodation and the length of time the accommodation will be needed.

PREGNANCY

Any student that is pregnant must obtain an attending Doctor's note that states confirmation of pregnancy and clearance to attend school. This note should also include any restrictions or special instructions and signed by the attending Doctor. It is important that the school is notified of any medical problems with the pregnancy.

6.3 ACCIDENT/INJURY

All injuries must be reported to a teacher, other school employee or the office. If indicated, the student will be referred to the building nurse/nurse assistant for appropriate treatment. In a case where the nurse/nurse assistant is not available, the student should report to the main office. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parents.

If the injury is serious, the parent/guardian will be notified by school personnel. If parent/guardian is unavailable, those listed as emergency contacts will be notified. School personnel will render first aid only. If school personnel deem it necessary, Emergency Medical Services (911) will be called.

NOTE: The school corporation is not responsible for expenses incurred as a result of an illness, accident or injury.

EXPOSURE TO BODY FLUIDS

In the instance of an accident or illness that possibly includes exposure to body fluids-for example, a cut, bloody nose, vomiting where there is blood or a body fluid spill present, you should **immediately** get help from an adult in that area. As a student assisting someone, please try to refrain from coming in contact with the "fluid". If you come in contact with the body fluid, report to the office **immediately** so they may assist you.

6.4 HEALTH REFERRALS/RELEASES

Students injured or sick at home **before arriving** at school should be treated by their parent(s)/guardian. If a student becomes ill or injured during the school day, the student must request permission from the teacher to go to the nurse's office. The teacher will provide a pass to the student. **The student is not to come between classes unless it's an urgent matter.** In the case where the school nurse/nurse assistant is not available, the student is to report to the main office, where the designated personnel will assist the student.

6.5 ILLNESS

Students will be sent home if needed when they become sick at school. **If a child becomes ill with a fever of one hundred (100) degrees or greater, vomiting, or diarrhea, or has a possible contagious condition, the parent or emergency contact must pick the child up from school.** (These guidelines are subject to change, as directed by the State Department of Health.)

If there is a necessity to go home due to illness or injury, the nurse/nurse assistant or office designee will inform the parent/guardian. When the parent/guardian is not available, those listed as emergency contacts will be notified. Upon picking up the student, the

parent/guardian/or emergency contact person will then sign the “Sign-Out-Sheet” in the main office before leaving the building. For safety reasons, students cannot walk home alone. Students should not call home to arrange for a ride home when ill without permission from the nurse/nurse assistant or office designee. The student who fails to follow procedure and leaves without properly checking out will be given an unexcused absence for classes missed and may be subject to disciplinary action. Students who remain in restrooms claiming illness may be considered truant. Should a student become ill in the restroom, he/she should have someone notify the office for help

Students with signs of illness will be allowed to return to school according to the most recent guidelines from the Indiana State Department of Health.

Students should not go to school if they have a fever over 100 degrees fahrenheit. Your child can return to school after they've been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication (antipyretics). (Health Department guidelines)

Five or more consecutive days of absences will require a Doctor's release form for return to school/school activities. When your child is hospitalized, a discharge form from the hospital or a Doctor's release must be submitted to the office. See attendance section for further information.

6.6 TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL

Please follow the most recent screening form if your child has signs of illness. This will be posted on the RFCSC website under Health Services.

6.7 ILLNESS PREVENTION

According to the CDC, “An infection occurs when germs enter the body, increase in number, and cause a reaction of the body.” Here are some tips from the CDC on keeping you from getting sick or spreading germs.

- *Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- *Stay home when you are sick. See guidelines above.
- *Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the wastebasket. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- *Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

*Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods!

See the CDC or RFCSC website for more specific instructions in the event of illness outbreaks.

6.8 IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must provide documentation that complies with the rules set forth by the Indiana State Board of Health that all immunizations required by law are current, including, but not limited to diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, rubella, poliomyelitis, mumps, varicella, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and meningitis, or have an authorized exemption from State immunization requirements. From time-to-time, other communicable diseases may be designated by the State Board of Health as diseases that require immunizations. For the safety of all students, the school principal may remove a student from school or establish a deadline for meeting State requirements if a student does not have the necessary immunizations or authorized exemption.

Authorized exemptions include religious and medical exemptions. A parent who objects on religious grounds must complete and sign the proper documentation available from the nurse/nurse assistant. If a physician certifies that a particular immunization(s) is or may be detrimental to a student's health, a medical exemption form must be completed and signed by the physician. Religious and medical exemption paperwork must be completed and signed **every year**. In the event of a communicable disease epidemic regarding required immunizations, the Superintendent may temporarily deny admission to a student otherwise exempted from the designated disease lacking the information. Any questions about immunization or exemptions should be directed to the school nurse/nurse assistant. Exemption forms must be completed every year. Please contact your healthcare provider for further information.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth. The disease can progress rapidly and within hours of the first symptoms, may result in death or permanent disability including loss of hearing, brain damage and limb amputations. Symptoms of meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, stiff neck, making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that causes meningococcal diseases are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. Fortunately, there is an immunization available and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends routine meningococcal immunizations for all students in grades 6-12. Information concerning meningococcal disease (meningitis) and its vaccine, shall be provided to students and parents at the beginning of the school year. This information can be obtained from the school website or you may request a copy from your school nurse.

HPV INFECTION

The parent of each student entering grade 6, shall be provided with information prescribed by the State Department of Health concerning the link between cancer and the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection and that an immunization against the HPV infection is

available. This information can be obtained from the school website or you may request a copy from your school nurse.

Keep your healthcare provider informed of any issues with your child's health or immunizations.

6.9 MEDICATIONS

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

In the circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- The Authorization to Administer Prescription medication form must be completed and signed by the physician AND parent and then filed with the respective Health Office before the medication can be administered. This must be filed **annually**.
- All medications must be registered with the office of the nurse. Prescription medication must be in its original container, labeled with the student's name and the exact dosage.
- At no time is the school to administer a dosage other than that authorized by the physician's prescription unless the prescribed dosage exceeds the permissible dosage for such medication, in which case the parent will be contacted to come to school to administer a dosage greater than the maximum permissible dosage.
- Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, back pack, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications. In this case, the school needs to be notified that the emergency medication was sent.
- Students who may require administration of an emergency medication may have such medication stored in the nurse's office. However, if authorization for self-medication has been provided by the parent and physician the student may retain possession of the self-administered medications. A student who needs to use his/her emergency medication should (for example an asthma inhaler, Epi-Pen, etc) report the use of the supervising adult immediately.
- The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time.

SELF ADMINISTERED MEDICATION

A student may possess and self-administer medication for chronic disease or medical conditions provided the student's parent files a written authorization with the nurse. The written authorization must be filed **annually**. A physician's written statement must be included with the parent's authorization that includes the following: .

- An acute or chronic disease or medical condition exists for which the medication is prescribed.
- The student has been given instruction on how to self-administer the medication.

- The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the medication.

NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS

- Prior written consent of the parent must be on file before any non-prescription medication or treatment can be administered.
- All medications must be registered with the office of the nurse. Medication must be in its original container.
- At no time is the school to administer a dosage other than what is listed on the bottle.

SUNSCREEN

A student may possess and use a topical, non-aerosol sunscreen product without being required to:

- have a physician's note or prescription
- store the topical, non-aerosol sunscreen in a specific location

The product must be one that is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use for the purpose of limiting ultraviolet light-induced skin damage.

Corporation personnel may, but are not required to, assist a student in applying the product if the school has **written permission** from the student's parent or guardian.

RETURNING MEDICATION TO THE HOME

- For grades K-8, medication may be released only to the student's parent or to an individual who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and who has been designated, in writing by the student's parent, to receive the medication. For grades 9-12, medications may be sent home with the student if the student's parent provides written permission for the student to receive the medication.
- Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by School personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of the School year.

ANY STUDENT WHO DISTRIBUTES A MEDICATION OF ANY KIND TO ANOTHER STUDENT OR IS FOUND TO POSSESS A MEDICATION OTHER THAN THE ONE AUTHORIZED IS IN VIOLATION OF THE SCHOOL'S CODE OF CONDUCT AND MAY BE DISCIPLINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DRUG USE PROVISIONS OF THE CODE

6.10 PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

If head lice is suspected, the student will be checked by the school nurse, nurse assistant or trained designee. Students found to have nits (lice eggs) only do NOT need to be sent home early from school. They can go home at the end of the day. Students found to have live lice bugs will be sent home. After parental notification, prompt and proper treatment is expected and is in the best interest of the child and his or her classmates. If a student is sent

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home with live bugs, he/she must be brought in by the parent/guardian to be checked before re-admittance to class. Re-admittance to the classroom if no treatment or insufficient treatment has been given will be handled on a case by case basis.

Classroom head lice screens will only be performed if there is an unusual number of cases in that room. Routine head lice screenings will not be performed.

CDC head lice prevention and control measures:

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

Head lice is a universal problem, present in the community at all times, and is particularly prevalent among elementary school-age children. Head lice are a nuisance, but do not spread disease. Control of lice infestation is best handled by adequate treatment of the infested person and their immediate household and other close personal contacts. Contracting head lice is not an indicator of uncleanliness or socioeconomic status. Head lice are spread most commonly by direct head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact. However, much less frequently they are spread by sharing clothing or belongings onto which lice have crawled or nits attached to shed hairs may have fallen.

Communication from the school to parents directly and through parent and classroom education to the students help increase the awareness for both parents and child. Parents need to check their child's head on a regular basis for signs of head lice and treat adequately and appropriately as necessary. Control depends on prompt case finding and effective treatment.

The school nurse or their designee shall be the only ones authorized to conduct examinations of students for head lice.

The school nurse or designee shall notify the parent and ask the parent to pick the student up at the end of the school day and administer an FDA-approved lice treatment (e.g., pediculicide/ovicide, treatment by a qualified healthcare provider, or treatment at a clinic specializing in lice and nit removal. The student shall remain in the classroom for the remainder of the school day.

After treatment and upon returning to school, the student will be examined by the school nurse or designee, which may include the principal. The Corporation practices a policy of "no live lice" as the criterion for return to school.

The following are steps that can be taken to help prevent and control the spread of head lice:

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities at home, school, and elsewhere (sports activities, playground, slumber parties, camp).

- Do not share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Do not share combs, brushes, or towels. Disinfect combs and brushes used by an infected person by soaking them in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5–10 minutes.
- Do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infected person.
- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that an infected person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using the hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned OR sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay. However, spending much time and money on house cleaning activities is not necessary to avoid reinfestation by lice or nits that may have fallen off the head or crawled onto furniture or clothing.
- **Do not use fumigant sprays or fogs; they are not necessary to control head lice and can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin. To help control a head lice outbreak in a community, school, or camp, children can be taught to avoid activities that may spread head lice.**

You can help prevent head lice by taking the following steps:

- Teach your child not to share combs, brushes, hats and coats and to not try on other people's hats (not even in department stores).
- Teach your child to hang coats separately-placing hats and scarves inside coat sleeves.
- Check your child's hair if he/she itches or complains about itching
- Getting rid of lice as soon as they are found to help prevent them from spreading in your home or the classroom

Feel free to contact your nurse/nurse assistant with any questions or concerns.

6.11 CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or high-transient pest. The corporation will follow all State statutes and Health Department regulations and guidelines regarding length of any exclusion, immunizations and other means of controlling the spread of communicable disease. A communicable disease board policy is in effect and is obtainable on request from the central or school offices.

6.12 SCENTS

To protect those who are highly sensitive to smells, we discourage use of strong perfumes/ colognes/ body sprays and discourage you from applying it at school.

SECTION VII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

7.1 BOOK RENTAL

All students are required to pay a rental fee for textbooks. This fee provides for all basic textbooks, consumable workbooks, testing materials and supplementary materials.

Since schoolbooks must be used for several years, students must take great care at home and at school. Students are responsible for all books issued to them and will be subject to a fee if any book is lost or damaged.

BOOK RENTAL IS PAYABLE THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL. The school offices are open two weeks before the opening of school to collect book rental fees. In the case of an established inability to pay fees and/or book rental at the time they are due, the principal may extend the due date to meet the needs of individual cases. Legal action shall be initiated to collect unpaid textbook or materials fees.

Textbook assistance may be applied for at registration. However, **in addition to the book rental fees**, a **\$5.00 assembly** and a **\$5.00 technology** fee are payable. **These fees also apply to those students receiving textbook assistance and are required to be paid.**

7.2 CAFETERIA

Each elementary school offers students a well-balanced breakfast and hot lunch program at a reasonable cost. Menus are sent home on a monthly basis.

Using the facilities of the cafeteria is a privilege. All students eating in the cafeteria must obey the rules.

FOOD ALLERGIES

If your child has a food allergy requiring accommodation from the cafeteria, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Food Service Director at 219-962-7551 Ext. 3082 for instructions. You may also view the food allergy guidelines on the food service page of the corporation website at www.rfcsc.k12.in.us

Please also notify your building nurse/nurse assistant.

7.3 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In order to expedite matters regarding financial assistance in the areas of textbook rental and lunches, please fill out the Free/Reduced Lunch application online during student registration. If unable to complete the form online, please contact the school's office for assistance prior to the start of school.

7.4 CARE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Students should take pride in their school's appearance and maintain it as if it were their home. They should do their part to keep the classrooms including desks, corridors, washrooms, and the cafeteria as clean as possible. Paper and other refuse needs to be placed in the appropriate containers.

7.5 DRESS CODE

Dress plays an important part in developing attitudes for neatness and respect. We prohibit clothing that depicts illegal, obscene, violent, or inappropriate behaviors. Children may not wear clothing advertising tobacco, alcohol, or drug related products. The type of clothing worn to school has a definite effect on the attitude, conduct, and work habits of the student. We do insist that students not call undesirable attention to themselves through an immodest or unkempt appearance. Courts have ruled that any appearance that: (1) creates a disturbance, (2) causes amusement or laughter, (3) provokes looks or a stare, (4) is lewd and suggestive shall not be allowed in the public schools. Tube tops, crop tops, tank tops, halter tops, bicycle shorts, spandex shorts, baggy pants that drag the ground, (pants are to be worn at the waist with a belt) pajamas and undergarments, which are worn as outer garments, are not appropriate. Plastic flip-flops are not allowed as footwear. Walking shorts, Bermuda shorts, mini skirts, etc. NOT of appropriate length (below the tip of the fingers) and not tight fitting may be worn. Cutoffs, swimsuits or shorts with extreme side slits are not to be worn.

Clothing with obscene markings, clothes, which show bare midriff, and clothes that are extremely ragged, stained, or dirty are not acceptable attire. Fashion jeans with holes exposing large areas of skin in delicate areas are not appropriate for school and may not be worn. Holes in shorts or pants, must be below fingertip length. The building principal will make a decision as to acceptability.

Hats may be worn to and from school, but they may not be worn inside the school at any time.

Artificial fingernails that interfere with a student's ability to type, write, or follow classroom expectations are NOT permitted.

1. When students are not dressed properly, calls will be made home.
2. If a change of clothes can not be provided by the parent/parent designee, substituted clothes will be provided.

The wearing of any clothing, jewelry, or any other items that are related to gang symbols is strictly prohibited. Suspension and possible expulsion from school will be the result. (See also 2.5)

7.6 BAD WEATHER

All schools in the River Forest Community School Corporation will be open on all regularly scheduled days unless closed by the Superintendent of Schools because of an emergency. When schools are confronted with an emergency, such as extreme conditions of snow, ice, or mechanical failure which necessitates the closing of school, an announcement will be given to the radio stations prior to 6 a.m. Emergency closings or early dismissals during the day will be announced via automated call and posted on the district webpage as soon as possible. The following stations will be notified:

Indiana 105.5	FOX 32	1500 AM WAKE	Z-107.1 FM
Revised June 2023			

WGN – TV
NBC Channel 5

Lakeshore Public TV
ABC Channel 7

CBS Channel 2

Emergency Closings are based upon information obtained from the Indiana State Police, Lake County Highway Department, Lake County Sheriff's Office, State Highway Department, and the Weather Bureau.

Your child should know what to do when no one is at home when school is dismissed early. Please set up alternatives in advance with friends, relatives, or neighbors. Be sure your child knows what to do if the first alternative does not work out. Remember to allow for the wind chill factor when dressing for bad weather.

7.7 CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, OR EMERGENCY NUMBERS

If a student moves within his own neighborhood during the school year, he/she should promptly report the change of address and telephone to the office. In addition, emergency numbers should be updated in the school office if they change during the year

7.8 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There are many extra-curricular opportunities in our elementary schools. They may include after school recreation activities and intramurals.

Some teachers serve as sponsors of these activities. They will announce which clubs; groups and activities will be available at the beginning of the school year.

All Elementary athletic teams will inform parents that playing time is not guaranteed for any student-athlete. Our goal is to get everyone in the activity, but due to numbers, it is not always feasible and is a coach's decision. Parents on the game day/night are not to interrupt the coaches/administrators before, during, or after the game on this issue or interrupt classroom instruction on this issue. They need to see school officials at an appropriate time and make an appointment.

The teacher/sponsor will be responsible for the rules the students will follow:

1. Permission from the student's parents will be needed for the students to participate in activities held after school.
2. All students should be in their meeting place by 3:15, not in the halls.
3. All students should have a way home; no teachers should be expected to take students home.
4. Siblings and friends of students participating in after school activities may not stay at school during practices.
5. If a child is absent a full day, he/she may not participate in after school activities for that day.
6. Student athletes should be in good standing with respect to attendance and tardies.

7. Student athletes can not have failing grades or be considered a discipline concern.

7.9 ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION POLICY

River Forest Community Schools tries to include all eligible students who are interested in athletics and extracurricular activities. We believe that participation in athletics and extracurricular activities is beneficial to a child not only to learn athletic skills, but social skills such as teamwork, cooperation and self-discipline. However, we also believe that the most important learning occurs daily in the classroom and that students should exhibit appropriate behavior not only during the extra-curricular events, but also during the course of the regular school day. Therefore, this policy has been established for student participation in athletics and extracurricular activities:

1. Once a week during the course of the season, a roster of team members will be circulated to classroom teachers. Each student will be evaluated by the regular classroom teacher the student has during the course of the regular day. The student will be given an O.K., a warning, (he/she will be marked “NO” next time if the situation does not improve by the following week) or a “NO” (with comments) in the areas of behavior and academic work. A “NO” may be given for inappropriate classroom behavior, not completing classroom/ homework or lack of progress/effort.
2. Music, Art, P.E. Teachers and Title I staff members will notify the Principal if they feel any student should receive a “NO” for any of the above reasons. Special Education teachers and the Principal will be included on the list that is circulated to the classroom teachers.
3. If any student receives a “NO” from any of his/her teachers for the week, the student will be suspended from games and practices for the extra-curricular activity. A Notice of Athletic/Extracurricular Suspension will be sent home to parents to be signed and returned. Failure to return this notice will result in removal from the team.
4. If a student receives a “NO” during the season from any of his/her teachers (does not have to be the same teacher), the student may be removed from the team or not allowed to participate in the activity. A student may also be immediately removed from the team for disciplinary reasons.
5. A student who has been removed from an athletic team may participate in the next sport that is offered.
6. Students who do not follow the coach’s rules are subject to the same consequences as in Numbers 3 and 4 above.
7. Students who are to remain for detention after school or are being kept for corrections will participate in practice that day only if time remains after detention or corrections.

This policy covers all athletics and extracurricular activities at River Forest Community Elementary Schools.

7.10 LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES

Unclaimed or found items are turned into a designated area. If your child should lose a hat, glove, sweater, etc., encourage him/her to check the LOST AND FOUND items. All outer garments, personal items, lunches, and lunch boxes should be clearly marked with the name of the student. Lost and Found articles can be searched to identify the owner.

7.11 VISITATIONS

In order to maintain an uninterrupted educational day for all students, parents are asked to telephone the school office to make an appointment before a class or school visitation. Parents should stop at the school office upon arrival in the building to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. When the visitation is completed, parents are to stop in the office and sign out.

Parents MAY NOT visit with teachers during times when students are under the teacher's direct supervision. Parents **MAY** visit classrooms for up to ½ day a semester with prior permission from the principal and at least 24 hours notice to teachers.

7.12 PTA/PTO

Each elementary school has an active PARENT-TEACHER organization. Parents are encouraged to participate. Each elementary organization will announce its schedule of meetings and events at the beginning of each year. These meetings are planned to interest and assist parents.

7.13 RECESS

Fresh air and outdoor exercise are important to strong/healthy children. Therefore, we urge parents to see to it that children are suitably dressed with necessary boots, hats, gloves, etc., so that they may play outside during the winter months. Students who go outside for recess are more alert than students who stay inside all day. All students will be sent outdoors during recess periods and the noon hour to participate in the school planned activity programs when weather and health permit.

7.14 STAYING INSIDE

Children who are ill should be kept at home. Requests to stay inside for more than one day should be accompanied by a note from the doctor. Most of the time, if a child is well enough to go to school, he/she is well enough to go out for short periods of time. The weather conditions are monitored to determine appropriate time for outdoor play.

7.15 SUPPLIES

Children in all grades will be given a list of supplies they will be expected to furnish. These supplies should be refurbished throughout the school year when needed.

7.16 WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Parents or guardians wishing to withdraw a student from school need to call school AT LEAST THREE DAYS IN ADVANCE of the withdrawal. Parents or guardians will need to come to school to pick up the transfers and sign necessary forms. **ALL BILLS OWED TO THE SCHOOL MUST BE PAID.** If a student re-enrolls, any previous outstanding debts MUST BE PAID.

Any district electronic devices and chargers provided to students for use in school MUST be returned or the parent/guardian will be billed a replacement fee. This fee is due upon withdrawal.

7.17 BICYCLES

If a student has permission to ride a bicycle to school, he/she must park it in the designated area. After a bike is parked, the only time it should be used is after school. All students riding bicycles to and from school should adhere to traffic regulations. Students who ignore bicycle regulations will lose the privilege of riding their bicycle to school. We highly recommend that students have locks for their bicycles, as the school corporation assumes no responsibility for stolen or damaged bicycles.

7.18 RIVER FOREST COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION Policy on District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks (Internet)

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the right to freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. Such rights extend to minors as well as adults. Schools facilitate the exercise of these rights by providing access to information regardless of format or technology. In a free and democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship.

In making decisions regarding student access to the Internet, the River Forest Community School Corporation considers its own stated educational mission, goals and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world.

The district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources should be structured in ways, which point students to those, which have been evaluated before use. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to learning objectives.

Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media.

Students utilizing district-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by the River Forest Community School Corporation's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior online just as they are in a classroom or other areas of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

The purpose of district-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, student use must be in support of and consistent with the education objectives of the River Forest Community School Corporation. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers would always be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- to access, upload, download or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit materials;
- to transmit obscene, abusive, or sexually explicit language; to violate any local, state, or federal statute;
- to vandalize damage or disable the property of another individual or organization;
- to access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission;
- to violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission; and
- to purchase materials or items from the Internet without a purchase order.

Any violation of District policy and rules may result in loss of district-provided access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

The River Forest Community School Corporation makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including--but not limited to--loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service.

The district will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature or quality of information stored on district diskettes, hard drives or servers; nor for the accuracy, nature or quality of information gathered through district-provided Internet access. The district will not be responsible for personal property used to access district computers or networks or for district-provided Internet access. The district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from district-provided access to the Internet.

Parents of students in the River Forest Community School Corporation shall be provided with the following information:

The River Forest Community School Corporation is pleased to offer its students access to the Internet. The Internet is an electronic highway connecting hundreds of thousands of computers and millions of individual users all over the world. This computer technology will help propel our schools through the communication age by allowing students and staff to access and use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups around the world, and significantly expand their available information base. The Internet is a tool for lifelong learning.

Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet, which could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent or guardian would be liable.

While it is the intent of the district to make Internet access available in order to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other material as well. Even should the district institute technical methods or systems to regulate students Internet access, those methods could not guarantee compliance with the district's acceptable use of policy. That notwithstanding, the district believes that the benefits to students having access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Toward that end, the River Forest Community School Corporation makes the districts complete Internet policy and procedures available on request for review by all parents, guardians and other members of the community; and provides parents and guardians the option of requesting for their minor children alternative activities not requiring Internet use.

NOTICE: This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state and federal statutes.

Replacement/Repair of School Issued Technology Devices

Should it be determined by school administration that school issued technology devices were intentionally damaged by a student, the student/guardian will incur a cost and be responsible for time and resources used for repair and/or replacement.

7.19 PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Corporation maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and

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instructions on how to prohibit its release you may consult the Board's annual Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notice which can be found in the school office or review Policy 8330- Student Records.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, social security numbers, and communications with family and outside providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the confidential secretary. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of his/her right to a hearing on the matter.

The administration may disclose personally identifiable information from education records without prior parental consent to officials of state and federal government, educational institutions and agencies, and under specific circumstances authorized by Board policy and Federal law.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the Corporation's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- C. sexual behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The principal will provide the parent access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is made.

The parent may access the following:

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose; and
- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

7.20 PARENT/COMMUNITY CIVILITY

Civility does not deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but serves only to maintain, to the extent of possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for students and staff. River Forest Community School Corporation encourages positive communications, but will not tolerate volatile or hostile actions and/or abusive language by any student, parent, or guardian.

Any person who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school day or school related events; threatens the health and safety of anyone through harassment; willfully causes property damage; uses offensive language or uses any form of social media to be offensive; acts in a rude or disrespectful manner; or who otherwise establishes a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be dealt with either according to the student disciplinary procedures, or if an adult, will be asked to cease such behavior or be directed to leave school property. If any person uses obscenities or speaks in an abusive manner, the administrator or employee to whom the remarks are directed will politely request that person to communicate in a courteous manner. If the person does not take corrective action, the employee will verbally notify him/her that the meeting, conference or telephone conversation is terminated and will refer the person to the building principal or designee. For students, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken according to the school handbook. For persons other than corporation students, the Superintendent or designee will inform the person that he/she will not be allowed on school property for an amount of time determined by the administration.