



2020  
2021

## Secondary Student Handbook

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**Russellville School District will educate, equip, and empower all students to be productive, contributing members of their school, their community, and their world, by preparing students to be college and career ready.**

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

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# Section 1: General Information

## Equal Educational Opportunity

No student in the Russellville School District shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by the district.

The Russellville School District shall ensure that no student is denied access to being selected for honors and awards through the establishment of non-biased and equitable policies and procedures related to honors and awards programs in each school within the district.

## Public Complaints/Grievance Procedure

The Russellville School District is open to grievances that arise through actions of its employees or the operating procedures and policies of the district. Complaints should begin as close as possible to the origin of the issue. The Board expects the staff and the grieving party to be courteous when a complaint occurs. Parents are asked to contact the school or appropriate central office administrator during the work day. The superintendent will assist parents when an issue is taken to the Board level.

For additional information, School Board Policy [6.7](#) – Adopted 2/19/2019

## Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Every parent, guardian, person having lawful control of the child, or person standing in loco parentis of any child age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before August 1 of the current school year within the District shall enroll and send the child to a District school.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.3](#) – Adopted 6/18/2019

## Extracurricular Activities – Secondary Schools

The Board believes in providing opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities that can help enrich the student's educational experience. At the same time, the Board believes that a student's participation in extracurricular activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Interruptions of instructional time in the classroom are to be minimal, and absences from class to participate in extracurricular activities **shall not exceed one per week** per extracurricular activity (tournaments or other similar events) except with approval of the building administrator. All students are eligible for extracurricular activities unless specifically denied eligibility on the basis of criteria outlined in this policy.

A student must meet guidelines as set forth by the AAA to participate in AAA Extracurricular Activities. A student may lose his/her eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities when, in the opinion of the school's administration, the student's participation in such an activity may adversely jeopardize his/her academic achievement. Students may also be denied permission to participate in extracurricular activities as a consequence of disciplinary action taken by the administration for inappropriate behavior.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.56](#) – Adopted 6/18/2019

## Extracurricular Activities – Home Schooled Students

Home-schooled student means a student legally enrolled in an Arkansas home school and who meets or has met the criteria for being a home-schooled student, as established by A.C.A. § 6-15-503.

Interscholastic activity means an activity between schools' subject to regulations of the Arkansas Activities Association that is outside the regular curriculum of the school district, such as an athletic activity, fine arts program, or a special interest group or club. Each school in the District shall post on its website its schedule of interscholastic activities, including sign-up, tryout, and participation deadlines, at least one semester in advance of those activities. A hard copy of the schedule shall be available upon request.

Home-schooled students whose parents or guardians are legal residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the student's resident school zone as permitted by this policy. Home-schooled students whose parent or legal guardian are not residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the District if the superintendent of the student's resident district and the superintendent of the District both agree in writing to allow the student to participate in interscholastic activities at the District.

Although not guaranteed participation in an interscholastic activity, home-school students who meet the provisions of this policy, AAA Rules, and applicable Arkansas statutes shall have an equal opportunity to try out and participate in an interscholastic activity without discrimination.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.56.2R](#) – Adopted 6/27/2017

### **Residence Requirement**

The schools of the district shall be open and free through the completion of the secondary program to all persons between the ages of five (5) and twenty-one (21) years whose parents, legal guardians, or other persons having lawful control of the person under an order of a court reside within the district and to all persons between those ages who have been legally transferred to the district for educational purposes.

Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older may establish a residence separate and apart from his or her parents or guardians for school attendance purposes.

In order for a person under the age of eighteen (18) years to establish a residence for the purpose of attending the district's schools separate and apart from his or her parents, guardians, or other persons having lawful control of him or her under an order of a court, the person must actually reside in the district for a primary purpose other than that of school attendance.

The children or wards of any person who is at least a half-time employee of this district but reside in another district are eligible to enroll in district schools.

Act 1255 of 2005 gives the Department of Human Services the authority to require a school district to waive the residency requirement for foster children unless a court determines it is not in the child's best interest for the child to remain in his/her current school. The Act further provides that districts are "encouraged to work out a plan for transportation for the child to remain in the child's current school."

Children whose parent or legal guardian relocates within the state due to a mobilization, deployment, or available military housing while on active duty in or serving in the reserve component of a branch of the United States Armed Forces or National Guard may continue attending school in the school district the children were attending prior to the relocation or attend school in the school district where the children have relocated. A child may complete all remaining school years at the enrolled school district regardless of mobilization, deployment, or military status of the parent or guardian.

### **Family and Community Engagement Plan**

**The full text of the Family and Community Engagement Plan for the District may be obtained through the district website [www.rsd.k12.net](http://www.rsd.k12.net).** Please choose the "State Required Information" button and scroll to the current year Family and Community Engagement Plan. A plan for each building and for the district is included.

The Russellville School District School Board and Administration understand the importance of involving parents and the community as a whole in promoting higher student achievement. The District Family and Community Engagement Plan is reviewed annually, and includes major goals for improving and continuing parent and community involvement in education:

- Goal One: The District will **promote and support family and community involvement** through surveys, written information, the website and other publications, and annual parent meetings.
- Goal Two: The District **will assist school buildings in promoting and improving** family and community engagement.
- Goal Three: The District will ensure that **school principals, teachers, and parents** receive information and training in promoting family and community engagement and communicating with parents.
- Goal Four: The District will include **parents in evaluating and improving** the ways in which schools and teachers communicate with and involve parents.
- Goal Five: The District **will include parents in joint review and development of the Title I Plan** for buildings, as applicable

**Please contact your school building principal for additional information and assistance with involvement. You are asked to let us know that you have received this information in your student handbook by signing the assurance page included for you.**

### **Parent – Teacher Communication**

The district recognizes the importance of communication between teachers and parents/legal guardians. To help promote positive communication, parent/teacher conferences shall be held once each semester.

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by parents or guardians when they feel they need to discuss their child's progress with his/her teacher. If school personnel are notified of a change of communication or custody, the teacher shall be notified.

Teachers are required to communicate during the school year with the parent(s), legal guardian(s), or care-giving adult or adults who live in the student's home to discuss the student's academic progress unless the student has been placed in the custody of the Department of Human Services and the school has received a court order prohibiting parent or legal guardian participation in parent/teacher conferences. More frequent communication is required with the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of students who are performing below grade level.

All parent/teacher conferences shall be scheduled at a time and place to best accommodate those participating in the conference. Each teacher shall document the participation or nonparticipation of parent(s)/legal guardian(s) for each scheduled conference.

If a student is to be retained at any grade level or denied course credit, notice of, and the reasons for retention shall be communicated promptly in a personal communication.

### **Communication Between Parents and The District**

An additional form of communication that is available to parents/guardians is through the e-mail system. Parents/guardians may contact teachers and administrators in the Russellville School District by using the first and last name along with [rsdk12.net](mailto:rsdk12.net).

Example: [john.doe@rsdk12.net](mailto:john.doe@rsdk12.net)

### **School Supplies, Textbooks, and Technologies**

Students are responsible for all borrowed materials. Any materials including, but not limited to, textbooks, library books, technological devices, or library materials lost, or literacy materials lost or damaged beyond repair must be paid by the student. The fine must be paid before the end of the school year. Replacement cost of each book varies according to the class.

Students are expected to provide their own supplies for classes. A supply list is provided at the beginning of each year for RIS, RMS, and RJHS.

### **Student Handbook**

It shall be the policy of the Russellville School District that the most recently adopted version of the Student Handbook be incorporated by reference into the policies of this district. In the event that there is a conflict between the student handbook and a general board policy or policies, the more recently adopted language will be considered binding and controlling on the matter provided the parent(s) of the student, or the student if 18 years of age or older, have acknowledged receipt of the controlling language.

### **Student Electronic Device and Internet Use Agreement**

The Russellville School District agrees to allow the student to use the district's technology to access the internet under the following terms and conditions whether access is through a district or student owned electronic device (as used in this Agreement, "electronic device" means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data):

1. **Conditional Privilege:** The Student's use of the district's access to the Internet is a privilege conditioned on the Student's abiding to this agreement. No student may use the district's access to the Internet unless the Student and his/her parent or guardian have read and signed this agreement.
2. **Acceptable Use:** The Student agrees that he/she will use the district's Internet access for educational purposes only. In using the Internet, the Student agrees to obey all federal laws and regulations and state laws and regulations. The Student also agrees to abide by any Internet use rules instituted at the student's school or class, whether those rules are written or oral.
3. **Penalties for Improper Use:** If the Student violates this agreement and misuses the Internet, the Student shall be subject to disciplinary action.
4. **No Expectation of Privacy:** The Student and parent/guardian signing below agree that if the student uses the Internet through the district's access, that the student waives any right to privacy the Student may have for such use. The student and the parent/guardian agree that the district may monitor the student's use of the district's internet access and may also examine all system activities the student participates in, including but not limited to e-mail, voice, and video transmissions, to ensure proper use of the system. The district may share such transmissions with the student's parents/guardians.

5. No Guarantees: The district will make good faith efforts to protect children from improper or harmful matter which may be on the internet. At the same time, in signing this agreement, the parent and student recognize that the District makes no guarantees about preventing improper access to such materials on the part of the Student.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.29F](#) – Adopted 6/19/2019

### **Wellness Policy**

The Russellville School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Russellville School District that

- The Russellville School District will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies;
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis;
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school meals will meet the nutrition requirements of the USDA regulations;
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students, in clean, safe settings; and
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs.



## Section 2: Academic Information

### Academic Calendar for 2020-2021

August 6-7, 10	No School – Professional Development
August 11-12	No School – Teacher Work Days
August 13	First Day of Class
September 7	No School – Labor Day Holiday
September 16	5 Weeks Progress Reports
October 9	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
October 12	First Day of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
October 19	*½ Professional Development; Parent/Teacher Conferences (PK-5)
October 20	*½ Professional Development; Parent/Teacher Conferences (6-12)
November 13	5 Weeks Progress Reports
November 23-24	No School – Flex Professional Development
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Holidays – No Classes
December 15-18	Semester Tests
December 18	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester
December 19-1/3	Christmas Holidays – No Classes
January 4	First Day of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester/Classes resume
January 7	First Semester Report Cards Sent Home
January 18	No School – Flex Professional Development
February 8	*½ Professional Development; Parent/Teacher Conferences (6-7); Student Success Night for Grades 8 -11
February 9	*½ Professional Development; Parent/Teacher Conferences (PK-5)
February 15	Parent/Teacher Conference – RJHS/RHS (4-7 pm)
March 12	End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter
March 15	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter begins
March 19	Report cards sent home
March 22-26	Spring Break
April 2	No School-Professional Development
April 21	Progress Reports sent home
May 13	Teacher Recognition – 2 Hour Early Dismissal
May 21, 24-26	Semester Tests
May 26	Last Day of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester if no inclement weather
May 31	Memorial Day holiday
January 20, May 28-29	Make-up days for inclement weather
June 3	

\*All Parent/Teacher Conferences are held from 1:00 pm – 7:00 pm

### Academic Test Schedule 2020-2021

The following is the testing schedule for Secondary Students:

April 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	RMS Summative Assessment
April 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	RIS Summative Assessment
April 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	RJHS 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Summative Assessment
April 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	RJHS 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Summative Assessment
December 15-18 <sup>th</sup>	First Semester Tests (RJHS & RHS only)
May 21, 24-26 <sup>th</sup>	Semester Tests (RJHS & RHS only)
September 22	RHS ACT Make-Up from Spring 2020 test
February 1--5	RHS ELPA21 Summative

**Note:** Senior Second Semester Tests are different than listed above. Adjustments to the above testing schedule occurs when extenuating circumstances arise, e.g., days added to the end of the school year due to inclement weather. The school is not obligated to allow for early testing unless there is an extreme emergency. Any exceptions are approved by building administrators.

### **Academic Exemption Policy**

During the second semester only, students in grades 8-12 will be exempt from the final exam if they have 80% or higher and have missed no more than 4 total days, excluding school-sponsored trips/ absences. Two college visits and the senior job shadowing does NOT count against exemption status. Juniors are allowed one documented college visit day that does not count against exemption status. Students who are exempt and choose to take the final exam are NOT penalized regardless of the grade they make on the final exam. This policy does not impact semester classes that only meet second semester. Students who take the AP exam may be exempt from semester tests.

### **Academic Integrity**

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is passing off a source's information, ideas, or words as one's own. Plainly spoken, it is the use of someone else's work without giving proper credit to that author or source. Use of information without proper documentation or acknowledgement is cheating. Copying another student's homework, essay, test, research paper, etc. is also cheating. The following list contains ways to avoid cheating/ plagiarism

- Do not copy another person's words or ideas from any book or reference material unless the source is acknowledged;
- Do not copy someone else's work;
- Do not lend your work to another student;
- Use the approved reference guide to cite sources;
- See the teacher about any questions or proper documentation; and
- Remember that all borrowed facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge, must be documented.

#### **Other issues of Academic Integrity-Technology**

The secondary school's faculties are committed to promoting positive character qualities; hence, the issues of technological academic dishonesty must also be addressed. All students are expected to be responsible digital citizens; therefore, cheating in any form is not acceptable. The following list represents a partial list of technological misuse/abuse in the classroom

- cutting, pasting, or downloading information from the internet;
- rephrasing sentences from the internet;
- text-messaging during test or anytime during the instructional period; and
- improper use of any electronic source.

#### **Consequences of Academic Dishonesty**

Situations of Academic Dishonesty vary in seriousness and circumstance; therefore, there are levels of offenses. Consequences,

- When a student copies from another student's work, both parties will receive a zero. School administrators will be notified for documentation and possible disciplinary action.
- For compositions, research papers, etc., the following consequences are suggested
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: A zero on the work and parent contact by the teacher;
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: A zero on the work and parent contact by the teacher. The student is referred to the office;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: A zero on the work and parent contact by the teacher. The student is referred to the office.

**DISCLAIMER:** The administration reserves the right for alternative penalties, based on the severities of the situation.

## **Academic Information: Smart Core Curriculum and Graduation Requirements**

All students are required to participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless their parents or guardians, or the students if they are 18 years of age or older, sign a *Smart Core Waiver Form* to not participate. While Smart Core is the default option, a *Smart Core Information Sheet* and a *Smart Core Waiver Form* will be sent home with students prior to their enrolling in seventh grade, or when a 7-12 grade student enrolls in the district for the first time and there is not a signed waiver form in the student's permanent record. This policy is to be included in student handbooks for grades six (6) through twelve (12) and both students and parents must sign an acknowledgement they have received the policy. Those students not participating in the Smart Core curriculum will be required to fulfill the Core curriculum or the requirements of their IEP (when applicable) to be eligible for graduation. Counseling by trained personnel shall be available to students and their parents or legal guardians prior to the deadline for them to sign and return the waiver form.

While there are similarities between the two curriculums, following the Core curriculum may not qualify students for some scholarships and admission to certain colleges could be jeopardized. Students initially choosing the Core curriculum may subsequently change to the Smart Core curriculum **providing** they would be able to complete the required course of study by the end of their senior year. Students wishing to change their choice of curriculums must consult with their counselor to determine the feasibility of changing paths.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and as part of the annual school district support plan development process to determine if changes need to be made to better serve the needs of the district's students. The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall select the composition of the review panel.

Sufficient information relating to Smart Core and the district's graduation requirements shall be communicated to parents and students to ensure their informed understanding of each. This may be accomplished through any or all of the following means.

- Inclusion in the student handbook of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements;
- Discussion of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements at the school's annual public meeting, PTA meetings, or a meeting held specifically for the purpose of informing the public on this matter;
- Discussions held by the school's counselors with students and their parents; and/or
- Distribution of a newsletter(s) to parents or guardians of the district's students.

Administrators, or their designees, shall train newly hired employees, required to be licensed as a condition of their employment, regarding this policy. The district's annual professional development shall include the training required by this paragraph.

To the best of its ability, the District shall follow the requirements covering the transfer of course credit and graduation set forth in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children for all students who meet the definition of "eligible child" in Policy 4.2—ENROLLMENT.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The number of units students must earn to be eligible for high school graduation are to be earned from the categories listed below. A minimum of 22 units is required for graduation for a student participating in either the Smart Core or Core curriculum. In addition to the 22 units required for graduation by the Division of Elementary and Secondary (DESE), the district requires one (1) unit of a technology elective for a total of twenty-three (23) units to graduate. There are some distinctions made between Smart Core units and Graduation units. Not all units earned toward graduation necessarily apply to Smart Core requirements. The provisions of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) serve as his/her graduation plan. Students may not double up on English III and English IV during their junior year in order to graduate early.

### **The following seventeen (17) credits are required for all students:**

- Four (4) credits English
- Four (4) credits Mathematics (Smart Core: Alg. I, Geometry, Alg. II, and an advanced math course\*)
- Three (3) credits Science\*\* (one (1) Physical, one (1) Biology, and one (1) DESE approved science course)
- Three (3) credits Social Studies (American History; World History; one-half (½) credit Civics or Government and one-half (½) credit Economics)
- One-half (½) credit Physical Education
- One-half (½) credit Health and Safety Education
- One-half (½) credit Fine Arts (music, art, or drama)

- One-half (½) credit Oral Communications
- One (1) credit Technology (Computerized Business Applications, Computer Science or EAST)

In addition to the above credits, students shall select six (6) elective credits for a total of twenty-three (23) credits.

**The requirements above are for the smart core curriculum. If a smart core waiver is returned, the math and science are as follows:**

- Four (4) credits Mathematics (Algebra 1, Geometry and two additional approved math courses)
- Three (3) credits Science (one (1) Physical, one (1) Biology and one (1) DESE approved science credit)

See Policy 4.45 and 4.45.1 to read the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education’s entire Smart Core curriculum graduation requirements and allowable course options in Arkansas.

\*4<sup>th</sup> math credit advanced courses offered in RSD: Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Digital Electronics, PLTW Engineering Design & Development, Computerized Accounting II, and any of the computer science courses

\*\*See Table for all science course options in the Russellville School District (RSD).

\*\*\*Students can also take the yearlong course, Financial Planning & Wealth Management, to get their half credit of Economics, along with one elective credit.

Table 1: Russellville School District Courses Offered for Science Graduation Credit

	1 Biology Credit	1 Physical Science Credit	1 3 <sup>rd</sup> science Credit
RSD Courses Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Biology Integrated</li> <li>➤ Concurrent Credit Biology</li> <li>➤ Advanced Biology Integrated</li> <li>➤ AP Biology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Physical Science Integrated</li> <li>➤ Advanced Physical Science Integrated</li> <li>➤ Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ Advanced Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ AP Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ AP Physics I</li> <li>➤ PLTW Principles of Engineering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Physical Science Integrated</li> <li>➤ Advanced Physical Science Integrated</li> <li>➤ Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ Advanced Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ Advanced Chemistry Integrated</li> <li>➤ AP Physics I</li> <li>➤ Environmental Science</li> <li>➤ AP Environmental Science</li> <li>➤ Concurrent Credit Biology</li> <li>➤ AP Biology</li> <li>➤ PLTW Principles of Engineering</li> <li>➤ PLTW Human Body Systems</li> </ul>

All students must receive a passing score on the Arkansas Civics Exam in order to graduate.

**Digital Learning Courses**

The District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format. In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

Personal and Family Finance (beginning with the class of 2021 and thereafter)

In tenth (10<sup>th</sup>), eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>), or twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade, all students shall receive credit in a course covering the Personal and Family Finance Standards.

**Career Focus: 6 units**

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student’s contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

A student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.

Note: The Smart Core Information Sheet and the Smart Core Waiver Forms are available on the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education website.

**NOTE:** For more information, School Board Policy [4.45.1](#) – Adopted 6/18/2019

### Special Recognition

Cumulative grade point average (GPA) is used to determine class rank. All courses taken for high school credit are included. The GPA includes all weighted grades from Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Students designated as graduating with highest honors receive special seating at graduation. Speaking at graduation as well as attending the Governor’s Reception for High Academic Achievers are determined by class rank within this group. Other academic awards are handled similarly.

In the event of a tie for graduation speakers, the quality points from honors and AP courses are used to determine order between the tied students. This tie-breaking process does not affect rank.

Honor graduates’ tentative status is determined approximately three weeks before graduation. Determination is made by combining first semester cumulative GPA with second semester anticipated GPA. Final honor status is determined once final grades are figured at the end of the student’s senior year.

### Graduation Exercises

Participation in commencement exercises by seniors who have completed ALL requirements for graduation is encouraged, but not compulsory. Since these exercises require planning (rehearsals are held during school hours on school days) all students who wish to participate in the exercises are required to attend rehearsals. Failure to do so may exclude a student from participating in graduation exercises.

Students who have not completed **ALL** requirements for graduation are NOT eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony. Students completing requirements for graduation in the summer or fall may participate in the next exercise if they desire. In this case, the students must notify the principal’s office of their intent to participate in graduation exercises.

**NOTE: Part-time home-schooled students may participate in graduation exercises only if the student completes all requirements at Russellville High School.**

### Honor Graduates 2021 and thereafter

1. **Earn 12 academic credits** from honors courses.
2. Maintain a cumulative grade point (grades 9-12 inclusive) of a 3.50 or better. Recognition will be designated as follows:
  - a. With Highest Honors: grade point of 4.0 and above with **seven of the twelve** required honors courses being **weighted** and from **three** different areas. Students graduating with highest honors sit at the front of the group of students at graduation. The students with highest honors and ranked 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> are graduation speakers.
  - b. With High Honors: grade point of 3.75 and above with **five of the twelve** required honors courses being **weighted** and from **two** different areas.
  - c. With Honors: grade point of 3.50 and above with **four of the twelve** required honors courses being **weighted** and from **two** different areas.
3. Honor graduates are tentatively determined prior to graduation with final determination based on final grades. The complete high school record is used in making the calculation.

### National Merit Scholarships

High school juniors may qualify for National Merit Scholarships by receiving a high score on the PSAT taken in October of the junior year.

Juniors need a high selectivity index score in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile range. Not all students in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile range are National Merit Semifinalists. Each state has a different cut off score for the selection of National Merit Semifinalists.

The score is obtained from the total of three sections on the PSAT: the critical reading; math; and writing scores. The highest score is 240 (80+80+80=240) since each section of the PSAT ranges from 20 to 80 points.

If a student plans to take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall, then the student must pick up the Official Student Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT from the counselor's office in September.

The Student Guide has three main sections

1. test taking help;
2. information about National Merit Scholarship Corporation scholarship competitions; and
3. a full-length practice test.

For more information: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about/bulletin.html>.

### **Special Needs Students**

Special needs students who desire to take classes off campus may be given the opportunity to include no more than two credits in lieu of regular courses at Russellville High School. These credits could be from accredited correspondence schools, college or universities, virtual high school courses or an adult education center. Students must obtain permission from the principal prior to enrolling in any off-campus course to receive Russellville High School credit for this course.

### **Attendance**

#### **Absences**

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction that results in higher student achievement.

#### **Excused Absences**

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons and the parent/guardian contacts the school upon his/her return to school from the parent or legal guardian stating such reason:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of seven (7) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal;
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by their faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal,
7. Participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students.
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.
10. Absences granted, at the Principal's or Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in the eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades eleven (11) and twelve (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive excused absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Excessive absences may, however, be the basis for the denial of course credit, promotion, or graduation.

#### **Unexcused Absences**

Absences not defined above or not having an accompanying note from the parent or legal guardian shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with six (6) unexcused absences in a semester may not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or credit. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has three (3) unexcused absences, his/her parents, guardians, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day. Whenever a student exceeds six (6) unexcused absences in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons in *loco parentis* shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis, and the school or district administrator or designee.

Students who attend in-school suspension shall not be counted absent for those days. Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences.

Applicants for an instruction permit or for a driver's license by persons less than eighteen (18) years old on October 1 of any year are required to provide proof of a high school diploma or enrollment and regular attendance in an adult education program or a public, private, or parochial school prior to receiving an instruction permit. To be issued a driver's license, a student enrolled in school shall present proof of a "C" average for the previous semester or similar equivalent grading period for which grades are reported as part of the student's permanent record.

A student will be allowed to make up all assignments during absences by presenting an explanation of the absence signed by the student's parent or person legally responsible. Any time a student presents a note from a licensed medical professional, or the student absence is cleared by the building administration, the absence(s) will not count toward the allowed number and the student will be allowed to make up all assignments. The building administrator (Principal) shall determine when absences are excessive for the purpose of this policy.

## Tardies

Promptness is an important character trait that district staff are encouraged to model and help develop in our schools' students. At the same time, promptness is the responsibility of each student. Students who are late to class show a disregard for both the teacher and their classmates which compromises potential student achievement.

In addition to school district policy

- Three tardies are equivalent to one absence for exemption purposes, whether excused or not;
- Absences or tardies due to dress code violations or other disciplinary actions are excused at the discretion of a principal;
- If a student misses less than 10 minutes of any class period, he/she is considered tardy; and
- If a student misses more than 10 minutes of a class period, he/she is considered absent. Unless excused by administration.

## Late to School Tardies

Students arriving to school after the 8:00 a.m. bell rings must consider the following

- A parent can excuse their child "late to school" no more than five (5) times per semester. After five (5) parent excused "late to school" tardies, "late to school" tardies are considered unexcused (unless approved by a Building Administrator). Note: RHS accepts only three (3) late to school tardies;
- A parent-excused tardy is still recorded as a tardy but does not count toward the assignment of Saturday School;
- A student who arrives late to school on a regular basis, unexcused, receives Saturday School after the fifth unexcused tardy. **Note:** RHS accepts only 3 late to school tardies;
- Parent conferences are held, if necessary, to resolve the problem of excessive tardies; and
- Students who arrive 10 minutes after the tardy bell rings are considered absent from a class period (even if the tardy is excused, in which case it will be an excused absence from a class).

Tardy counts start over at the beginning of each semester for RJHS students. Tardy counts start over at the beginning of each quarter for RHS students.

## Credit Recovery for Attendance

### Excused Absences (Grades 9 – 12)

**Credit Recovery** is designed to allow students regain credit who have absences totaling over the maximum number of **excused absences and/unexcused absences** for the semester and have a passing grade in the class. The maximum number of excused absences is 13 per semester. This includes if a student has 7 excused and 6 unexcused absences or 13 total excused absences. Once the student exceeds 13 absences, without going over the 6 allowable unexcused absences, the student may lose credit for the course if he/she does not enroll in credit recovery. Failure to follow all rules result in dismissal from the program and loss of credit in that course. **Before** reaching 13 absences, the student has the right to petition for extra days. Extra days are granted on a case by case basis determined by the building administrator.

#### Credit Recovery

**14-25 Absences** Students are enrolled in the school's credit recovery computer program. To receive credit for the class, the student must complete all assigned modules with a passing grade.

**Above 25 Absences** Students are in summer school to recover credit. Students may fulfill their credit recovery from offered courses. It is the responsibility of the student to enroll in summer school.

### Unexcused Absences

Any student who exceeds the maximum number of unexcused absences, 6 per semester, may lose credit for that course. At the discretion of the administration, a parent/guardian and student may meet with an administrator to petition for enrollment into Credit Recovery. Acceptance into the credit recovery program is determined on a case by case basis. Each accepted student is enrolled in the school's credit recovery computer program. Students with excessive unexcused absences may enroll in summer school to make-up credits.

\*\*If a student enrolled in an AP course enters the credit recovery program, the district will not pay for the cost of the AP exam, and the student will not receive the grade based on the 5-point scale.

## College Credit/Concurrent Credit

Russellville High School in partnership with Arkansas Tech University offers concurrent courses that are taught on the RHS campus by RHS faculty. Students who meet the requirements of enrollment for ATU can receive both high school credit as well as credit from ATU for the approved courses:

- Before a student can enroll in a concurrent course, he or she must meet all of ATU's admission requirements and must have a qualifying test score submitted to ATU no later than August 1 of each school year;
- The student will be responsible for the costs of taking the qualifying test as stated in the RULES GOVERNING CONCURRENT COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT;
- US History I is a prerequisite for US History II and must be taken in consecutive semesters;
- Composition I is a prerequisite for Composition II and must be taken in consecutive semesters;
- Comp I will count as an elective and Comp II can only replace English IV;
- Intro to Biology (420001) is a prerequisite for the concurrent Advanced course (529900) and must be taken in consecutive semesters during the student's sophomore year. Students may receive a total of 4 hours of Biology credits from AP or Concurrent Courses; and
- Concurrent credit Biology taken at Russellville High School counts as a Biology credit for non-Biology majors that enroll at ATU.

## Homework

Study and preparation outside of individual class periods and, in many cases, outside of the school day, is a desirable means of expanding educational experiences for students. Differences in age, maturity, educational readiness and ability, make it necessary to provide as much individualization as possible when assigning homework.



## Make-up Work

Students who miss school due to an absence shall be allowed to make up the work they missed during their absence under the following rules.

- On the first day returning to class, students are responsible for asking teachers what assignments they need to make up.
- Teachers are responsible for providing the missed assignments.
- Students shall have one class day to make up their work for each class day they are absent. Students must complete the work or make special arrangements with the teacher for extended time. Students receive a "MW" (weighted as a ZERO) at the time of the absence until the work is turned into the teacher.
- Make-up work which is not turned in within the make-up schedule for that assignment shall be assigned a zero.
- Make-up tests are to be rescheduled at the discretion of the teacher.
- Students are responsible for turning in their make-up work without the teacher having to ask for it.
- Students who are absent on the day their make-up work is due must turn in their work the day they return to school.
- Work missed while a student is suspended may be made up for full credit following the same procedures stated above.
- A student's Individual Educational Program (IEP) or 504 Plan takes precedence over this policy.

## Marking Grades

Grades reflect only accomplishment of educational objectives.

Teachers use the following uniform grading system as required by Act 1070:

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

"I" indicates incomplete work. An "I" mark is upheld for up to two weeks unless otherwise determined by administration until the deficiency is corrected. If not corrected, the "I" becomes an "F".

Weighting of grades is as follows

Grades 6-8	60% (Assessments)	40% (Classwork/Homework)
Grades 9-12	70% (Assessments)	30% (Classwork/Homework)

**Note:** 8<sup>th</sup> grade courses that count for High School graduation requirements follow grades 9-12 weighting.

## Marking Grades - Advanced Placement (AP)

1. Students who take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, or honors courses approved for weighted credit by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall be graded according to the uniform marking system.
2. For determining grade point averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be:

- A = 5 points
- B = 4 points
- C = 3 points
- D = 2 points
- F = 0 points

Students who transfer into the district are given weighted credit for the AP, IB courses, honors courses approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, and concurrent college courses taken for weighted credit at his/her previous school(s) according to the preceding scale.

Students taking AP, or IB courses shall receive weighted credit as described in this policy. Credit shall be given for each grading period during the year but shall be retroactively removed from a student's grade for any course in which the student fails to take the applicable AP exam. Students who do not take the AP exam shall receive the same numeric value for the grade he/she received in the course as if it were a non-AP course.

**Legal References:** *Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules and Regulations Governing Uniform Grading Scales for Public Secondary Schools, DESE Rules Governing Advanced Placement Courses in the Four Core Areas in High School, A.C.A. § 6-15-902(c)(1), (c) (3).*

### **Point System for Honor Rolls/Class Ranking**

Each term students, who achieve certain academic standards, can receive scholastic recognition: the All A's Honor Roll (4.0 grade point average (GPA), the Principal's Scholar List (3.66 to 3.99 GPS), and the Scholastic Honor Roll (3.25 to 3.65). Other individual building recognition systems may be available. The following point system is used in computing the grade point and determining academic achievement:

A	4.00
B	3.00
C	2.00
D	1.00
F	0.00

For students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, the following point system is used for computing GPA:

A	5.00
B	4.00
C	3.00
D	2.00
F	0.00

GPA's are computed on the courses that issue a letter grade only.

**Note:** A grade of "U" in any non-graded class is considered a failing grade and disqualifies a student for any of the above lists.

### **Student Promotion and Retention**

A disservice is done to students through social promotion and is prohibited by state law. The district shall, at a minimum, evaluate each student annually in an effort to help each student who is not performing at grade level. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice of a student's possible retention or required retaking of a course shall be included with the student's grades sent home to each parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student's academic success.

At least once each semester, the parents and teacher(s) of a student in kindergarten through eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade shall be notified in writing of the student's independent grade-level-equivalency in reading.

Any grades, course credits, and/or promotions received by a student while enrolled in the Division of Youth Services system of education shall be considered transferable in the same manner as those grades, course credits, and promotions from other accredited Arkansas public educational entities.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.55](#) – Adopted 5/19/2020

### **Student Medications**

Prior to the administration of any medication to any student under the age of eighteen (18), written parental consent is required. The consent form shall include authorization to administer the medication and relieve the Board and its employees of civil liability for damages or injuries resulting from the administration of medication to students in accordance with this policy. All signed medication consent forms are to be maintained by the school nurse. Parent permission form shall include an assurance that the requested medication has been given at least once with no adverse reaction prior to school administration of medication.

Unless authorized to self-administer designated rescue medications, students are not allowed to carry any medications, including over-the-counter medications or any perceived health remedy not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration,

while at school. The parent or legal guardian shall bring the student's medication to the school nurse. When medications are brought to the school nurse, the nurse or trained designee shall document, in the presence of the parent, the quantity of the medication(s). Each person present shall sign a form verifying the quantity of the medication(s).

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.35R](#) – Adopted 6/18/2019

## Section 3: Student Behavior and Discipline

The school is a community and the rules and regulations of a school are the laws of that community. All those enjoying the rights in the school community must also accept the responsibility of citizenship by respecting the laws of the community.

An important part of growing up is to learn to get along with others. In order for the school to function properly, all students must make an effort not to do things that create problems for others. Every student has the right to attend school in a safe and violence-free environment. Bullying, fighting, or violence of any nature is subject to disciplinary action. This section identifies the parameters and expectations of proper school citizenship.

For additional information, School Board Policy [4.17](#) – Adopted 6/18/2019

### **Student Behaviors**

The District's Student Code of conduct applies to students while traveling to and from school or to and from a school activity to the same extent as if the student were on school grounds. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken against commuting students who violate the District's Student Code of Conduct. The preceding paragraph also applies to student conduct on school buses. Students shall be instructed in safe riding practices. The driver of a school bus shall not operate the school bus until every passenger is seated. In addition to other disciplinary measures provided for violation of the District's Student Code of Conduct, the student's bus transportation privileges may be suspended or terminated for violations of the Student Code of Conduct related to bus behavior. Students are eligible to receive district bus transportation if they meet the District's requirements for riding a bus. The transportation to and from school of students who have lost their bus transportation privileges is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian.

### **Abuse of Public School Employee**

School districts are required to report to the Department of Education any prosecutions of individuals who insult or abuse teachers. Abuse of a public school employee constitutes the following

- It is unlawful, during regular school hours, and in a place where a public school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties, for any a person to address a public school employee using language which, in its common acceptance, is calculated to
  - cause a breach of the peace;
  - materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school; or
  - arouse the person to whom it is addressed to anger, to the extent likely to cause imminent retaliation.
- A person who violates this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction be liable for a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500).

*Legal Reference: Arkansas Code Ann. 6-17-106*

### **Behavior/Items Not Permitted**

All Russellville School District students shall comply with rules and regulations found in this handbook. Students are to obey reasonable instructions, submit to the teacher, school, and Board of Education authorities on school property or at school-sponsored off-campus activities. The following behaviors/items are not permitted and results in disciplinary action

- Food is not allowed in hallways or classrooms. No outside disposable drinks are allowed in hallways or classrooms. All drinks must have a closed/secured lid. Drinks purchased at school must be consumed in designated areas;
- Students are not allowed to sell or trade personal items at school;
- Prohibited items include
  - games (including electronic/video);
  - collector's cards, playing cards;
  - skateboards, roller blades;
  - dice;
  - yo-yos;
  - knives, water guns, cigarette lighters;
  - fireworks; and
- Fidget Spinners

- Book bags or backpacks are not permitted in RIS, RMS, and RJHS classrooms. RHS allows backpacks in the classroom;
- Throwing of rocks or other objects on campus is prohibited;
- No laser lights are allowed. (Act 1408 of 1999 prohibits possession of laser pointers by students);
- RSD adheres to a "hands off" policy. Students are to keep their hands to themselves. Playing around may cause serious fights and injury. The "hands off" policy includes the use of feet, throwing of objects or any type of physical contact. No students may hug, hold hands, or kiss while at school. Students not following this policy may be assigned detention or Saturday School;
- Cameras and use of camera phones are not allowed at school unless approved through administration;
- Students are not permitted to film, post, or share any physical or verbal altercations; and
- Students are not permitted to fly or display flags in or from their vehicles. Students not following this rule may have their driving privileges revoked.

**Note:** Use of approved electronic devices is allowed only for educational purposes in the classroom. Students are responsible for their personal electronic devices. Schools are not liable for theft or destruction of student property.

## Bullying

### Definitions

"Attribute" means an actual or perceived personal characteristic including without limitation race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, academic status, disability, gender, gender identity, physical appearance, health condition, or sexual orientation;

"Bullying" means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated and that causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable:

- Physical harm to a public school employee or student or damage to the public school employee's or student's property;
- Substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education;
- A hostile educational environment for one (1) or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act; or
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment;

Examples of "Bullying" include, but are not limited to, a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

1. Cyberbullying,
2. Sarcastic comments "compliments" about another student's personal appearance or actual or perceived attributes,
3. Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate,
4. Mocking, taunting or belittling,
5. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as "fronting" or "chesting" a person,
6. Demeaning humor relating to a student's actual or perceived attributes,
7. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans,
8. Blocking access to school property or facilities,
9. Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property,
10. Stealing or hiding books or belongings,
11. Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others,
12. Sexual harassment, as governed by policy 4.27, is also a form of bullying, and/or
13. Teasing or name-calling related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether the student self-identifies as homosexual or transgender (Examples: "Slut", "You are so gay.", "Fag", "Queer").

"Cyberbullying" means any form of communication by electronic act that is sent with the purpose to:

- Harass, intimidate, humiliate, ridicule, defame, or threaten a student, school employee, or person with whom the other student or school employee is associated; or
- Incite violence towards a student, school employee, or person with whom the other student or school employee is associated.

Cyberbullying of School Employees includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Building a fake profile or website of the employee;

- b. Posting or encouraging others to post on the Internet private, personal, or sexual information pertaining to a school employee;
- c. Posting an original or edited image of the school employee on the Internet;
- d. Accessing, altering, or erasing any computer network, computer data program, or computer software, including breaking into a password-protected account or stealing or otherwise accessing passwords of a school employee;
- e. Making repeated, continuing, or sustained electronic communications, including electronic mail or transmission, to a school employee;
- f. Making, or causing to be made, and disseminating an unauthorized copy of data pertaining to a school employee in any form, including without limitation the printed or electronic form of computer data, computer programs, or computer software residing in, communicated by, or produced by a computer or computer network;
- g. Signing up a school employee for a pornographic Internet site; or
- h. Without authorization of the school employee, signing up a school employee for electronic mailing lists or to receive junk electronic messages and instant messages.

Cyberbullying is prohibited whether or not the cyberbullying originated on school property or with school equipment, if the cyberbullying results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment or is directed specifically at students or school personnel and maliciously intended for the purpose of disrupting school and has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

“Harassment” means a pattern of unwelcome verbal or physical conduct relating to another person's constitutionally or statutorily protected status that causes, or reasonably should be expected to cause, substantial interference with the other's performance in the school environment; and

“Substantial disruption” means without limitation that any one or more of the following occur as a result of the bullying:

- Necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities;
- Inability of students or educational staff to focus on learning or function as an educational unit because of a hostile environment;
- Severe or repetitive disciplinary measures are needed in the classroom or during educational activities; or
- Exhibition of other behaviors by students or educational staff that substantially interfere with the learning environment.

Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, robs a person of his/her dignity, detracts from the safe environment necessary to promote student learning, and will not be tolerated by the Board of Directors. Students who bully another person shall be held accountable for their actions whether they occur on school equipment or property; off school property at a school sponsored or approved function, activity, or event; going to or from school or a school activity in a school vehicle or school bus; or at designated school bus stops.

Students are encouraged to report behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to their teacher or the building principal. The report may be made anonymously. Teachers and other school employees who have witnessed, or are reliably informed that, a student has been a victim of behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident(s) to the building principal, or designee, as soon as possible. Parents or legal guardians may submit written reports of incidents they feel constitute bullying, or if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to the building principal, or designee.

The person or persons reporting behavior they consider to be bullying shall not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

A building principal, or designee, who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall:

1. As soon as reasonably practicable, but by no later than the end of the school day following the receipt of the credible report of bullying:
  - a. Report to a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student that their student is the victim in a credible report of bullying; and
  - b. Prepare a written report of the alleged incident of bullying;
2. Promptly investigate the credible report or complaint of bullying, which shall be completed by no later than the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) school day following the completion of the written report.
3. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student who was the alleged victim in a credible report of bullying whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true and the

availability of counseling and other intervention services.

4. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person acting in loco parentis of the student who is alleged to have been the perpetrator of the incident of bullying:
  - a. That a credible report or complaint of bullying against their student exists;
  - b. Whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true;
  - c. Whether action was taken against their student upon the conclusion of the investigation of the alleged incident of bullying; and
  - d. Information regarding the reporting of another alleged incident of bullying, including potential consequences of continued incidents of bullying;
5. Make a written record of the investigation, which shall include:
  - a. A detailed description of the alleged incident of bullying, including without limitation a detailed summary of the statements from all material witnesses to the alleged incident of bullying;
  - b. Any action taken as a result of the investigation; and
6. Discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services with students involved in the incident of bullying.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred. In addition to any disciplinary actions, the District shall take appropriate steps to remedy the effects resulting from bullying.

Notice of what constitutes bullying, the District's prohibition against bullying, and the consequences for students who bully shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, cafeteria, restroom, gymnasium, auditorium, and school bus. Parents, legal guardians, person having lawful control of a student, persons standing in loco parentis, students, school volunteers, and employees shall be given copies of the notice annually.

The superintendent shall make a report annually to the Board of Directors on student discipline data, which shall include, without limitation, the number of incidents of bullying reported and the actions taken regarding the reported incidents of bullying.

Copies of this policy shall be available upon request.

**Technically, students are under the jurisdiction of the school from the time they leave home in the morning until they return home in the afternoon.**

## **Hazing**

A student in the Russellville School District shall not engage in hazing, or encourage, aid, or assist in any other student in hazing. No person shall knowingly permit, encourage, aid or assist any person in committing the offense of hazing, or willfully acquiesce in the commission of such offense, or fail to report promptly his or her knowledge or any reasonable information within his or her knowledge of the presence and practice of hazing to an appropriate administrator of the Russellville School District. Any act of omission or commission shall be deemed hazing as determined under the provisions of state law.

The offense of hazing is a Class B misdemeanor. Upon conviction of any student of the offense of hazing, he or she, in addition to any punishment imposed by the court, shall be expelled from the Russellville School District.

## **Prohibited Conduct**

Students and staff require a safe and orderly learning environment that is conducive to high student achievement. Certain student behaviors are unacceptable in such an environment and are hereby prohibited by the board. Prohibited behaviors include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- disrespect for school employees and failing to comply with their reasonable directions or otherwise demonstrating insubordination;
- disruptive behavior that interferes with orderly school operations;
- willfully and intentionally assaulting or threatening to assault or physically abusing any student or school employee;

- possession of any weapon that can reasonably be considered capable of causing bodily harm to another individual;
- possession or use of tobacco in any form including **electronic cigarettes (vaping devices)** and paraphernalia on any property owned or leased by any public school including school buses.
- willfully or intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing while on school property or at school events;
- possession of any paging device, beeper, or similar electronic communication devices on the school campus during normal school hours unless specifically exempted by the administration for health or other compelling reasons;
- possession, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, any illegal drug, unauthorized inhalants, or the inappropriate use or sharing of prescription or over the counter drugs, or other intoxicants, or anything represented to be a drug;
- sharing, diverting, transferring, applying to others (such as needles or lancets), or in any way misusing medication or any medical supplies in their possession;
- inappropriate public displays of affection;
- cheating, copying, or claiming another person's work to be his/her own;
- gambling;
- inappropriate student dress;
- use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language or gestures;
- truancy;
- excessive tardiness;
- engaging in behavior designed to taunt, degrade, or ridicule another person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or disability;
- possess, view, distribute or electronically transmit sexually explicit or vulgar images or representations, whether electronically, on a data storage device, or in hard copy form;
- hazing, or aiding in the hazing of another student;
- gangs or gang-related activities, including belonging to secret societies of any kind, are forbidden on school property. Gang insignias, clothing, "throwing signs" or other gestures associated with gangs are prohibited;
- sexual harassment;
- bullying/Hazing; and
- operating a vehicle on school grounds while using a wireless communication device; and
- theft of another individual's property.

The Board directs each school in the district to develop implementation regulations for prohibited student conduct consistent with applicable board policy, state and federal laws, and judicial decisions.

In addition to this policy, students are not permitted to film, post, or share any physical or verbal altercations.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment, as with other forms of discrimination, is prohibited according to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects the adolescent at work, and Title IX of 1972, which protects students from sex discrimination at school. The Supreme Court has mandated that schools provide a safe environment for students. The Russellville School District is committed to the eradication of sexual harassment in the school. Such harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion.

Sexual harassment consists of verbal or physical sexual conduct that disrupts the right to an equal education by interfering with the student's psychological, social, and physical well-being. If students feel they have been sexually harassed, the following steps should be taken without fear of retaliation

- inform a teacher, counselor, or administrator; and
- write a detailed account of the incident including the date, time, place and witness(es) if any.

This information will then be forwarded to the appropriate administrator for review, investigation and appropriate action. In the event the harassment is caused by an employee. The offended student should report the incident immediately to the employee's supervisor.

### **Student Assault Or Battery**

A student shall not threaten, physically abuse, or attempt to physically abuse, or behave in such a way as to be perceived to threaten bodily harm to any other person (student, school employee, or school visitor). Any gestures, vulgar, abusive or insulting language, taunting, threatening, harassing, or intimidating remarks by a student toward another person that threatens their well-being is strictly forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, fighting, racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual slurs.



Furthermore, it is unlawful, during regular school hours, and in a place where a public school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties, for any person to address a public school employee using language which, in its common understanding, is calculated to: a) cause a breach of the peace; b) materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school; c) arouse the person to whom it is addressed to anger, to the extent likely to cause imminent retaliation. Students guilty of such an offense may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures.

### **Student Conduct Off-Campus**

RSD students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when attending school sponsored off-campus events. Appropriate disciplinary action is taken to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants of off-campus events.

## **Student Disciplinary Actions**

### **Due Process**

The constitution rights of individuals assure the protection of due process of law; therefore, this system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures is approved with regard to the administration of discipline. The hallmark of the exercise of disciplinary authority shall be objectivity. Efforts shall be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems through utilization of school district resources or conferences with the student and his/her parent/guardian. Teachers and other school personnel have the authority to give reasonable instructions to any student while he/she is under school jurisdiction and the responsibility for reporting the violation of a school regulation by student.

A teacher has the authority and responsibility for giving reasonable and necessary instructions to any student who is under school jurisdiction and for reporting violations of school regulations not resolved by the teacher. A teacher has the authority to suspend a student from class temporarily by sending the student to the principal's office with a written statement of reasons for the student's suspension from class. The principal shall determine whether to reinstate the student to class or take other disciplinary action.

The principal, or assistant in charge, is authorized to temporarily suspend a student from school for a period which ordinarily will not exceed five (5) days and to require a student-parent-principal conference as a condition for reinstatement. The principal may suspend a student for up to five (5) more additional days when the infraction is repeated or of a more serious nature.

When a student has been notified that he/she is suspended from school, he/she shall leave the building and grounds immediately and shall remain off any school district premises for the duration of the suspension, at which time a parent or guardian shall accompany the student for a student-parent-principal conference. While suspended or placed in the Student Discipline Center (SDC), a student may not attend or participate in any school function or activity.

When the principal decides to recommend that a student be expelled, he/she shall make such a recommendation to the superintendent along with a written statement of the charge or charges against the student. The superintendent shall then determine the course of action to be taken at that time.

Further due process information pertaining to suspension is found under School Board Policy 4.30 Suspension.

### **Types of Disciplinary Actions**

In order to assure a climate conducive to learning, rules are a necessary part of school. Every attempt is made to maintain rules in a clear and consistent manner. Each discipline incident is evaluated on the basis of its circumstances and the scope of its impact. Any disciplinary infraction is punishable from the minimum of a reprimand to a maximum of expulsion. The following are descriptions of the discipline consequences that may be assigned to a student.

### **Corporal Punishment**

The Russellville School Board authorizes the use of corporal punishment to be administered in accordance with this policy by the superintendent or his/her designated staff members who are required to have a state-issued license as a condition of their employment. Parental/Guardian permission must be secured prior to punishment.

## **Detention**

### **Lunch Detention**

Lunch detention is held each day during the student's lunch time in a designated area. Lunch detention may be assigned by a teacher or principal for minor offenses including, but not limited to, tardies, classroom misconduct, misbehavior, etc. Failure to attend lunch detention will result in additional days of lunch detention or Saturday School.

### **Morning Detention**

Morning Detention served from 7:15-7:45 on Tuesdays and Thursdays at a designated location for Russellville High School students.

### **Saturday School**

Saturday School is held at each building for their students on selected Saturdays from 8:00 am until 11:30 am. Parents are notified and expected to provide transportation to and from Saturday School. Saturday School is assigned by administrators for a variety of discipline infractions. Additionally, students may be assigned community as an alternative during Saturday School. Failure to attend may result in two (2) days of Student Detention Center (SDC).

### **Student Detention Center (SDC)**

SDC is located on the Gardner Building Campus. Parents are notified, and students are expected to complete the assigned number of days before returning to their home campus. Saturday School is assigned by administrators for a variety of discipline infractions.

## **Expulsion**

The Board of Education may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District's written discipline policies. The Superintendent may make a recommendation of expulsion to the Board of Education for student conduct

- deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate,
- where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly environment, or
- would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardians (mailed to the address reflected on the district's records) that he/she will recommend to the Board of Education that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the Board of Education will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of the Board and student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The President of the Board, Board attorney, or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. Both the district administration and School Board also may be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the Board unless the parent, or student if age eighteen (18) or older, requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the Board shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the superintendent, or designee, or representative will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses that gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be permitted; however, any member of the board, the superintendent, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

Except as permitted by policy 4.22, the superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm prohibited on school campus by law. The superintendent shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis. Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a

copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a weapon on school property.<sup>1</sup> The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The superintendent and the Board of Education shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.

**Note:** <sup>1</sup> The current law governing parental responsibility is A.C.A. § 5-27-210

## Suspension

Students not present at school cannot benefit from the educational opportunities the school environment affords. Administrators, therefore, shall strive to find ways to keep students in school as participants in the educational process. There are instances, however, when the needs of the other students or the interests of the orderly learning environment require the removal of a student from school. The Board authorizes school principals or their designees to suspend students for disciplinary reasons for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) school days,<sup>1</sup> including the day upon which the suspension is imposed. The suspension may be in school or out of school. Students are responsible for their conduct that occurs: at any time on the school grounds; off school grounds at a school-sponsored function, activity, or event; going to and from school or a school activity. A student may be suspended for behavior including, but not limited to that which

- is in violation of school policies, rules, or regulations;
- substantially interferes with the safe and orderly educational environment;
- school administrators believe will result in the substantial interference with the safe and orderly educational environment; and/or
- is insubordinate, incorrigible, violent, or involves moral turpitude.

Out-of-school suspension (OSS) shall not be used to discipline a student in kindergarten through fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) grade unless the student's behavior

- poses a physical risk to himself or herself or to others,
- causes a serious disruption that cannot be addressed through other means, or
- is the act of bringing a firearm on school campus.

OSS shall not be used to discipline a student for skipping class, excessive absences, or other forms of truancy.

The school principal or designee shall proceed as follows in deciding whether or not to suspend a student

- The student shall be given written notice or advised orally of the charges against him/her;
- If the student denies the charges, he/she shall be given an explanation of the evidence against him/her and be allowed to present his/her version of the facts; and
- If the principal finds the student guilty of the misconduct, he/she may be suspended.

Out-of-school suspension shall not be used to discipline a student for skipping class, excessive absences, or other forms of truancy.

When possible, notice of the suspension, its duration, and any stipulations for the student's readmittance to class will be given to the parent(s), legal guardian(s), or to the student if age 18 or older prior to the suspension. Such notice shall be handed to the parent(s), legal guardian(s), or to the student if age 18 or older or mailed to the last address reflected in the records of the school district.

Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as practicable.

It is the parents' or legal guardians' responsibility to provide current contact information to the district which the school shall use to immediately notify the parent or legal guardian upon the suspension of a student. The notification shall be by one of the following means, listed in order of priority

1. a primary call number (the contact may be by voice, voicemail, or text message);
2. an email address; and/or

3. a regular first-class letter to the last known mailing address.

The district shall keep a log of contacts attempted and made to the parent or legal guardian.

During the period of their suspension, students serving OSS are not permitted on campus except to attend a student/parent/administrator conference.

During the period of their suspension, students serving in-school suspension shall not attend any school-sponsored activities during the imposed suspension nor shall the student participate in any school-sponsored activities.

Suspensions initiated by the principal or his/her designee may be appealed to the superintendent, but not to the Board.

Suspensions initiated by the superintendent may be appealed to the Board.

Appeals may occur up to fourteen (14) days from the suspension date.

**Notes:** <sup>1</sup> The ten school days are on a traditional school calendar

<sup>2</sup> Act 159 of 2007 requires attempts at contacting parents be made first by phone. If such contact fails, then contact may be by email, and if that is unsuccessful, contact may be by regular first-class mail.

## Student Dress

While encouraging individual expression and recognizing the rights of all persons, the Russellville School District is firm in its belief that students are entitled to the pursuit of studies without disruption and that proper conduct, dress and respect for administrative authority and the rights of others must be maintained. The district insists on high standards of cleanliness, neatness, and decency in the conduct and dress of students.

Principals shall have the authority to take appropriate disciplinary action when the dress of any student, or students, in the opinion of such principal, is

- disruptive, undermining, rude, or contemptuous to the extent that it interferes with proper learning processes,
- detracts from proper decorum of the school, or
- constitutes a challenge to the authority of the school administration.

Students are required to change their clothing if it is found to be inappropriate. Violations must be corrected before students return to class. Secondary students are expected to follow these guidelines for appropriate dress at school.

- Clothing and body should be clean and in keeping with health, safety, and sanitary practices;
- All clothing should be worn as designed;
- Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses should be appropriate and in conformity with good taste and good citizenship. Skirts and shorts may be no shorter than a mid-thigh all around the leg while standing and still be appropriate while sitting. Shorts must be neatly hemmed with no raveled edges;
- Leggings, jeggings, and “yoga” pants, regardless if they have pockets and/or zippers, are not allowed unless covered by shorts, skirts, or tunics that are long enough to cover one’s private areas;
- All holes in pants that expose skin must meet the “mid-thigh” rule above the front and back of the knee requirements. Holes with sewn-in patches are allowed. Holes can be covered that allows students to return to class with the understanding that the student is not allowed to wear that item of clothing again;
- Blouses and tops may not show skin at the midriff or cleavage. Shirts must touch the pants or skirt when a student is seated. No bare midriff, open-sided/open backed tops, halter tops, or muscle shirts are allowed;
- Females are allowed to wear sleeveless shirts that have 2” straps from front to back. Racer-back shirts are not allowed unless a shirt meeting the 2” strap policy is worn underneath;
- Any “see through” shirts that show underwear are not acceptable;
- Students (male or female) are not permitted to wear any covering on their heads (hoodies, hats, caps, scarves, etc.) or hands during school hours. Caps and hats must be placed in lockers upon entering the school building, otherwise, they will be confiscated. **No bandanas are allowed to be brought to school.** Hoods attached to jackets may not be worn on campus unless weather conditions warrant it. Hoods may not be worn at any time inside the building;

- Sunglasses are not to be worn in any building;
- Items of clothing with sexual messages/connotations, vulgar, obscene or offensive messages or which advertise alcohol, drugs, or tobacco are not allowed on campus. T-shirts that represent music bands or solo artists whose lyrics contain the warning for “Parental Advisory Lyrics” are also not allowed. These shirts represent a language that is not acceptable in RSD schools;
- Extreme hairstyles that interfere with the ability for students to see effectively in the classroom are not acceptable;
- Face paint, stickers, or glitter are not allowed;
- Writing on clothing or body with markers or pens is not permitted;
- Students are not to wear gang attire or wear any clothing in a manner that represents or promotes gang activity; and
- Examples of dress that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to:
  - shoes with steel taps, plates or spurs;
  - chains of any kind (belts, billfolds with chains, etc.);
  - sagging is not allowed. Pants must be worn up over the hips with a belt if necessary (Act 835 of 2011);
  - the stomach, back, and underwear of all students (male and female) must be completely covered while sitting, standing, or bending;
  - apparel that exposes underarms of male students;
  - any type of jewelry (rings, necklaces, etc.) with sharp edges or sharp projections is not allowed; and
  - sleepwear or house shoes.

**Note:** If a student develops a pattern of wearing inappropriate clothing the administration and counselors may implement an **individual dress code**.

## Electronic Devices

Students may bring their cell phone to school; however, RIS, RMS, and RJHS students must leave the device turned off in his/her locker. RHS students may take their cell phone to class; however, the device must be placed in silent mode and not visible in the classroom. **Students are not allowed to talk on their cell phone during the school day.** If a need arises when a student needs to make a phone call, the student must come to the office and ask for permission. RIS, RMS, and RJHS students are not allowed to use earbuds/ headphones during school hours. RHS students may only use earbuds if it does not interfere with classroom instruction.

### **Possession and Use of Cell Phone and Other Electronic Devices**

Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that respects the rights of others. Possession and use of any electronic device, whether district or student owned, that interferes with a positive, orderly classroom environment does not respect the rights of others and is expressly forbidden.

To protect the security of statewide assessments no electronic, device as defined in this policy shall be accessible by a student at any time during administration unless specifically permitted by a student's individualized education program (IEP) or individual health plan. This means that when a student is taking an AESAA assessment, the student shall not have his/her electronic device in his/her possession. Any student violating this provision shall be subject to this policy's disciplinary provisions.

As used in this policy, “electronic devices” means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data.

Misuse of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:

1. Using electronic devices during class time in any manner other than specifically permitted by the classroom instructor;
2. Permitting any audible sound to come from the device when not being used for reason #1 above;
3. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, or wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores;
4. Using the device to record audio or video or to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms;
5. Creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person.

Use of an electronic device is permitted to the extent it is approved in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.

Before and after normal school hours, possession of electronic devices is permitted on the school campus. The use of such devices at school sponsored functions outside the regular school day is permitted to the extent and within the limitations allowed by the event or activity the student is attending.

The student and/or the student's parents or guardians expressly assume any risk associated with students owning or possessing electronic devices. Students misusing electronic devices shall have them confiscated. Confiscated devices may be picked up at the school's administration office by the student's parents or guardians. Repeat offenders are subject to discipline by the building's policy. Students have no right of privacy as to the content contained on any electronic devices that have been confiscated. A search of a confiscated device shall meet the reasonable individualized suspicion requirements of Policy 4.32—SEARCH, SEIZURE, AND INTERROGATIONS.

Students who use a school issued cell phones and/or computers for non-school purposes, except as permitted by the district's Internet/computer use policy, shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students are forbidden from using school issued cell phones while driving any vehicle at any time. Violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

No student shall use any wireless communication device for the purposes of browsing the internet; composing or reading emails and text messages; or making or answering phone calls while driving a motor vehicle that is in motion and on school property. Violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

### **Consequences of Cell Phone Violation**

RHS students cell phones are to be on silent during the school day. RJHS students are not allowed to carry cell phones. RJHS students must keep them in their lockers at all times. Students violating the school's cell phone policy may be subject to the following consequences; administration reserves the right for harsher punishment depending on the severity of the situation.

1. First offense: Warning to include, but not limited to, \*phone locked-up and stored in office, lunch detention or Saturday School, depending on severity of the situation;
2. Second offense: \*Phone locked-up, stored in office, and Saturday School or SDC (student discipline center) depending on severity of the situation; and
3. Third offense: \*Phone locked-up, stored in office, and SDC or out of school suspension, depending on the severity of the situation.

\*Students must turn phone off and place the device in a locked pouch furnished by the office. Students report to the office, at the end of the day, to have the pouch unlocked.

Cell phone consequences start over at the beginning of each semester.

The school is not be responsible for loss, damage, or theft of any electronic device, including cell phones, brought to school and/or onto district property.

I have read and understand the policies pertaining to the student handbook. I also understand that failing to comply with these policies as outlined in the student handbook shall result in disciplinary action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date