

WELCOME TO RIVERMONT SCHOOLS HOME OF THE BULLDOGS



Rivermont School -Alleghany Highlands

100 Falling Spring Circle

Hot Springs, VA 24445

2026-2027

Parent/Student Handbook

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Rivermont School - Alleghany

School 100 Falling Spring Circle, Hot Springs, VA 24445

Office: 540-965-6388

Fax: 540-691-2149

Student Hours: 8:45am – 3:00pm

School Hours: 8:00am – 4:00pm

****The best time to contact classroom staff is between 8:00 - 8:30 AM and 3:15 – 4:00 PM.**

Andrew Hipes, Principal

andrew.hipes@newstoryschools.com

Stacey Bryant, Office manager

Debbie Burns, Therapist

Sommer Quantz, BCBA

Michael Williams, PBS-Leader



Rivermont School Alleghany

Building Description

Rivermont School – Alleghany Highlands was located on Main Street in the City of Covington, Virginia from 2007 until 2021. We opened our facility at the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year and provide services to students from the surrounding local education agencies including Alleghany County, Covington City, and Bath County.

In October 2021, we moved to the former Falling Springs Elementary School. The school is in the beautiful Falling Springs community; 100 Falling Spring Circle, Hot Springs, VA 24445.

We are in a modern school with a lot of wonderful updates. Our school provides many amazing opportunities for our students. Our school consists of 5 classrooms, a gymnasium, kitchen, lifeskills room, sensory room, observation room, conference room, seven offices, speech therapy/occupational therapy office, a medication storage room, student and staff restrooms and multi-purpose room to provide one-on-one academic instruction and testing. The students have two outside playgrounds, an outdoor walking track, close proximity to the Jackson River Scenic Trail and fresh country air!

Rivermont Alleghany



2026-27 Rivermont Alleghany

2026-2027 School Calendar

Rivermont School-Alleghany
100 Falling Spring Circle, Hot Springs VA 24445
Phone: 540-965-6388 / Fax: 540-691-2149



August 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

14 Instructional Days

September 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

20 Instructional Days

October 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

20 Instructional Days

November 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

17 Instructional Days

December 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

14 Instructional Days

January 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

17 Instructional Days

Make Up Days (if needed)

First Day of School

Last Day of School

End of reporting period

School Closed/Holiday

Staff Workday

Extended School Year (8:30-1:30)

Regular School Day

Early Release Day (12:30)

August 03 -11	Staff Workdays
August 12	First Day of School for Students
September 02	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
September 07	School Closed/Holiday
September 16	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
September 28	Parent/Teacher Conferences, NO STUDENTS
October 07	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
October 12	School Closed/Holiday
October 16	Professional Development, NO STUDENTS
October 21	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
November 04	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
November 11	School Closed/Holiday
November 18	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
November 25-27	School Closed/Holiday
December 02	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
December 16	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
December 21-31	School Closed/Holiday
January 01	School Closed/Holiday
January 04	Students Return
January 06	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
January 11, 12	Professional Development/Staff Workday
January 18	School Closed/Holiday
January 20	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
February 03	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
February 15	Professional Development
February 17	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
March 03	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
March 17	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
March 25-30	School Closed/Holiday
April 07	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
April 21	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
May 05	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
May 19	Early Dismissal (Students leave at 12:30)
May 26	Last Day of School, End of Semester 2, 180 days
May 27, 28	Staff Workdays
May 31	School Closed/Holiday
June 01-08	Staff Workdays
June 09-15	School Closed/Holiday
June 16	First Day of Extended School Year (ESY)
July 05	School Closed/Holiday
July 21	Last Day of Extended School Year (ESY)
July 22-30	School Closed/Holiday

**All inclement weather days are made up at the discretion of the school principal.

February 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

19 Instructional Days

March 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

19 Instructional Days

April 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

22 Instructional Days

May 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

18 Instructional Days

June 2027						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

11 ESY Days

July 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

14 ESY Days

Description/History of Rivermont School Alleghany

Rivermont School Alleghany We are located in the Falling Springs community of Alleghany County, please note our mailing address is Hot Springs. We are at the bottom of Falls Road, less than 4 miles from the famous Falling Springs Falls.

Falling Spring Falls is a breathtaking 80' waterfall that is one of the most visited and photographed spots in the Alleghany Highlands. The scenic waterfall is located on Route 220 in Alleghany County, just five miles north of Covington, Virginia. The property has had extensive renovations to the overlook and grounds, including a picnic area, so that visitors can more safely stop and enjoy the view.

Thomas Jefferson described the Falling Spring Falls as a "remarkable cascade...falling over a rock about 200 feet to the valley below." One of the largest falls in Virginia, it cascades from an overhanging ledge, and is easily visible from the roadway.

We are also near the Jackson River Scenic Trail. The JRST is built along an old railroad bed that runs mostly parallel to the Jackson River. The southern terminus is located just outside of downtown Covington, Virginia. Easy access to the trail makes it a popular place for residents and visitors to enjoy walking, jogging and biking amid the beautiful mountain scenery that the Alleghany Highlands is famous for. In addition to scenic views of fields, farmland and mountains, the *Jackson River Scenic Trail* offers up-close views of the river. The river is for more than just sight seeing, it's also a treasured recreational asset just like the trail for fly-fishing, kayaking, canoeing and tubing.

Historic Humpback Bridge is on Route 60 west of Covington roughly 20 minutes drive from Rivermont Alleghany.

Up in the Alleghany Highlands, nestled into a canyon once called Kincaid Gorge, lies Gathright Dam. This massive earthen structure backs up the Jackson River for over 12 miles, forming Lake Moomaw. A U. S. Army Corps of Engineers project, Lake Moomaw was constructed for downstream flow augmentation (water quality), flood control, and recreation. The idea for a lake above the City of Covington was hatched just after World War II, but the project was not completed until the early 1980's. The backwater of the Jackson River flooded acres of bottomland once owned by Thomas Gathright. The project was pushed forward by Covington businessman Benjamin Moomaw, after which the lake was named. Lake Moomaw is the second largest impoundment in western Virginia. It covers 2,530 surface acres and has a maximum depth of 152 feet. The impoundment is "drawn down" between 10-15 feet annually, beginning slowly in June and reaching its lowest level usually by September. There are 43 miles of undeveloped, wooded shoreline.

Lake Moomaw is also known for its trout fishery. A layer of cold, oxygenated water lies 15 feet below the surface. It is in this zone that stocked rainbow, brown, and brook trout thrive.

If you are an outdoor enthusiast, the Alleghany Highlands is just the place for you.

Introduction to Rivermont Schools

Rivermont School, established by Virginia Baptist Hospital's Mental Health Services division in the Fall of 1986, is a structured therapeutic private day school program designed to meet the needs of children and adolescents who have emotional or behavioral needs which impact their ability to succeed in school. Since that time, several campuses have been established throughout the state of Virginia. In 2008, Rivermont School expanded its services to include Autism at some of the campuses. In 2020, we were acquired by New Story Schools, a leading educational organization with over 20+ years of service across five northeastern states. The school operates Monday - Friday and adheres to a 180-day school year with the possibility of extended school year services. The main administrative offices are in Lynchburg, Virginia. Working within the framework of School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions Supports and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), our goal is to prepare students to be successful citizens in the 21st century. Each school has several classrooms, ample outdoor recreation space, conference room(s), resource/library room, computer and mobile technology, and offices. School facilities and equipment are maintained in accordance with Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. In addition, there is up to date multi-media technology available for classroom use to supplement curriculum materials. Students are typically referred to the day school by their local education agency (LEA) in accordance with Virginia's Children Services Act (CSA) guidelines. Rivermont School does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment of, or employment in its programs, services, or activities based on race, color, national origin, sex or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local law. All facilities are ADA compliant.

Philosophy

Rivermont School believes that students who are not able to participate in public school programs due to individual learning problems, psychiatric problems, emotionality, neurodivergence, conduct and other maladaptive behaviors should be provided with educational opportunities which allow them to succeed academically and emotionally. The educational program is designed to meet individual needs and administered in conjunction with therapeutic goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are based on a holistic approach within which attention is given to individualized instruction, behavior management, interpersonal skills, family involvement, and community and social awareness. Emphasis is placed on preparing the student for transition into a less restrictive educational environment.

Rivermont believes:

- All students have the ability and right to learn.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
- Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches along with the opportunity to apply their learning in meaningful contexts.
- Students learn best when they have appropriate opportunities for success and are challenged with realistic expectations.
- A student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships, trust, and mutual respect among and between students and staff.
- A positive, emotionally safe and unconditionally accepting environment promotes student success.
- Student success is enhanced when school, parent, and community collaborate as a team.
- The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.

Purpose Statement

Rivermont provides students, who are not able to participate in public school programs due to individual special needs, the educational and social emotional opportunities which allow them to succeed, with emphasis on preparing the student for transition into a less restrictive educational or work environment.

Goals

1. To provide a safe and therapeutic educational environment where each student may reach his or her full potential.
2. To identify and address the individual needs of each student, and provide the best instruction, guidance, and support necessary to meet each goal.
3. To brighten each student's future prospects by fostering a positive self-concept and academic excellence.
4. To help students develop physically, mentally, and emotionally and to facilitate their return to a less restrictive environment.
5. To prepare students for post-secondary career choices through preparation for economic and occupational competency and the development of skills required in the activities of daily living.
6. To help students become responsible and productive members of society through the understanding of its institutions, traditions, values, and social heritage, as well as the rights, duties, and responsibilities of its citizens.
7. To help students formulate socially appropriate values that serve as guides to responsible social interactions.
8. To develop in each student the appreciation of aesthetic values and growth in creative interests and abilities.
9. To foster the maturation of intellectual abilities and processes, including self-direction, critical thinking, and problem solving.

Curriculum Philosophy

Students accepted into Rivermont School enter with a wide variety of needs and skills. Through the application process and in conjunction with the referring school division, a placing IEP will be developed which supports an educational program which is unique and individual to the student being served. Goals and objectives are developed which support access to the general curriculum based on the student's readiness level. We believe doing so fosters an atmosphere for academic success, higher self-esteem and allows for a therapeutic environment for the academically deficient as well as the gifted learner.

Rivermont School considers the Virginia Standards and Essentialized Standards of Learning an excellent foundation in determining the academic expectations of our classrooms. Our curriculum is multi-layered and highly eclectic, providing equitable and challenging learning experiences. Instruction is designed to engage students using challenging curriculum materials, technology, and a variety of teaching methods. Ongoing student progress toward mastery of the standards is closely monitored using formative benchmark testing as well as summative evaluations. Through the use of a curriculum framework which mirrors what is used on a statewide level, we feel that we can better meet our objective of returning the student into the least restrictive environment.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Rivermont School began school-wide adoption and implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in 2013-14. School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a process for creating and sustaining school environments that are more proactive, predictable and effective for achieving academic and social success. PBIS will enhance our current systems and practices and also change our culture for the better. At Rivermont, SW-PBIS helps to create school environments in which students are more likely to be successful in transitioning to public education classroom environments, to graduate, and to be successful in meeting their post-secondary goals.

By implementing PBIS, we will increase appropriate school and classroom behaviors through consistent, ongoing instruction of desired behaviors. Collectively, the staff at Rivermont School identified important values for our school. These 3 basic expectations are:

Be There, Be Ready
Accept Responsibility
Respect Self and Others

All students are explicitly taught what it looks like "Be There, Be Ready, Accept Responsibility, and Respect Self and Others" in every area at our school. These behavior expectations are clearly displayed on the walls around our school. Our goal is to explicitly teach behavioral expectations and then recognize and reinforce the positive behaviors shown by students. This approach to managing behaviors is positive, proactive, and preventative. Students are consistently acknowledged for exhibiting appropriate behaviors by receiving various positive behavioral reinforcements (i.e., points and levels, token economy, participation in school-wide celebrations).

Rivermont Schools Matrix

At Rivermont, our schoolwide PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) Expectations Matrix is called the Bulldog B.A.R.K.S. Matrix. The matrix provides a common language for the positive behaviors that are taught, modeled, reinforced, and recognized throughout the school day. Consistently teaching and recognizing these behaviors helps make them an integral part of our school culture.

B.A.R.K.S. represents our schoolwide behavioral expectations:

- **Be There, Be Ready**
- **Accept Responsibility**
- **Respect Self and Others**
- **Individual Goal 1**
- **Individual Goal 2**

The first three expectations are universal for all students, while Individual Goal 1 and Individual Goal 2 are based on each student's Student Support Plan and provide opportunities to reinforce individualized behavioral goals.



Behavioral expectations are taught and reinforced in different areas of the school, including all settings, the classroom, hallways, gym/physical education, and restrooms. The Bulldog B.A.R.K.S. Matrix clearly defines what each expectation looks like in each of these settings, so students understand how to be successful throughout the school day.

Throughout each Rivermont school, Bulldog B.A.R.K.S. Matrix posters are displayed in hallways, classrooms, and other key areas to serve as visual reminders of our behavioral expectations. These expectations are taught both directly and indirectly throughout the school day, including during social skills instruction, daily routines, and positive interactions with staff.

This proactive approach focuses on teaching students the behaviors we want to see rather than simply reacting to problem behaviors after they occur. By explicitly teaching, practicing, and reinforcing positive behaviors, students develop the skills needed to be successful across school settings and beyond.

Rivermont's points and levels system is directly aligned with the Bulldog B.A.R.K.S. Matrix. Students earn points throughout the day by demonstrating the B.A.R.K.S. expectations across school settings. This consistent approach reinforces positive behavior, promotes skill acquisition, and supports student success.

Admissions

Students enrolled in Rivermont School are typically referred by their home public school system or any agency represented on a region's Family Assistance Planning Team. Personnel from the public school make the initial contact with the Rivermont School staff and provide a completed Rivermont School referral packet to determine appropriateness of the program for the student. The referral packet requires a report of a physical examination and a current record of immunization. Parents may be required to provide this documentation so as not to interrupt a child's educational placement.

Before a local school division places a child with a disability in the school, the local school division shall initiate and conduct an I.E.P. meeting, in accordance with the requirements set forth in the applicable Regulations Governing Special Education Programs. Families will be offered a tour of the program prior to enrollment.

For referrals initiated by a parent, the parent will complete Rivermont School referral application packet.

Based on this information, Rivermont School will make the decision to accept or reject the child's application for admission. The parent/guardian and appropriate school division and/or referral source will be notified in writing of the decision.

Once the parent and local education agency is notified of acceptance, an orientation meeting must be held, and the required admittance paperwork completed.

Orientation

Upon admission and annually, an orientation packet that includes required registration forms will be sent to the parent/guardian for completion prior to the student's first day of school. Parent/guardians will receive a "Snapcode" in their email from Powerschool to complete the online registration packet. Parent/guardians can obtain a paper copy of all registration forms to complete by calling the school and submitting a request. If parents/guardians require access to a computer to complete registration, contact the school to set up an appointment to complete registration. All registration forms are required to be reviewed, completed and/or signed and returned to the school. The student will not be allowed to start classes until our registration documents have been completed and received by Rivermont School.

Withdrawal, Transfers, Suspensions and Expulsions

Rivermont School makes every effort to meet the individual needs of its students. However, changes in a student's situation may dictate a change in placement. All requirements dictated by special education legislation will be adhered to. In all situations, the well-being of the student is first and foremost.

In the event that you must withdraw or transfer your child, please notify the school principal or school main office of your intent.

Withdrawal – In the event a student must withdraw from Rivermont School, the referring LEA/agency will be notified. All academic and social/emotional reports on the student's progress and present level of performance while in attendance will be forwarded to the appropriate LEA.

Transfer – In the event a student transfers from one Rivermont School campus to another, Rivermont School will work closely with the LEA(s) involved. The student's record will be forwarded to the receiving campus and staff will collaborate in an effort to avoid any delay in the continuation of placement.

Suspension – At times suspensions may be a necessary and required strategy to use in response to certain situations. Rivermont School only utilizes suspensions as a last resort.

Expulsion – If a student exhibits behavior that is deemed so severe that it compromises the program and/or the safety of others, the student will be discharged from Rivermont School. Additionally, for a student to be successful at Rivermont School, full program participation is necessary. If a student or parent refuses to participate in all or a part of Rivermont School's program, the student may be discharged. Every effort is made to address the individual needs of the students, however, if a student or parent refuses the efforts of the school, continuing the enrollment of the student is no longer in the student's best interest. In this event, the parent/guardian and LEA will be notified in writing of the reasons for the action and provided suggestions for alternative placement, if known. The student's master file will be forwarded to the appropriate LEA representative.

Student Charges

Students are expected to provide their own personal classroom supplies such as paper, pen, pencil, etc. On occasion, students may be asked to pay a small fee to help with the cost of a field trip or other group activity.

Program Description

The school program is individualized to meet the specific needs of the student. The primary focus is given to the social/emotional growth of the student in an attempt to return the student to a less restrictive educational setting. Generally speaking, students are placed in classes grouped by ability, age, maturity, social/emotional needs, and grade level.

The school is designed to meet the developmental, academic, and social/emotional needs of students K-12 identified with primary disability of, but not limited to, Emotional Disability (ED), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Intellectual Disability (ID), Other Health Impaired (OHI), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Speech/Language Impairment (SLI), Developmental Delayed (DD) and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), or who are experiencing difficulty succeeding in a less restrictive environment. Rivermont School staff in conjunction with the IEP team will make recommendations and/or provide related services based on a student's individual needs and IEP. Any service that Rivermont School does not provide directly is provided through a contracted provider or the student's LEA.

The focus of our curriculum is to empower students to be effective managers of their own academic and social behavior. Comprehensive academic instruction for grades K-12 is offered in social studies, language arts, math, science, and physical education/health. A typical classroom student/staff ratio is 5:1 or lower dependent on student need. In general, each class meets the minimum state clock-hour requirement; however, adjustments are made so as to adhere to a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP). Rivermont School collaborates with each Local Education Agency (LEA's) to ensure courses meet requirements for credit. Each student has behavioral goals and, if applicable, academic goals. Our basic instructional program is taken from the Virginia State Department of Education Standards of Learning. The sending LEA determines the entering student's grade level. Our school year is divided into two semesters; thus, we can accommodate courses that are either 18 or 36 weeks in length. Rivermont School will work closely with the student's LEA to ensure that each student participates in his or her appropriate program of study, including meeting graduation requirements. This includes requesting all

previous educational records and sending to the LEA credits received from Rivermont School.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an evidenced based method used in our ABA focused schools and classrooms. A variety of techniques and interventions may be incorporated to teach target skills in all areas to include, but not limited to verbal behavior, functional communication, augmentative communication, discrete trial training, Natural Environment Teaching (NET), picture communication, visual and auditory strategies, task analysis, incidental teaching, and sensory strategies. These methods are founded on research based, scientific principles of operant conditioning to build communication, social skills, academic, vocational and independent living skills as well as reduce inappropriate behavior. Each student's curriculum is designed based on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The ABA focused schools and classrooms employ a structure focused on teaching small, measurable units of behavior. The model is a success-oriented model based on positive reinforcement. Correct responses are followed by consequences that have been found to be positively reinforcing to the student. Data collection is essential to ABA programming. Each student's data will be held confidential. This information will be given with Progress Reports and Interims to families and LEAs (Local Education Agency).

A qualified staff is key to assuring a student's success at Rivermont School. Therefore, Rivermont School adheres to **8 VAC-20-671-350** from the Regulations Governing the Operation of Private Schools for Students with Disabilities regarding staff development. Each year all Rivermont School staff attend annual trainings such as Mandt training and Ukeru training (crisis intervention), First Aid/CPR/AED (as required by position), child abuse and neglect, system and school-based emergency procedures, instructional strategies, and many other topics that Rivermont requires to be covered. Staff also participate in monthly topics chosen by building administrators. Our staff can also attend professional development training by outside professionals and/or professional conferences.

Rivermont Schools seek to enrich the lives of students by offering group and/or individual therapeutic counseling support provided by a licensed or a license eligible mental health professional (therapist).

Rivermont School staff in conjunction with the IEP team will make recommendations and/or provide the related services based on a student's individual needs and IEP.

No one can predict how long it will take before a child is ready to return to a less restrictive educational setting. Thus, we do not place a limit on length of stay. Excluding situations involving expulsion, at the end of each academic year, staff from Rivermont School will discuss with the LEA and parents each student's degree of progress and make recommendations as to an appropriate placement for the upcoming school year.

Music Appreciation Students will develop an informed appreciation of music by engaging in activities such as listening, singing, playing classroom instruments, moving rhythmically, creating, and enjoying music. This content will be integrated into core content lessons and/or social skills time.

Art Appreciation Students will develop an informed appreciation of art by engaging in such activities as making aesthetic judgements, producing individual works of art, and studying art history. This content will be integrated into core content lessons and/or social skills time.

Health and Physical Fitness All students, K-12, shall have the opportunity to participate regularly in supervised physical activities, either organized or unstructured, intended to maintain physical fitness and to understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

Family Life Education Family life may be taught as a unit in the health or social skills block of time. Content considered to be sensitive will be offered in sex-separated classes. Prior to instruction, parents will be sent a letter stating dates that family life instruction will take place, inviting them to preview materials and asking for written consent for student participation.

Elementary School

For elementary students, a minimum of 75% of the annual instructional time of 990 hours shall be given to instruction in the disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. Students who are not successfully progressing in early reading proficiency and/or who are unable to read the materials necessary for instruction with comprehension shall receive additional time in reading.

Middle School

To provide middle school students a sufficient opportunity to learn, each student shall be provided 140 clock hours per year of instruction in each of the four disciplines of English, math, science, and history/social science.

High School

Although students are enrolled in classes at Rivermont School, and the school is authorized to confer diplomas, the LEAs confer diplomas or certificates once a student completes the units of credit prescribed by the State Board of Education and the LEA for graduation, passes all required state assessments, or completes the requirements of an Individualized Education Plan. During the student's tenure at Rivermont School, transcripts with grades and awarded credits, and state assessment scores are kept in the student's administrative file. Staff works closely with the guidance department of the LEAs to ensure that students are on track for graduation.

Diplomas

VAC 20-131-50: The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from a Virginia High School shall be those in effect **when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time.**

Verified Unit of Credit for Graduation

A verified unit of credit for graduation shall be based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction and the achievement by the student of a passing score on the end-of-course Standards of Learning Test for that course.

Repeat Courses Under the Credit Recovery Format

Students who have earned an "F" in a high school credit course may retake that course as a repeat course under the Virginia Department of Education approved "credit recovery" format. This format allows for repeat instruction to be provided in half the instructional hours as a new credit course. More specifically, semester courses awarding 0.5 Carnegie credits must provide no less than 70 clock hours of instruction. However, the same course as a repeat course under the credit recovery format meets for no less than 35 hours. Only students who have previously failed a course and have had that failure reflected on the academic record are eligible to enroll in a repeat course under the credit recovery format.

Applied Studies Diploma

The Applied Studies Diploma is a diploma option available to students identified as having a disability who complete the requirements of their individualized education programs (IEPs) and meet certain requirements prescribed by the Board of Education pursuant to regulations, but do not meet the requirements for any named diploma.

Certificate of Completion

Available to students who complete the prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for diplomas.

Virtual Learning: Grade 6-12

In addition to our basic high school and middle school curriculum, we offer the Edgenuity® computer based and virtual curriculum. This program is fully endorsed and approved by the Virginia Department of Education. The Edgenuity® program allows high school students to work at their own pace to recover credits as well as acquire new credits. It also offers a vast selection of elective and advanced courses. All coursework will be monitored by our licensed teachers.

Transitions

Rivermont School, in conjunction with the LEA, is committed to helping ensure that an appropriate IEP is developed for each student. Individualized Education Plans written for students who are deemed ready to return to a less restrictive education setting will address general procedures and goals which are designed to make the transition as smooth as possible.

When staff at Rivermont School, in consultation with parents and personnel from the home school division, decide a child is ready for transition back to his/her home school, Rivermont School will develop a discharge plan addressing academics and behavioral suggestions designed to help ensure success. After the plan is written and shared with the child's home schoolteacher(s) and principal but before beginning classes, a meeting may take place between the child's teachers and counselors representing both schools in order to clarify issues and answer questions.

A Rivermont School designee will encourage and initiate frequent contact with home school staff and the child's parent(s) throughout the student's first grading period and on an as-needed basis, thereafter.

Secondary Transitions

At age 14 or before, the student and guardian will collaborate with IEP team members and necessary community service providers to develop a secondary transition plan. The plan will be derived from a collection of data determining the student's strengths, interests, abilities and needs. Postsecondary goals and a plan of study will then be established to include pathways for employment, future training, education and independent living options. The transition plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

When appropriate, vocational training and work experience is arranged for high school students. This would include assistance to applicable seniors in securing suitable post-graduation employment.

Referrals to the Children's Protective Services

The *Code of Virginia* requires teachers or other persons employed in private and public schools to report suspected child mistreatment, abuse, and neglect. Any suspicions of mistreatment, abuse and neglect are to be reported by Rivermont School staff to the local department of social services or to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of the first suspicions in compliance with Virginia law. The LEA will be notified by Rivermont School when a Child Protective Services (CPS) report is filed. The parent/guardian will be notified of the report to CPS if doing so would not jeopardize the child's safety. The principal and/or designee will complete a **NOTICE OF A COMPLAINT FILED WITH CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES** and submit it to the Virginia Department of Education.

The school site administrator, or designee, will cooperate with the CPS worker during an investigation, family assessment, or human trafficking assessment of suspected child abuse and neglect by a non-school-employee by providing the following resources:

- a) Documentation and/or information relative to the complaint.
 - b) Pertinent directory information, such as the child and family's contact information.
 - c) A room or space to interview children and/or staff that ensures privacy and is free from interruptions.
- Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1518, a person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in loco parentis, or school personnel.

Structured Behavioral Interventions

School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) at Rivermont School provides a framework which promotes data-based practices and tiered levels of support that concentrate on creating learning environments which support students in a proactive, preventative, and predictable manner. It is implemented by collaborative, school-based teams comprised of administrators, therapists, BCBA's, positive behavior support leaders, and classroom teams. School-wide expectations for behavior are clearly stated, taught across all school environments, and frequently reinforced. Both individual and school-wide learning and behavior problems are assessed comprehensively. Based upon a functional observation of learning and behavior challenges, interventions are implemented to address skill acquisition, skill building, and/or generalization across multiple settings. The effectiveness of the selected interventions is evaluated and reviewed, leading to data-based revisions. Students are supported through a common approach to behavior management and a continuum of methods that help them learn and maintain appropriate behavior and discourage inappropriate behavior.

While the successful implementation of SWPBIS typically results in improved social and academic outcomes, it will not eliminate ALL behavior incidents in a school. At times, it may be necessary to exclude a student from the classroom and/or their peers due to disruptive or aggressive behavior. Every effort will be made to return the child to the lesser restrictive environment as soon as the child demonstrates the ability to manage his/her own behavior appropriately. Students are encouraged to remove themselves appropriately from a situation/environment they are finding difficult to handle. If the student is a threat to the safety or wellbeing of self or others, he/she may be assisted by staff to a safer environment. The student will be always treated with dignity and respect.

At times suspensions may be a necessary and required strategy to use in response to certain situations. Rivermont School only utilizes suspensions as a last resort.

Rivermont School provides structured universal interventions supporting academic and behavioral success including:

- A points/levels system which defines varying degrees of privileges, identifies strengths and areas of need, as well as quantifies degrees of behavioral progress.
- Consistent acknowledgement of desired behavioral expectations
- A system of meaningful consequences for inappropriate behaviors
- Individualized Student Support Plans
- Daily communication with parents
- Structured social skills instruction
- Engaging instructional environments

Points and Levels System

Rivermont School utilizes a Points and Level System as a behavioral intervention, which positively reinforces appropriate and /or individually targeted behavior.

Procedure

The system combines a points and levels model, which allows for both short and long-term reinforcement. The points provide immediate recognition for positive performance within the class. The system is slightly modified for the elementary aged grouping or when required by individual intervention plans. Points are always earned for appropriate performance. Points are not taken away once they have been earned.

- Daily point totals determine the students' placement within the school level system. The system consists of four levels: Level R (Restrictive) and Level I through III.
- Levels will be earned daily according to the previous day's point total. Students earn points throughout the day as they demonstrate school-wide behavioral expectations and/or individual targeted goals.

ABA Behavioral Interventions

Rivermont staff have a variety of methods for either increasing or decreasing behaviors and strongly emphasizes the use of reinforcement. Both positive and negative reinforcement are used to increase the likelihood that socially appropriate behaviors will occur again in the future.

When changing behaviors, it is best to intervene in the moment. Staff will redirect students and teach replacement behaviors. All replacement behaviors are designed to meet the same function as the problem behavior, thus teaching the student a more socially acceptable way to communicate needs and wants.

We believe that by incorporating a positive educational environment, redirection, and relying heavily on reinforcement schedules we can best care for the students and allow them to grow within our program. We believe that we can best implement these policies by incorporating the following behavior management strategies:

- Structured daily activities
- Utilizing research-based techniques for behavior reduction
- Developing a safe and positive environment for growth
- Individualizing reinforcement plans, as well as incorporating positive language.
- Providing small student/staff ratios
- Providing small class sizes
- Utilizing group management techniques
- Utilizing transition aides
- Treating the students as individuals with respect and dignity
- Setting reasonable limits for children
- Training staff on individual student backgrounds and possible behavior to be prepared for any possible incidents.
- Maintaining consistency and a structured environment

Explanation of Behavior Management Methods

- **Redirection-** During maladaptive behaviors staff will give other options to the student.
- **Positive reinforcement-** The student receives a preferred item after exhibiting an appropriate behavior (i.e.: receiving a sticker, small edible, or tangible reward after completing a work session)
- **Negative reinforcement-** Removing something the student doesn't like after exhibiting appropriate behavior (i.e.: removing a task once the student completes it. Finishing the task and it goes away is reinforcing the compliance of the activity.)
- **Replacement behaviors-** Socially appropriate behaviors that meet the same need or want as a maladaptive behavior the student is exhibiting (i.e., tapping on the shoulder to gain someone's attention rather than pinching.)

Explanation of Physical Prompting

The following is a description of physical prompting. The prompts may include, but are not limited to:

1. Light touches.
2. Physical guidance at the upper arm, elbow, forearm, wrist, and the top or underneath the hand.
 - a. This includes physical guidance to ensure compliance with a task or activity.
 - b. Hand-over-hand to provide errorless teaching.
 - c. Physical guidance can also be utilized in transitions to prevent disruptions within current environment and/or teach expectations in transitions (such as: prompting the student to wait, helping a student up after dropping to the ground, or guiding a student back to a designated area).
 - d. Assistive devices, such as an ambulatory belt, may be required. If an ambulatory belt is recommended it must be approved by a BCBA or BCaBA as well as the parent/guardian.
3. Body blocking with or without natural boundaries.
 - a. Natural boundaries could include desk, walls, chairs, etc.
 - b. Body blocking could include leaning over the student, shadowing close behind or in front of the student, limiting range of motion, limiting chair movement, blocking entrances and exits, confining students in an area to prevent bolting, and protective stances.

4. Full physical restraints in accordance with applicable regulations.
 - a. If a student requires physical restraint that restricts all movement, the administration and student's team will be consulted on development of a BIP if one is not in place.

Time-Out /Therapeutic Restraint

Rivermont School utilizes the behavior management techniques referred to as time-out and a therapeutic restraint. Time-out is used to affect negative environmental factors and to reflect and regain self-control when he/she has been unable to respond to a less restrictive intervention. A therapeutic restraint is used only for the purpose of keeping the student and others safe from harm.

Time-out is accomplished by instituting graded levels of restrictive environmental options ranging from occupying a chair or study carrel within class to sending a child home for the day.

The first option (level) for time-out should be in the classroom. This option is the least restrictive of the time-out options. The student is not removed from the instructional setting, but instead, denied access to reinforcers through a temporary manipulation of the environment. The student can be directed to stay at their desk or move to another location within the room. They can hear and/or see the class activities.

The second option (level) for time-out, and slightly more restrictive (exclusion), is for the student to be directed to serve a time-out in a designated area outside of the classroom (an area within the building such as another room) with little to no reinforcers. This level may be implemented when it becomes clear to staff that the student has become a significant disruption to the normal flow of activities taking place in the classroom. The use of time-out will be documented, and procedures implemented to prevent those students who choose to remain in time-out when no longer necessary.

The final option (level) for time-out and most restrictive (suspension) is sending the student home. Only the principal or his/her designee can make this decision. Please keep in mind that the one constant criterion for placing a student in an environment more restrictive than a preceding option (level) is the student's degree of disruptive behavior, and or threat of harm to self or other.

Restraint will not be used as part of an intervention plan. It is only used when there is a need to address behaviors that present an immediate danger to the student or others. They will not be used as a punishment, or to force compliance. Rivermont believes that interventions for students should emphasize prevention and positive behavioral supports.

The student will be given the opportunity for motion, eating at normal mealtimes, fluids, and use of restrooms as needed.

Staff members will be trained in the Mandt system and required to follow its philosophy of using all non-physical, less restrictive techniques with the intent of de-escalating behavior and using physical, more restrictive techniques only for the purpose of keeping the student and others safe. This system effectively trains in conflict de-escalation techniques to avoid and defuse crisis and conflict situations, student violence and self-injurious behavior. Staff are required to be recertified annually.

In 2021, Rivermont School added the UKERU System, which is a trauma informed approach that teaches staff members how to safely manage crisis situations (behaviorally) with the least restrictive approach

possible. It teaches staff how to comfort students and not control them. UKERU is used with the MANDT System as a supplemental tool to help reduce the need for physical restraints by providing blocking techniques that may be used to avoid restraints in a volatile situation.

Restraint will only be utilized when a student is physically out of control and a threat of harm to self, or others is present. Staff will assess the student's behavior no more than every 3 minutes in accordance with MANDT practices, and when the student is no longer a threat to him/herself and/or others he/she will be released. Rivermont School does not utilize mechanical or chemical restraints.

When a student is restrained, the parent/guardian will be notified before the end of the workday on the day of the incident, documentation will be reviewed, and processing will occur between the student and staff.

Assisting and Moving

Rivermont believes that the safety of the students is paramount. However, due to the types of disabilities served and the resulting behaviors, it is necessary at times to use physical interventions. Staff are trained in behavior management techniques and certified in the Mandt System. Our belief is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to the least restrictive, safe, welcoming, and effective educational environment. This is accomplished by building positive relationships and building positive self-images through personal achievements.

In an educational environment a student might become aggressive or disruptive, for example, to avoid work. When this happens, every effort will be used to encourage the student to de-escalate and to work with staff in solving the concerns they have with the work assigned. If these attempts are unsuccessful physical prompting may be used to ensure consistency with therapeutic goals and limited interruption of instructional time for other students.

If a student is on the floor and it is determined that physical intervention is required due to safety issues, Applied Behavior Analysis strategies, or therapeutic needs, the student may be assisted to their feet using a safe and appropriate technique. In the event a student must be moved to another location within the room or out of the room, a safe moving technique will be used. All physical intervention techniques that are used will be in accordance with physical techniques taught in the Mandt System. All non-physical techniques will be attempted prior to the implementation of any physical technique. If the use of this technique is necessary, proper documentation in the Serious Incident and Behavior Management Report shall be completed by the staff involved. Documentation is reviewed by the administration and sent to LEAs and/or other required agencies. Staff debriefing occurs during the review of documentation.

Prohibited Actions

The following actions are prohibited:

1. Restraint and seclusion, except when it is necessary to protect the student and others from personal harm, injury, or death and other less restrictive interventions were unsuccessful.

2. Prone “face down” restraints, mechanical restraints, pharmacological restraints, and any other restraint that restricts breathing or harms the child or interferes with the child’s ability to communicate.
3. Deprivation of drinking water or food.
4. Limitation on contacts and visits from the student’s probation officer, social worker, placing agency representative, or other service provider as appropriate.
5. Any action that is humiliating, degrading, or abusive.
6. Corporal punishment.
7. Deprivation of approved prescription medication or other necessary services.
8. Denial of access to toilet facilities.
9. Application of aversive stimuli.
10. Strip and body cavity searches; and
11. Discipline, restraint, or implementation of behavior management plans by other students.

Standardized Testing Program

Virginia’s Standards of Learning

Rivermont will cooperate with the public schools in the administration of all SOL tests and statewide/district assessments as indicated in the student’s IEP.

Student Participation and Accommodations

Rivermont Schools in collaboration with the LEA and IEP Team will follow the Virginia Department of Education’s Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Assessment Participation and Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Test Accommodations, as well as any other applicable federal, state or local law.

Grades and Reporting

The Grading Scale for the Rivermont campuses is:

A = 90-100%	O = Outstanding
B = 80-89%	S = Satisfactory
C = 70-79%	N = Needs Improvement
D = 60-69%	U = Unsatisfactory
F = below 60%	NE = Not Evaluated

Grades are computed according to the following weights:

Tests/Major Projects/ Reports	30%
Quizzes	25%
Classwork	25%
Homework/Participation	20%

Daily reports of academic/behavioral progress are provided to the parents regularly through phone calls and/or written reports. Formal reports on academic and behavioral progress are completed at the end of each nine-week grading period as indicated on the school calendar. At nine-week intervals a copy of the grade report, the IEP progress report and/or Positive Behavior Intervention Plan Progress Report are mailed to the parent and LEA.

Determining Semester Grades:

Semester grades are to be computed by an average of the two nine-week grades.

Determining End-of-Course Grades:

End-of-course grades are to be computed by an average of the semester grades.

Development and/or Revision of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP)

Any meetings to develop, review and/or revise the child's IEP may be initiated by the parent, Rivermont School, or the LEA.

If the Rivermont School initiates and conducts these meetings, it shall ensure that the parent(s) and a local school division representative are involved in any decision affecting the child's IEP and agree to any proposed changes in the program before those changes are implemented.

Within 30 days of being parentally placed, Rivermont School will develop an Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP) designed to meet the unique needs of the student without disabilities.

IEP Progress Reporting

The referring Local Educational Agency (LEA) provides an IEP in consultation with Rivermont School staff for their students' initial enrollment. When it is necessary to modify an IEP, recommended changes are initiated in consultation with the LEA. If a student is to continue at the school from one year to the next, the teacher is responsible for developing the IEP in consultation with the parent and the student's LEA for the upcoming year.

Procedure

Each teacher will review all IEP goals and objectives of students assigned to their class. Reviews will occur at minimum quarterly. The teacher will record the date of each review on each IEP goals and objectives page, along with progress noted or date mastered, if applicable. A copy of the IEP progress report is forwarded to the LEA and parent(s) immediately. It is recommended that IEP goals be revised if there is minimal student progress made after two grading periods.

Notification of Rights Regarding Student Scholastic Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights within respect to the student's scholastic records.

Confidentiality

Rivermont School shall protect the confidentiality of all students. No information shall be disclosed to anyone either written or verbally without written parental consent, except in those situations allowed by FERPA.

Student Administrative Record

An individual student record is maintained for each student enrolled at Rivermont School. This is a comprehensive record containing all educational information, evaluations, correspondence, and other related information about the student.

Student records are to be kept in locked files in the main office. Written consent from the child's parent shall be obtained before disclosure of information from a student's education record to unauthorized parties. Authorized parties shall be limited to school employees, including contracted employees, and representatives of placing school divisions, accrediting agencies, and state licensing agencies who need access to the student's records to carry out their work responsibilities.

A Record of Access form is located inside each Special Education record and will be filled in by each person who reviews the file.

Transfer of Records

When a privately placed student graduates or leaves school, the student's education record shall be offered to the eligible student or parent. The records of a publicly placed student who graduates or leaves school shall be transferred to the child's home school.

Permanent Record of Attendance

Rivermont Schools shall maintain a permanent record of attendance to include the following:

1. Name and address of school.
2. Name, address, and birth date of student.
3. Name and address of the home school division for publicly placed students.
4. Name and address of the parent.
5. Student ID number.
6. Dates of attendance; and
7. Academic transcript.

Destruction of scholastic records is the best protection against improper and unauthorized disclosure; however, the scholastic records may be needed for other purposes. When informing parents or eligible students about their rights, Rivermont School will remind them that scholastic records may be needed for social security benefits or other purposes. If the parents or eligible students request that the information be destroyed, then Rivermont School will retain only that information required under state law and regulations.

Prior to destruction of data, a reasonable effort shall be made by Rivermont School to notify parents or eligible students that they have the right to be provided with a copy of the data.

When a file is destroyed, the facility shall maintain a permanent record of that information required by the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education

In the event the school or campus closes its doors permanently, all education records of privately placed students shall be provided to the parent or student who has reached 18 years of age, and all education records of publicly placed students shall be returned to the school division of the parent's residence and acknowledgement of such to the parent and the Department of Education.

Parent Inspection of Records

The parent of a child with a disability, upon request, shall be afforded an opportunity to inspect and review all education records within 5 days after the request has been made. Copies of education records involving the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a child will be provided upon request at no cost. The parent has a right to have a representative of the parent inspect and review their child's records upon completing a signed release of information form designating such representative. Upon parental request, the principal or designee will be present to explain/interpret the records.

The school may presume that both parents have the authority to inspect and review records relating to his or her child unless the school has been advised that one or both parents do not have the authority under applicable state law governing such matters as guardianship, separation, and divorce.

Access to Record of Discharge or Dismissal

The school shall keep a written record of all counseling discussions and documents pertaining to student discharge or dismissal from school.

The student, parent and local educational agency will be notified regarding discharge or dismissal from school.

Attendance Policy

Good attendance is essential for the success of each student both in school and later in his/her chosen life work. Students who develop patterns of tardiness and absenteeism usually find frustration and failure in the classroom. It is the belief of Rivermont School that behavioral and academic goals cannot be achieved if the student is not in attendance; therefore, the following attendance procedures shall be enforced.

****The District of Columbia Public Schools Non-Public Unit Policy to Address Absences will apply to all District of Columbia students.**

Procedure

1. Parents/guardians are urged to call the school to report the absence of their children.
2. Calls regarding absences are requested as early in the school day as possible, but they will be accepted until the end of the school day.
3. If the school has not been given prior notice by phone, the parent or guardian is requested to provide the school with a written explanation regarding their child's absence.
4. Absences will be recorded daily.
5. Teachers will be informed of calls concerning student absences.

6. The school should be notified by the parent/guardian of anticipated absences because of trips or family emergencies, as well as medical and agency appointments.
7. The school shall attempt to investigate unexplained absences through telephone contacts or home visits as soon as possible and advise parents regarding the importance of regular school attendance and the legal implications involved.
8. An Absenteeism Notice will be mailed to the parent/guardian after the tenth unexcused absence (may be more frequent due to LEA policy).
9. After the fifteenth unexcused absence, an IEP meeting will be held between Rivermont School, the placing school division and the parent/guardian advising them of requirements under Code of Va., 22.1-254 (May be more frequent due to LEA policy).
10. Should efforts by Rivermont School and the public-school system fail to solve the problem, legal steps may then be taken by the placing school division.
11. Students are expected to make-up all course work by the end of the grading period. Make-up work may be given as homework.

Tardiness to school is considered an absence for the period of time the student is not in class.

1. In all cases of tardiness to school or early dismissals, parent/guardian must notify the school stating the reason for the tardiness or early dismissal. Excused unexcused reasons are the same for tardiness and a full day's absence.
2. When tardy, the parent/guardian or designee must sign the student in at the school office.
3. In case of early dismissal, the parent/guardian or designee must sign the student out at the school office.
4. Students who arrive late or leave early are missing instructional time. When possible, appointments need to be scheduled so that they do not conflict with school hours.

Absences

The intent of this attendance policy is to establish an effective and uniform system of school procedures regulating responsibilities under the applicable laws concerning student attendance. Good attendance is essential for the success of each student both in school and later in his/her chosen life work. Students who develop patterns of tardiness and absenteeism usually find frustration and failure in the classroom. It is the belief of Rivermont School that behavioral and academic goals cannot be achieved if the student is not in attendance; therefore, the following attendance procedures shall be enforced.

Excused Absences:

- illness or injury of the student (Doctor's note needed within 3 days of the return to school)
- illness in the family household necessitating the presence of the student.
- death in the family
- family emergency of an unforeseen nature
- medical appointment (provide note upon return)
- subpoenaed court appearance (provide copy of subpoena or court papers)
- administrator approved absence

To receive consideration for an excused absence, a note of explanation must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian upon return of the student to school. A written note does not necessarily mean the absence is excused.

Unexcused Absences:

- truancy shall include absence of the student from school without the knowledge and permission of his/her parents or guardians or school authorities; absences of the student which are excessive and/or which interfere with the student's educational program; absence of the student for any reason other than one approved by the principal.
- suspension from school
- organized skip day
- absences not accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian upon the student returning to school.
- all absences not covered under excused absences.

Students are expected to attend school daily. The school contacts the student's parent/guardian to verify each absence. The school will document all attempts at ascertaining reasons for absences and steps taken to encourage regular attendance. A student is considered at-risk when 3-4 absences have occurred within the first quarter and chronically absent when he/she has missed 4.5 days or more. Parents will be notified and/or invited for a conference to address attendance. Student attendance is reported to the LEA.

Make-Up of Work and/or Tests

Students are expected to make-up all course work by the end of the grading period in which the work was assigned. Make-up work may be given as homework. Make-up work is to be completed at a mutually agreed upon time between the student and the teacher.

Inclement Weather

Rivermont Schools will close in accordance with the designated school division of that Rivermont School location.

Rivermont Schools may make up inclement weather days in-person or on a virtual learning platform. This decision will be made at the discretion of the school administrator.

Local city and county policies may vary, thus if inclement weather begins after a school day has begun, parents should call Rivermont School for report of early dismissal.

School Closing

In the event that school cannot operate on a normal schedule due to non-weather-related conditions (i.e., loss of utilities), parents, students, and LEAs will be notified by school staff.

Parents/guardians should have arrangements in place for their children in case of emergency early dismissals and ensure that emergency contact information is up to date.

Transportation

It is the responsibility of the local school division or the parent to provide transportation for day students.

Rivermont School will transport students with parental permission in vehicles owned or leased by Rivermont and operated by approved school staff for functions other than regularly scheduled transportation by the Local Education Agencies to and from school. Off-ground activities may include trips to the YMCA, local parks, educational field trips, etc. As a result of serious disciplinary action, illness, or injury, students may be transported home or to an agreed upon supervised destination, which may include a hospital emergency room.

Generally, a van or bus will be available to the school for use in transporting students to approved activities. The principal must approve use of the van or bus. It is a privilege for students to receive transportation to and from school-related activities. Students maintain this privilege by acting in a mature and responsible manner and by cooperating with the driver. The foremost concern is the safety of the students.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities will be well supervised, organized and scheduled to avoid interrupting the instructional program. Rivermont School will take all necessary precautions and safeguards in order to ensure the safety of students when on field trips, including adventure/wilderness activities and water-related activities.

The following precautions are implemented for field trips to ensure safety for each student and staff member.

- All guardians must sign a permission slip for each student for each field trip.
- Staff will brief all students regarding the potential risks and special considerations for each field trip.
- All staff will carry a first aid kit, epi-pen, OSHA kit (spill kit), and fire extinguisher.
- CPR and first aid certified staff shall accompany students on school sponsored activities.
- Staff will take a copy of the Student Information Form, which contains additional medical information and emergency contact numbers for each student.
- Student medications will be taken on the trip, as appropriate.

Dress Code

Principals shall ensure individuals in school or at events are clothed so as not to violate health or safety concerns and not to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process.

Expectations of Appropriate Dress

1. Include hats and other head coverings unless worn for sincere religious, or cultural purposes, or medical reasons.
 - a. School Administration may reach out to a student's family if clarification is needed regarding the purpose of the heading covering.
2. Messages on clothing, jewelry and personal belonging shall not relate to tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, sex, vulgarity, or obscenity.
3. Messages on clothing, jewelry, and personal belongings shall not reflect adversely upon other persons because of their race, sex, color, creed, national origin, or ancestry.
4. Clothing and accessories shall not have symbols and/or be representative or suggestive of gang colors and/or designs.
5. Sunglasses shall not be worn inside the building unless approved by school administrator.
6. Undergarments shall not be worn as outside apparel and shall not be visible.

7. Chains, spikes, and dog collars shall not be worn.
8. Bandanas shall not be worn.
9. Students shall wear shoes on the premises at all times. Bedroom shoes of any kind, however, are not allowed. Shoes with wheels or retractable wheels, sometimes referred to as “heelies” are not allowed. Steel-toed boots are not allowed.
10. Clothing shall cover the mid-section and the back of a student at all times, including when the student is standing and/or sitting.
11. The length of shorts shall be at least at the area marked by the tip of the student’s index finger or mid-thigh, whichever is longer – along his/her leg when standing.
12. Skirt and dress lengths shall be at least at the top of the knee when the student stands. Leggings may only be worn underneath shorts, skirts, or dresses that meet the shorts, skirt, and dress requirements.
13. Splits in skirts, dresses, or shorts shall be below the fingertips.
14. Necklines shall be modest, not revealing, and shall not allow cleavage to show. A 3” x 5” index card will be used as a measurement device for student compliance with the neckline requirements. The neckline when measured is from collarbone to the bottom of the index card (three inches).
15. Expose private parts or show an excessive amount of bare skin (i.e. see through clothing)

Violation of the Regulation

Willful violation of the student dress and appearance regulation will be subject to disciplinary action by the school’s administrators. These progressive disciplinary actions may include phone calls to parents for the first violation to various in-school actions to suspension from school for continued willful violations.

Ideally, discipline is self-directed and self-controlled. Schools, community, and parents share the responsibility for helping students develop self-discipline. Discipline is necessary to ensure an orderly environment in which each person may live and learn to his/her full capabilities in harmony with others.

In order to establish a sound foundation upon which good discipline will be maintained, clearly understood responsibilities must be established and supported by students, parents, teachers and school administrators.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

1. Attendance in each class is required.
2. Students are expected to remain in class for the duration of the period unless excused by the teacher.
3. Students are expected to be punctual.
4. Bathroom and water should be taken care of during break periods or at regular transition times between classes.
5. Students may be searched by visual inspection, pat down, or metal detector if there is reasonable cause to suspect weapons, drugs, alcohol, or any other contraband.
6. Students may not smoke, vape, chew or consume any tobacco or other mild altering substances during the school day.
7. Students will remain on school grounds until dismissal from school and transportation has arrived.

8. Students are expected to be respectful of private and public property. Property damage will be charged to the student responsible.
9. Students are expected to respect the personal space of others. Physical contact that is sexual, inappropriate, or unnecessary is not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, expulsion, or legal charges.
10. Students enter the school building immediately upon arrival and check in with the teaching staff.
11. Electronic devices, such as smart phones, cell phones, music players, and portable video game systems are not allowed at school unless permission has been granted by school administration.
12. Gang activity of any type, including recruitment, is strictly prohibited. See below for more information.
13. To respect the authority of teachers, principals, and other school staff who enforce Rivermont School policy and school rules regarding student discipline and conduct.
14. To abide by rules governing discipline established by the school.
15. To be self-controlled and non-disruptive in classrooms, hallways, study areas, school bus/vehicle, on school property, and at school activities.
16. To be clean and dressed in compliance with school rules of sanitation and safety, and in fashion that will not disrupt classroom procedures.
17. To be responsible, self-controlled, and considerate in your relationships with other students.
18. To strive for mutually respectful relationships with teachers.

Standards of Conduct for Transportation

Students are under the authority of the driver while in the vehicle. The driver is to control student conduct and report behavior problems to the principal. The principal, with input from the LEA, shall be responsible for all disciplinary action. Failure on the part of any student to follow the rules and regulations dealing with transportation may result in termination of privilege to use transportation in addition to other appropriate disciplinary measures.

The following actions are prohibited:

- Smoking and/or drinking
- Eating in the vehicle (unless otherwise directed)
- Use of any type of profanity and/or vulgarity

All students who ride a bus/vehicle are expected to:

- Follow staff directions.
- Remain seated with seat belts on when bus/vehicle is in motion.
- Avoid yelling out of the windows, making gestures from windows, writing on windows, or discarding litter or other objects from the windows.
- Avoid yelling, screaming, throwing things, hitting, pushing, shoving, or committing other harmful acts.
- Avoid defacing the bus/vehicle. The student or parent/guardian will be required to pay for willful damage.
- Practice acceptable behavior.
- Keep aisles clear.
- Avoid extending arms, hands, or head from bus/vehicle windows.
- Avoid bringing oversized items, live animals, glass objects or medications on the bus/vehicle.
- Assist the driver in maintaining a clean bus/vehicle.

If at any time the driver of the bus/vehicle feels that actions of the students are inappropriate and/or unsafe, he/she should pull over until the behavior is corrected. If necessary, the trip may be cancelled, and the group returned to the school. Bus/Vehicle privileges may be suspended for those involved.

Drugs, Weapons and Assaults

Rivermont School is committed to maintaining a safe and chemical-free environment for all students and will provide for a continuum of interventions for those students who need support for compliance with this practice.

With this effort in mind, the following protocol has been established:

Drugs

Any student, while on school property, or while engaged in or attending a school activity, and distributing, selling, intending, or attempting to sell, manufacture, or give away any of the following will be subject to suspension, administrative review, and possible termination from the school program:

- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Any illegal drug
- Drug paraphernalia
- Psychoactive non prescriptive drugs
- Illegally used prescriptive drugs
- Inhalants (including Vapes and Juls)
- Anabolic steroids
- Over the counter drugs (OTCs)
- Look alike imitation substances

Where termination is not recommended, participation in a drug counseling program may be required for continuation at Rivermont School.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence during school hours of any type of drug listed above, he/she will be subject to suspension, administrative review, and possible expulsion from the school program. Where expulsion is not recommended, drug testing/screening and full participation in a drug rehabilitation program (outpatient) may be required for continuation at Rivermont School.

Weapons

Any students, while on school property, or while engaged in or attending a school activity, caught with any of the following weapons (or items made to imitate the below items) will be subject to suspension, administrative review, or possible expulsion from the school program:

- Gun
- Objects designed to propel a missile
- Bowie knives
- Switchblade knives
- Razors
- Slingshots
- Nun chucks
- Chains

- Mace, pepper spray or any other similar propellant
- Any object used with the intent of threatening or harming any individual

Assaults

Any student involved in any type of physical assault upon another student or staff member, including but not limited to the following will be subject to suspension, administrative review, and possible expulsion from the school program.

- Physical attacks
- Sexual attacks
- Battery
- Improper touching upon any person

Violations involving alcohol or other drugs, weapons, assault, and any other serious infraction will be reported to parents, the appropriate school division, and if deemed in the best interest of the child, the proper juvenile justice authority, or police.

Gang Activity

Students are not permitted to participate or promote any type of gang activity. The following activities are expressly prohibited:

- wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign that is evidence of membership or affiliation with a gang.
- committing any act, using any speech, or using non-verbal gestures/handshakes that show membership or affiliation with a gang.
- using any speech or action to further the interests of any gang, such as solicitation, hazing, intimidation, initiation, or inciting other students to physical violence or threatening other students with physical violence.
- recruiting any student to join a gang.

Students involved in any of these activities will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension, administrative review, and possible expulsion from the school program. Violations of these policies will be reported to the parents, school division representatives, and if deemed in the best interest of the child, the proper juvenile justice authority, or police.

Bullying or Cyberbullying

Students, either individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others. The following conduct is illustrative of bullying:

- physical intimidation, taunting, name calling, and insults.
- comments regarding the race, gender, religion, physical abilities, or characteristics of associates of the targeted person
- falsifying statements about other persons
- use of technology such as e-mail, text messages, or web sites to defame or harm others.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in any way and violations will be met with disciplinary action and possible legal action.

1. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly a term or condition of a student's education.
 - b. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or
 - c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.
2. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - a. verbal harassment such as derogatory comments or expressions, slurs, or unwanted sexual advances or invitations.
 - b. visual harassment such as derogatory posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
 - c. physical harassment such as assault, unwanted or offensive touching, blocking normal movement, or interfering with the education environment; or
 - d. retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.
3. Whenever possible, a student or staff member who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should make it clear to the offender in a firm and direct manner that such behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
4. A student alleging sexual harassment may report a complaint to any staff member. A staff member alleging sexual harassment should report the complaint to the administrator/administrative designee.
 - a. If the complaint involves sexual child abuse, the staff member will follow reporting procedures as outlined in the policy for reporting suspected child abuse.
 - b. If the complaint involves only students, the administrator/administrative designee will investigate and take appropriate action. The administrator/administrative designee will report all pertinent information, including resolution, to their regional vice president/senior vice president.
 - c. If the complaint involves an employee and student, the administrator/administrative designee will notify the Department of Education and Child Protective Services. In addition, if the complaint is against the administrator/administrative designee, the student may bypass that individual and report the incident to any staff member. That staff member will follow up with immediate notification to their regional vice president/senior vice president.
 - d. If the complaint involves only staff members, the administrator/administrative designee will carry out the investigation and take appropriate action. All pertinent information will be reported to the Director. If the complaint is against the administrator/administrative designee, the employee may bypass that individual and report to their regional vice president/senior vice president.
5. A formal complaint should be reported to the administrator/administrative designee as soon as possible after the incident occurs. In situations involving students, the parents of the alleged victim must be notified without mentioning the name of the alleged offender. Investigation of the complaint will be conducted in a timely manner.
 - a. At each level, a written record of any meeting or discussion and actions taken will be maintained.
 - b. All discussions, written communications, records, and proceedings will be held confidential and disclosed only to those with a legitimate need to know.
 - c. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the student's status nor will it affect the student's future educational program unless it is determined to be a false accusation.

6. False Accusation and/or Retaliation.

- a. The making of a false accusation of sexual harassment is prohibited. A false accusation of sexual harassment is defined as an accusation of sexual harassment made by a student who knows the accusation is false. Any student who intentionally makes a false accusation of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.
- b. Retaliation will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

Any student or employee who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate actions, which may include counseling, suspension, expulsion, or legal charges, depending on the severity of the offense.

Search and Seizure / Evidence / Contraband

Personal belongings and/or clothing of students will be searched when deemed administratively necessary. No strip searches will ever occur. A metal detector may be used when there is reason to suspect a student is harboring a weapon or when failure to adequately search a student may result in risk of injury or compromise the safety of other staff and students. Searches are to be conducted with administrative approval only. Strict adherence to components of the search policy is expected and required.

All coats, jackets, book bags, lunch bags, purses and other packages are subject to search at any time.

Suspensions and Dismissals

Suspension or expulsion is the final step in Rivermont Schools' student disciplinary process. A suspension is the denial of access to all facilities and programs of the school during the length of the suspension or expulsion. A short-term suspension is for 1-10 school days.

Students can be excluded from school for serious safety risks, either to themselves or others, or for serious ongoing disruptions to the school program which have not been controllable by any other management technique. Arriving at school under the determined influence of marijuana, alcohol, or other drugs or in possession of drugs/alcohol on school premises may result in suspension, administrative review, and possible expulsion from the school program.

If it is determined that a student poses a serious threat to the program or is consistently involved in serious problems and is not responding to the program, he/she may be expelled from the program.

At times suspensions may be a necessary and required strategy to use in response to certain situations. Rivermont School only utilizes suspensions as a last resort.

Expulsion – If a student exhibits behavior that is deemed so severe that it compromises the program and/or the safety of others, the student will be discharged from Rivermont School. In this event, the parent/guardian and LEA will be notified in writing of the reasons for the action and provided suggestions for alternative placement, if known. The student's master file will be forwarded to the appropriate LEA representative, if requested.

Offenses and Sanctions

Rivermont School is committed to maintaining a safe and chemical-free environment for all students and will provide for a continuum of interventions for those students who need support for compliance with this practice. The following offenses and sanctions listed are a **guide**, and Rivermont School reserves its discretion to deviate from the listed sanctions below. Each offense is subject to more stringent sanctions at the discretion of administrative review.

Contraband

Possessing dangerous or potentially dangerous items prohibited by law or program policy. Contraband includes but is not limited to the following items:

- Firearms or ammunition of any type,
- Explosives or any explosive substance (butane, lighter, matches, etc.),
- **Any** type of knife or unauthorized tools or scissors,
- **Any** item which has been modified for use as a weapon,
- **Any** object used with the intent of threatening or harming **ANY** individual,
- **Any** illegal drug or substance including cigarettes, tobacco, inhalants, alcohol, non-prescriptive or prescriptive drugs.

SANCTION: Maximum: Possible expulsion from the school program
 Minimum: Up to 5 days suspension/Conference with parent & student; Contact Law Enforcement/Probation Office; Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Assault

A one-sided attack on another student or staff member by use of physical contact, violent, long-lasting excessive force, weapons or injurious objects; examples include throwing objects, throwing bodily fluids, spitting or biting another individual, use of objects as weapons, and fighting which requires medical attention.

SANCTION: Maximum: Possible expulsion from the school program
 Minimum: Conference with parent & student.
 Up to 5 days of suspension.
 In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Law Enforcement/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Bullying or Cyberbullying

Students, either individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others.

SANCTION: Maximum: Up to 3 days suspension
 Minimum: Conference with parent & student.
 Up to 3 days of suspension.
 In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Law Enforcement/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Sexual Misconduct

Inappropriate body contact to include kissing, public displays of affection, touching or grabbing breasts, buttocks, genitals, legs, thighs, etc., of others or oneself, with or without consent.

SANCTION: Maximum: Possible termination from the school program
 Minimum: Conference with parent & student.
 Up to 3 days Suspension.
 In School Suspension.

Loss of privileges.
Contact Law Enforcement/Probation Officer.
Due process/Appeal/Conference

Obstruction of Staff Action

Initiating or participating in a disturbance which threatens the safety of others or the security of staff; examples include interference with staff members or their instructions which results in the loss of control towards staff/peers or escalates a dangerous situation; instigates a fight between two other students; fighting in the classroom, hallway, bathroom or public area.

SANCTION: Maximum: Up to 3 days suspension.
Conference with parent & student
Minimum: In School Suspension.
Loss of privileges.
Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Fighting

Swinging, hitting, wrestling, etc. by two or more students is fighting, including additional students who become involved.

SANCTION: Maximum: Up to 3 days of suspension.
Conference with parent & student
Minimum: In School Suspension.
Loss of privileges.
Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
Due Process/Appeal/Conference

AWOL

Leaving the building or the designated area without permission

SANCTION: Maximum: Up to 3 days suspension.
Conference with parent & student
Minimum: In School Suspension.
Loss of privileges.
Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Aiding and Abetting

Assisting another student in the classroom in the commission of an offense or violation, but not meeting the criteria for the committed offense.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
Minimum: In School Suspension.
Loss of privileges.
Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Resisting Staff Directives

Physically or verbally resisting or fighting against a staff member's directive.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
Minimum: In School Suspension.

Loss of privileges.
Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Misrepresenting the Truth/Threats

Lying or falsely accusing another person in an official investigation, including dialing 911, making a bomb threat or setting off the fire alarm.

SANCTION: Maximum: 5 days suspension to possible termination from the school program
 Minimum: In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Major Offense Against Property

Destroying or defacing school property.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
 Minimum: Restitution
 In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Stealing/Possession of Stolen Property

Taking or having in one's possession the property of another without permission.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
 Minimum: Restitution
 In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Abusive Language/Obscene Gestures

Verbalizing, writing, or gesturing at another person in an insulting or degrading manner. This includes making racist, sexist, or religiously offensive comments.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
 Minimum: In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Throwing Objects

Throwing or slamming objects without harm to another person causing disruption to ongoing activities.

SANCTION: Maximum: 1 day suspension
 Minimum: In School Suspension.
 Loss of privileges.
 Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer.
 Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Trespassing

Intentional and wrongful invasion of Rivermont School property.

SANCTION:	<u>Maximum:</u>	Up to 3 days suspension Conference with parent & student
	<u>Minimum:</u>	In School Suspension. Loss of privileges. Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer. Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Inappropriate Transportation Behavior

Not observing established safety conduct while being transported from one location to another.

SANCTION:	<u>Maximum:</u>	Up to 3 days suspension Conference with parent & student
	<u>Minimum:</u>	In School Suspension. Loss of privileges. Contact Parent/Guardian/Probation Officer. Due Process/Appeal/Conference

Electronics

Electronic devices, such as smart phones, cell phones, music players, iPods, tablets, and portable video game systems are not allowed at school unless permission has been granted by the school administration. If approved, all electronic devices must be turned into a staff member as you enter the building. Each of these items will be returned to you at the end of the school day. Failure to turn these items in at the beginning of the day will result in confiscation by administration. The items will then only be released to a parent/guardian.

Technology

Students who have read and signed a Computer and Internet User Agreement will be provided supervised access to school computers and the internet to complete academic assignments. This includes computers in the computer lab and classrooms.

- You may only use the computer/Internet to complete work assigned and approved by a staff member. Please note that when you are using a computer, you are responsible for that computer.
- You are responsible for citing sources and giving credit to the authors for material you use during the research process.
- You are expected to honor the legal rights of software producers, network providers, copyright, and license agreements.

User Responsibilities

Access to technology is a privilege, not a right, and with use comes responsibility. The Rivermont School network, including Internet, was established for educational purposes. As a result, users have no personal privacy rights on the network. Files, including e-mail, located on individual computers as well as the network can be reviewed by network and school administrators to ensure that users are using the system appropriately. Users will be held accountable for any damages to the computer/ network as well as any illegal or unethical activity that you conduct while using the computer/Internet.

Cancellation of User Privileges

Any violation of the network responsibilities will result in a cancellation of your computer privileges and may result in disciplinary action. In addition, any student identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

Mental and Emotional Wellness

Mental and emotional health problems in students can disrupt their ability to function at home, in school, or in the community. Less serious problems can disrupt relationships, cause problems with physical health and affect school performance. More serious problems can lead to running away and death through suicide or bad life decisions.

Mental Health determines how we think of ourselves and interpret what goes on in the environment around us. It affects the decisions we make in life, our relationships with others and virtually every other aspect of our lives.

Emotional Health is the ability to live life to its fullest, realize one's potential and support others in doing so. It begins with a true understanding of how one feels about oneself, working to change circumstances or conditions that can be changed, coping or accepting those that can't be changed.

- The school has a therapeutic team to support students in crisis.
- The school will provide community resources information to parents and students about mental health issues.

Mental Health Evaluation and Return to Learning

If a student is referred for a mental health evaluation by Rivermont administration, a therapist, or a designee, a Return to Learning IEP meeting must take place before the student may return to the school building or program.

Once the evaluation has been completed, the parent/guardian should notify the school administrator. The administrator will then collaborate with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the family to schedule the Return to Learning IEP meeting.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing documentation confirming that the mental health evaluation has been completed.

Required Physical Examinations and Immunizations

Before a child is enrolled at Rivermont School, a copy of a comprehensive physical exam by a qualified licensed physician and a copy of current immunization records certifying that the child is adequately or age appropriately immunized is needed. (It is recommended that the physical and immunization records be completed within the last three years prior to enrollment.) **Admission of students without a physical examination is not allowed!**

Physical examination forms are available in your physician's office, or a copy may be obtained in the school office.

Diphtheria, Tetanus, & Pertussis (DTaP, DTP, or Tdap) - A minimum of 4 properly spaced doses. A child must have at least one dose of DTaP or DTP vaccine on or after the fourth birthday. DT (Diphtheria, Tetanus) vaccine is required for children who are medically exempt from the pertussis-containing vaccine (DTaP or DTP). Adult Td is required for children 7 years of age and older who do not meet the minimum requirements for tetanus and diphtheria. Effective July 1, 2019, a booster dose of the Tdap vaccine is required for all children entering the 7th grade

Meningococcal Conjugate (MenACWY) Vaccine - Effective July 1, 2021, a minimum of 2 doses of MenACWY vaccine. The first dose should be administered prior to entering 7th grade. The final dose should be administered prior to entering 12th grade.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine - Effective July 1, 2021, a complete series of 2 doses of HPV vaccine is required. The first dose shall be administered before the child enters the 7th grade. After reviewing educational materials approved by the Board of Health, the parent or guardian, at the parent's or guardian's sole discretion, may elect for the child not to receive the HPV vaccine.

Hepatitis B Vaccine - A complete series of 3 properly spaced doses of hepatitis B vaccine are required for all children. However, the FDA has approved a 2-dose schedule ONLY for adolescents 11-15 years of age AND ONLY when the Merck Brand (RECOMBIVAX HB) Adult Formulation Hepatitis B Vaccine is used. If the 2-dose schedule is used for adolescents 11-15 years of age it must be clearly documented on the school form.

Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR) Vaccine - A minimum of 2 measles, 2 mumps, and 1 rubella. (Most children receive 2 doses of each because the vaccine usually administered is the combination vaccine MMR). The first dose must be administered at age 12 months or older. The second dose of vaccine must be administered prior to entering kindergarten but can be administered at any time after the minimum interval between dose 1 and dose 2.

Haemophilus Influenzae Type b (Hib) Vaccine – This vaccine is required ONLY for children up to 60 months of age. A primary series consists of either 2 or 3 doses (depending on the manufacturer). However, the child's current age and not the number of prior doses received govern the number of doses required. Unvaccinated children between the ages of 15 and 60 months are only required to have one dose of vaccine.

Pneumococcal (PCV) Vaccine - This vaccine is required ONLY for children less than 60 months of age. One to four doses, dependent on age at first dose, of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, are required.

Rotavirus Vaccine - This vaccine is required ONLY for children less than 8 months of age. Effective July 1, 2021, 2 or 3 doses of Rotavirus Vaccine (dependent upon the manufacturer) is required.

Polio (IPV) Vaccine - A minimum of 4 doses of polio vaccine. One dose must be administered on or after the fourth birthday.

Varicella (Chickenpox) Vaccine - All children born on and after January 1, 1997, shall be required to have one dose of chickenpox vaccine administered at age 12 months or older. Effective March 3, 2010, a second dose must be administered prior to entering kindergarten but can be administered at any time after the minimum interval between dose 1 and dose 2.

Hepatitis A (HAV) Vaccine – Effective July 1, 2021, a minimum of 2 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine. The first dose should be administered at age 12 months or older.

Serogroup B Meningococcal Vaccine (MenB)** – Older teens, and young adults (ages 16-23) can receive the MenB vaccine. Talk with your child's health care provider to learn if the MenB vaccine is right for your teen.

****If** you child is missing any vaccines, be sure to ask your provider about the catch-up schedule so your child is fully protected. Doses of MMR and Varicella should be spaced 28 days apart and completed by kindergarten.

For further information, please call the Division of Immunization at 1-800-568-1929 (in state only) or 804-864-8055, or refer to the Virginia Department of Health website: www.vdh.gov/immunization/requirements/.

Taking Medication at School

If your child has a chronic health condition a Student Specific Health Plan is required (such as asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, food allergy) in addition Rivermont School requires them to have an Action Plan and/or Special Dietary Need form completed and signed by a physician and a parent **annually**.

If your child does not have one of these chronic illnesses but requires medication at school, please complete a Parental Consent and Licensed Prescriber Authorization for Administering Medication form (this requires a physician signature) **annually**. This form is available at the school.

The information listed on this page serves as a quick reference and guideline for any student who must take medication at school as prescribed by a physician. School policy mandates that any student who must receive medication during the school day have, on file, a completed authorization form signed and dated by the parent and physician to facilitate the safe and effective administration of the medication(s).

The medication administration guidelines for students are as follows:

- A Parental Consent and Licensed Prescriber Authorization for Administering Medication form must be completed, signed, and dated by the prescribing physician and the parent. ***The completed form should be returned to the school the first day of school before the medication is given.***
- No medication (including over the counter medications) will be administered without a completed physician/ parent authorization form on file.
- All medications (prescribed and over the counter medications) must be brought to school by the parent, given to, and signed in by the school.
- Medications must be in a (sealed) pharmacy medication bottle containing the student's name, name of the medication, dosage, route, and how often the medication is to be given.
- Over the counter medications must be brought in a sealed container. Medications brought to school in baggies, unmarked containers, or in containers prescribed for someone other than the student will not be accepted or given.
- Medications cannot be transported by the student.
- It is most important for parents to communicate any medical condition(s) (i.e., asthma, diabetes, seizures, and allergies) or special medical need(s) regarding their child.
- Medication will be administered by staff trained in an approved Medication Administration curriculum.
- Parents are permitted to come to school to give the recommended dose of medication to their child when there is no written authorization by a physician and/or parent on file.

- It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to bring in more medication when it is needed.
- Parents must pick-up all medications by the last day of school or medications will be destroyed. No medications are kept at school during the summer or until the next school term.

Contagious or Infectious Disease

Students should not be sent to school if they are not well enough to participate in normal school activities or recess. In addition, students should not be sent to school if they currently have, or have had in the prior 24 hours, any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100.4 or higher
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Thick yellow or green discharge from the nose or mouth
5. Rash or skin eruption anywhere on the body
6. Headache (when/if the headache interferes with participating in normal school activities)
7. Aches and pains
8. Cold or flu symptoms
9. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
10. Strep Throat

These symptoms are forerunners of many different diseases and staying at home at the onset may shorten the illness and prevent complications. In the event of a pandemic or other unexpected risk to the staff and students' health, the school will follow CDC recommendations and communicate to students and their families. Parents/guardians should contact the school within one hour of the scheduled start time in the event a student is ill and unable to attend school. Medical information should be reported directly to the School Medication Administrator/Designee and not through third party staff such as transportation drivers, community agencies, etc.

A student who has experienced a communicable disease will be permitted to attend school when they are free of symptoms and has observed the exclusion period.

In the event that a student has contracted a contagious or infectious disease, the following procedure will be followed:

- Once the student is identified as sick and/or contagious, the parent/guardian will be notified, and the student will be removed from the classroom and placed in a designated sick area until picked up by the parent/guardian. If the school is unable to contact the parent/guardian, the emergency contact(s) will be notified.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for picking up their student or arrange for an emergency contact to pick up the student within a timely manner prior to the end of the school day. In the event a parent/guardian and/or emergency contact is unwilling or unable to pick up the student, the school will utilize the LEA and other community resources for the sick student.
- The student will receive assignments by mailing items home or through specific arrangements between the school and the parent/legal guardian, at the parent/guardian request.
- General Return-to-School Guidelines:

- Fever-Free for 24 Hours – Without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Tylenol, ibuprofen).
- No Vomiting or Diarrhea for 24 Hours – The student should be able to eat and drink normally.
- Completion of Any Required Treatment – For illnesses requiring antibiotics (e.g., strep throat, pink eye), students should be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning.
- Symptom Improvement – Cough, congestion, or other symptoms should be mild enough that the student can participate in school activities.
- If there is a question about a student returning to school after a communicable disease, the principal will make the final decision.

Lunch / Snack

School lunches are provided at most Rivermont Schools except for Alexandria and Sterling. For safety purposes, the individual school campuses will establish and communicate any food restrictions to ensure the safety of students/staff with food allergies.

Rivermont School Alexandria and Sterling asks parents to provide their child's daily lunch, snacks, and drinks. All items **MUST** be labeled with the student's name and include the current date. Students will **ONLY** be allowed to consume food and beverages brought from home unless parents have given specific permission stating otherwise. If a student does not bring a lunch into school, Rivermont will make arrangements to provide lunch for the student.

The school will provide refrigeration, microwaves for heating food, and water to consume. All food items will be kept in a specific area which follows all Health and Safety Regulations for food storage.

Any special dietary needs, including allergies, are identified, and documented in the student's record. All parents are required to have a physician fill out a Standing Allergy Alert/Special Dietary Needs form during orientation, which is reviewed monthly by the principal or designee. Parents are requested to notify the school of any changes that may occur throughout the year, a new form would be required, and classroom staff would be notified by the principal or designee.

Rivermont School does not have a cafeteria but does provide access to lunches that consists of nutritionally balanced meals, (ii) includes an adequate variety and quantity of food for the age of students, and (iii) meets minimum requirements of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Parent Involvement

Parent and community stakeholder involvement are encouraged. Rivermont School believes in the team approach and welcomes the input and participation of anyone interested in the wellbeing and success of our students. Contact the Principal to find out what opportunities are available and how you may become involved.

Anyone needing information may contact the school by calling or stopping by the school office. If a meeting is desired with a staff member(s), the school office will be happy to schedule an appointment. Those interested in visiting our school to learn more about our program should contact the principal to schedule an appointment.

Because the safety of our students and employees is a top priority, all visitors during regular hours, including parents, must sign in and out at the office.

Another integral part of our program involves work with parents. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's educational program in a variety of ways. Participation in parent support group meetings, coupled with frequent parental/school contact via telephone, in-person conferences and sharing written regularly scheduled reports of student progress encourage home/school cooperation and a team approach toward helping students achieve success. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's educational program.

1. Parents may set up a conference with his/her teacher by calling the school and arranging a mutual time.
2. The school will sponsor a formal parent/teacher conference day at least twice during the academic school year. Written notices will be mailed to the parents no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled conference day.
3. Telephone conferences will be arranged upon request of the parent.
4. Frequent parent/school communication is encouraged.
5. Parents/legal guardians who wish to observe their student during school hours may do so infrequently, with the principal's permission, in a manner that is not disruptive to the learning environment. Administration will determine whether the observation is disruptive.
6. All procedural guidelines will be met in compliance with special education regulations.

Communication with Parents Who Maintain Two Households

Upon request, Rivermont Schools will make available to a non-custodial parent any information requested unless otherwise instructed by a court.

Community Involvement

Rivermont School desires to be of service to the entire community. In an effort to do this, we make available our resources such as consultation services, in-service training, and prospective employment pools. We also recognize that community resources can enhance our programs, as well as the educational experiences of our students. Therefore, we make use of all resources made available to our school.

We strive to provide a therapeutic environment in which to learn and develop. Because of the diverse and special needs of our students and their families, we welcome and accept any help/resources that will allow Rivermont School to better serve our clientele.

The following is a description of resources available to Rivermont School:

- Local Businesses – job mentorship placements, donations, and social skill activities
- Public Libraries – research and information
- YMCAs – physical education, recreation, and social skill activities
- Parks – physical education, recreation, and science class activities
- Community Service Board – referrals for more intensive therapy for students and/or their families
- Sheltered Workshops – pre-vocational and supported employment.
- Local Colleges – library services, recreation facilities, student teachers, exploratory career and technical education and adaptive physical education clinics

- Collateral Service Providers – mentors, in-home counselors, therapists.

Student Work-Study or On-The-Job Training

When Rivermont School places students on work-study, on-the-job training or other employment, the school administration will ensure that the placement complies with applicable laws governing the employment of children. These work assignments or employment, including rates of pay, shall be approved by the school administrator with the consent of the parent(s).

Procedures for Resolving Institutional Complaints

Rivermont Schools is committed to assuring that all complaints/concerns are addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

Rivermont Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, disability or any other characteristics protected under applicable federal, state or local law.

Any student, parent/guardian, and/or placing agency with a complaint regarding this institution are encouraged to contact the school and schedule a meeting to discuss the issue with the school administration.

If the issue is not resolved at the school level, the student, parent/guardian and/or placing agency are encouraged to contact the Regional Vice/Senior Vice President of Rivermont Schools and schedule a meeting to discuss the complaint.

If the issue is not able to be resolved at the institutional level, the student, parent/guardian and/or placing agency may submit their complaint to:

Office of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

District of Columbia students and parents may contact:

Office of Dispute Resolution

Email: Hearing.Office@dc.gov

Phone: (202) 698-3819

Fax: (202) 478-2956

Address: 1050 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20002

<https://osse.dc.gov/service/specialized-education-state-complaints>

<https://osse.dc.gov/service/office-dispute-resolution-odr>

All complaints submitted to Virginia's Department of Education must be in writing and should include adequate documentation to support the students' claims. Such documentation should include specific names, dates, incidents and copies of letters or other documents provided to the student by the school. Students may request a complaint form from the Department or submit the complaint in letter form.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The Rivermont School Emergency Preparedness Plan describes how the program endeavors to provide an educational setting that is free of hazards and that reduces the risk of injuries. This plan also describes the appropriate procedures to be followed by staff, students, and the community organizations to effectively respond to any emergency situations that may occur at any Rivermont School campus. Students and staff will go over and practice the plan during the first weeks of school. Below is an outline of the Rivermont School Emergency Preparedness Plan. In the event that the Emergency Preparedness Plan is put into action, parents, LEAs, appropriate officials, and the Department of Education will be notified by Rivermont School staff under the direction of the principal and/or designee.

Building Evacuation Procedure

Emergency evacuations will be initiated by staff for any reason that would make the building unsafe, or if a situation poses a threat to the health and welfare of students, staff, and visitors.

The all-clear is an announcement from an administrator or designee.

1. Students shall leave their rooms in single file, staying to the right side of the passageway and, at a brisk walk, leave the building using the designated exit. Under no circumstances shall students go get their personal belongings prior to exiting the building.
2. Students are expected to remain together as a group and refrain from talking.
3. Students shall walk to the designated assembly point (specific to your school) unless otherwise directed by staff.
4. Students are to remain in the designated area until given the all-clear signal. Students shall re-enter the building in an orderly manner by the route used while evacuating the building unless otherwise directed by staff.

Off-Site Evacuation

If an off-site evacuation is necessary, students will follow the building evacuation procedure, be loaded into school buses, cars and any other available means of transportation and moved from a dangerous area to an area of lesser danger. Students will stay together and remain calm. Parents/guardians will be notified of the situation and the location of the safe site.

Lockdown

Lockdown is initiated to isolate students from danger when there is a crisis inside the building and movement within the school might put them in jeopardy. Lockdown is used to prevent intruders from entering occupied areas of the building. The concept of lockdown is a “no one in, no one out” scenario. During lockdown, all exterior doors are locked, everyone is to gather in a corner of the classroom away from the doors and windows. Students are to remain quiet until the lockdown is cleared by administration or the designee.

Shelter In Place

Shelter in place is a short-term measure implemented when there is a need to isolate students and staff from the outdoor environment to prevent exposure to airborne contaminants. Students will remain in the

classroom away from doors and windows, remain calm and follow all staff directions. If students are in the hallway or outside, immediately go to the nearest classroom.

Fire

Notify a staff member immediately if a fire or smoke indicating a fire is discovered. Always respond to the sounding of the alarm by following the fire/evacuation procedure. State law mandates that schools hold regularly scheduled fire/evacuation drills. Students who refuse to participate in or disrupt a fire/evacuation drill are subject to disciplinary action. Students setting fires, setting off fire alarms or discharging fire extinguishers will be dealt with severely as these are violations of state law.

Natural Disasters

Tornado / Severe Weather

Staff will provide detailed instructions to students in the event of severe weather or tornado watch or warning. Students should move quietly and quickly into the hallways or designated safe areas. Students and staff will review the “drop and tuck” command. Be prepared to duck under a table if told to do so by a staff member. Remain in the hallway or designated safe area and follow all staff directions until you are informed that the emergency is over.

Flood

Flooding could threaten the safety of students and staff whenever storm water or other sources of water threaten to inundate school grounds or buildings. Staff will provide detailed instructions in the event of a flood. If evacuation of the building is necessary, the evacuation procedures will be followed.

Hurricane

In the event of an approaching hurricane, the principal and/or designee will monitor the situation and determine if it is safe for the school to remain open. If it is not safe, the principal and/or designee will notify the LEAs, transportation, and parents/guardians of the school closing. The principal and/or designee will monitor the situation and determine when it is safe for the students to return to school.

Earthquake

Earthquakes strike without warning. In the event of an earthquake and students are inside the building, it is important to quickly move away from windows, free-standing partitions and shelves and take the best available cover under a sturdy desk or table, in a doorway or against an inside wall and “drop and tuck”. After shaking stops, inform staff of any injuries to yourself or others. Follow further direction from staff and evacuate the building following the evacuation procedure.

In the event of an earthquake and students are outside, move away from buildings, trees, overhead wires, and poles. Drop to knees, clasp both hands behind neck, bury face in arms, make body as small as possible, close eyes, and cover ears with forearms. If notebooks or jackets are handy, hold over head for added protection. After shaking stops, inform staff of any injuries to yourself or others. Follow further direction from staff.

Power Outages / Loss of Utilities

In the case of power outages, students are to remain calm, in their designated study space. Students in other areas of the school should remain where they are at the time of the power outage (students in the bathroom should exit the bathroom and enter the nearest classroom). Students are to remain quiet and follow all staff directions.

In the case of other loss of utilities, students are to remain calm, in their designated study space. Students are to remain quiet and follow all staff directions.

In the event that school needs to be closed, the principal and/or designee will contact the LEAs, transportation, and parents/guardians.

Student Leaving Grounds Without Permission / Missing Student

If students notice that another student is missing or it is believed that another student has left school grounds or staff supervision during a school-sponsored activity away from school, notify a staff member immediately. After a reasonable amount of time has been spent searching for the student, the school administrator will notify the (local) police department and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Parents/Guardians are to contact the school immediately should they locate their child.

Contagious or Infectious Disease

In the event that a student has contracted a contagious or infectious disease and has been identified as sick and/or contagious, the parent/guardian will be notified, and the student will be removed from the classroom and placed in a designated sick area until picked up by the parent/guardian. Students will be allowed to return to school when a doctor approves their attendance in writing.

Medical Emergency / Severe Injuries

In a medical emergency, seconds count. Notify staff immediately if you or someone else appears in need of medical assistance. Students are to await further direction from staff.

Field Trip Safety

Rivermont School will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of students when on field trips such as: ensuring students will wear seatbelts, having a first aid kit on hand, taking student medical information and emergency contact numbers with them, administering all necessary first aid response, and calling 911 and the principal in the event of an emergency.

Auto Accident

In the case of an accident while being transported to or from a school-sponsored activity, students are required to follow all staff directions. Should students need to be evacuated from the vehicle, they are to remain in the designated evacuation spot until transportation arrives to bring them back to the school. Notify staff immediately if you or someone else appears in need of medical assistance. Authorities are to be called to report the accident.

Intruder / Workplace Violence

This is when a crisis occurs inside the building and movement within the school might escalate the situation and/or put students in jeopardy. If appropriate, lockdown procedures will be followed. Students should remain calm and follow all staff directions.

Physical / Verbal Altercations

Fighting is very dangerous to the well-being of students and is disruptive to the orderly functioning of the school. Therefore, students involved in this type of activity face suspension from school. If a student feels at risk of becoming involved in a physical or verbal altercation, immediately request intervention assistance from a classroom staff member. Students encouraging or assisting in the fight will be considered guilty of involvement and dealt with accordingly. Follow all staff directions, including moving to another part of the school. Staff have been trained in handling this type of emergency. As needed, the police will be called for assistance in resolving serious conflicts.

Civil Disturbance / Riot

A civil disturbance is an unauthorized assemblage on the school grounds. Students will remain in the classroom away from windows, “drop and tuck” on the floor, remain calm and follow all staff directions.

Hostage Situation

A hostage situation is defined as one in which a person(s) is forced to stay in one location by one or more individuals. At these times, it is imperative that students listen to and obey all staff directions, including maintaining silence and evacuating the building if able. If staff and students are unable to exit the building, lockdown will be announced, and everyone is to gather in a corner of the classroom away from the doors and windows. Students are to remain quiet until the lockdown is cleared by administration or the designee.

Shooting

Bringing a gun to school or threatening to shoot someone is a serious, criminal offense. Immediately inform a staff member if someone brings a gun or threatens to shoot someone at school.

If a gunshot is heard or someone is seen with a gun, students will gather in a corner of the classroom out of sight of doors and windows, while staff locks the door and turns off the lights. If a student is in a hallway, run inside the nearest classroom. It is imperative that students stay calm, obey all staff directions, including maintaining silence and evacuating the building if able.

Bomb Threats

Threatening to bomb a school is a serious, criminal offense. Immediately inform a staff member if someone threatens to bomb or “blow up” the building, or a school or staff vehicle. Always respond to the sounding of the alarm by following the fire/evacuation procedure.

Terrorism

Terrorism is the use of force or violence against persons or property in violation of the criminal laws of the United States for purposes of intimidation, coercion, or ransom. Acts of terrorism could include kidnappings, bomb scares, and the use of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

In the event that a terrorist act occurs, the principal and/or designee will place the school under “lock-down status.” It is imperative that students stay calm and obey all staff directions. Students are to remain quiet until the lockdown is cleared by administration or the designee.

In the event of an explosion, where a “lock down” policy is not the best course of action, the building will be evacuated following the fire/evacuation procedure. If any objects are falling, students should get under sturdy furniture until they stop falling, then obey staff directions and follow the fire/evacuation procedure.

Bioterrorism / Biological Agent Release

This is an incident involving the discharge of a biological substance in a solid, liquid or gaseous state. In the event of a biological agent release, students are to follow staff directions, be silent and remain calm.

Chemical Accident

Chemical accidents the magnitude of a disaster could result from a transportation accident or an industrial spill, involving large quantities of toxic material. In the event of a chemical accident, students are to follow staff directions, be silent and remain calm.