

RIDGWAY MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2019-2020

Achievement
Through Learning!

GENERAL INFORMATION.....

ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION

The building administrator may, at his/her discretion, alter procedures in accordance with district policy for the benefit of the student body.

AUTHORITY OF THE FACULTY

The administration and faculty at Ridgway Area Middle-High School are authorized by the Pennsylvania School Code to exercise the same authority in supervising our students as their parents. The Ridgway Area Middle-High School administration and faculty may take reasonable action to maintain a safe, orderly, non-disruptive school environment.

BOARD MEETINGS

All students, residents, parents and guardians are invited and encouraged to attend the school board meetings held the second Wednesday of each month or the planning meetings held on the first Wednesday of the month. If you wish to be placed on the agenda, contact the Superintendent's office ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

CAFETERIA RULES

All students are expected to eat in the school cafeteria. A closed lunch program will be in effect--no take-out food ordered from outside the school is allowed to be delivered or consumed in the cafeteria. No electronic devices are permitted in the cafeteria during lunch. Faculty member and adults are given priority in the cafeteria lines at all times. Specific additional guidelines for the cafeteria will be administered by the lunch monitors. Only beverages in sealed containers may be brought into the cafeteria. Pop will not be permitted. Eating in the cafeteria is a privilege. Students unable to comply will be provided lunch in an alternative environment.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Board of Education established a means to reconcile differences between the home and school in board policy #906. The key lies in communication between the parties involved. The first point of contact is with the staff member involved. If not resolved, the parties may appeal to the next level of the chain of command, the building administrator. It is hoped that resolution can occur at the lowest level possible.

DRAFT REGISTRATION

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is cooperating with the Selective Service System (SSS) by conducting the registration of individuals who could be eligible for military service in the event of mobilization. (You must go to your local post office to register.) Federal law requires men between the ages of 18-26 to register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. If more convenient for the individual, he MAY complete the Registration Form BEFORE his 18th birthday. His registration will be recorded when he is eligible to be registered. No authority exists to register a man who completes a Registration Form after he has reached age 26. Schools are required by law to provide names to the military for recruiting and mailing purposes. Students may have their name left off this list if they notify the superintendent in writing.

DRESS CODE (Board Policy 221)

The board, administration, faculty, and staff recognize that each student's choice of dress is an extension of their personal style and preference. Choice of student dress and appearance rests with the parent/guardian and student. The choice of dress and appearance will not be interfered with by school personnel provided that it does not substantially disrupt the educational process (materially interfere with school work, create a disorder, disrupt the educational program) or adversely impact the health and safety of others. Dress and appearance that result in a substantial disruption to the educational process or an adverse impact on the health and safety of others shall be addressed by the faculty and administration in accordance with the Student Discipline Code.

The following dress and grooming standards have been established to enact Board Policy 221:

- a. Shorts may be worn all year by students in grades 6-12
- b. Shorts may be worn from the start of the school year through November 1 and beginning May 1 by student in grades K-5
- c. Shorts, skirts, and dresses shall be worn to the mid-thigh of the wearer.
- d. Pants should not expose skin between the mid-thigh and waist of the wearer.
- e. Tank top straps should be 2 inches wide; arm holes in shirts should not exceed chest line.

The following items are prohibited according to School Board Policy 221:

- a. Hats, hoods, bandannas
- b. Exposure of skin on the torso from waist to neckline (e.g. bare mid-drifts; mesh shirts)
- c. Clothing that depicts drugs/alcohol/sexually explicit or suggestive material
- d. Clothing that depicts profanity (inappropriate language)
- e. Bare feet

Electronic Devices (within instructional settings – classrooms – see **TECHNOLOGY/CELL PHONES**)

- f.
- g. Playing cards
- h. Beepers (except for volunteer fire fighters and ems personnel)
- i. Backpacks/purses/sports bags may be brought into school but must remain in the student's locker or designated area (AD room; locker rooms) until dismissal
- j. Personal items and jewelry that may be construed as a weapon.

- k. Clothing that reveals undergarments.

In addition, outerwear may not be worn during the school day. Student enrolled in a physical education class are required to wear clothing as detailed by the instructor's syllabus. Students enrolled in vocational education courses must wear clothing as detailed by the shop instructor's syllabus.

ELKER ACADEMY

Ridgway Area Middle-High School is pleased to offer a cyber school option called Elker Academy for students seeking an online learning experience rather than the traditional school experience. Enrollment information is available by contacting the building administration. Some students opt for a blended learning experience that includes both traditional coursework on- campus and online courses to augment the educational experience. Elker Academy students must meet Ridgway Area School District expectations in regards to grades, behavior, and attendance. Enrollment requires a parent meeting with the school administration.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Weather related closings and delays occur in consultation with various weather resources, neighboring school districts, and the bus company. The decision to close, delay or release early the District's student body rest with the superintendent of schools. Parents/guardians' personal circumstance, dictate their individual decision to send their child to school/pick their child up during a weather emergency. The District provides notification to parents via a District wide call system (home and cell); texts; the District Facebook page; the District website; radio (WDDH -97.5; WKBI-93.9; WKBI-1400; WOWQ-102.2) and television WTAJ/WJAC; WPSU).

FIELD TRIPS- INCENTIVE REWARD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum and are an educationally sound and important component of the instructional program of the schools. Field trips occur off school premises, are conducted as a firsthand educational experience not available in the classroom, and are supervised by chaperones that include a teacher, district employee, and/or board approved chaperone. Non-school district employee chaperones must be parents/guardians of children on the field trip and must comply with School Board Policy 916 (School Volunteers).

All field trips require Board approval and must adhere to district policies. Field trips shall be governed by guidelines which ensure that: the safety and well-being of students will be protected at all times; permission of the parent/guardian is sought and obtained before any student may participate; the principal approves the purpose, itinerary and duration of each proposed trip; each field trip is properly planned, integrated with the curriculum, and followed up by appropriate activities that enhance its value; the effectiveness of field trip activities is monitored and evaluated continuously; teachers are

allowed flexibility and innovation in planning field trips; no field trip will be approved unless it contributes to the achievement of specified instructional objectives.

A field trip shall include curricular based field trips or incentive/reward field trips.

Curricular field trips are offered as part of a course of study, grade level, and/or credit class.

Incentive/Reward field trips include experiences such as the Accelerated Reader reward trips, Stand Tall, 8th grade and Senior class trips. Students participating in school-sponsored incentive/reward trips are expected to meet eligibility requirements regarding grades, attendance, and discipline. Students must be in good academic standing and meet the criteria as established by the trip advisor at the beginning of the school year. Students and parents will have advanced notice of trip criteria in order to ensure ample opportunity and time for students to meet the criteria. Students not in good standing (unserved detentions, more than three (3) maroon, white day absences per nine (9) weeks not medically excused, failing more than one (1) class for the school year) will not be permitted to participate on the incentive/reward trip. Students who contributed financially to the cost of the trip and who become ineligible will not receive reimbursement. Students/parents/guardian wishing to appeal a student's denial for participation in a field trip must contact the building principal at least seven school days in advance of the trip.

Specific information regarding the type and nature of the field trip will be communicated to both parents and students by the school immediately following Board approval of the trip. This information includes: student costs (fundraising activities to be completed by students to earn money for the trip); final amounts due must be paid prior to a student participating on the trip; detailed trip agenda/itinerary; parents/guardians and students are required to sign the field trip agreement. All student handbook regulations, RASD policies regarding discipline, alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, apply and are in force during field trips. The Parent Consent Form must be signed by parents/guardians in regards to transportation.

For overnight trips, specific guidelines are outlined in advance regarding expectations. Chaperones and advisors will strictly enforce room checks and "lights out." Students will be restricted to assigned rooms between 11:30pm and 6:30am. Luggage for overnight trips must be brought to a designated area 24-48 hours in advance of departure for search by designated school personnel. Carry-on luggage will be searched at departure.

Medications on Field trips – medications necessary for a trip must be brought to the nurse's office no later than the day prior to the trip. It must be in the original container (prescription or over the counter) with only the necessary amount for the trip being supplied. A physician order and written parental consent must be provided for all medications, including over the counter medications (allergy medication, motion sickness medication, etc.). The student's name and date of birth must be placed on any over the counter medication that is being supplied. Prescription medications must be in their original prescription bottle. Medications must be brought in by a parent or parent designee. Students are not permitted to transport medication. Medications

brought in plastic bags or other non-original containers will not be administered

While participating in a Board approved field trip, students in violation of behavioral expectations are subject to possible immediate suspension of all field trip activities (placed in direct supervision of a chaperone), school discipline, and/or being sent home at parent expense. The Board directs planning for field trips to start early in the school year and to include collaboration between administrators, teachers, nurses, parents/guardians and other designated health officials.

FOOD AND DRINK/ WATER BOTTLES

The consumption of food and drink is limited to the cafeteria during specified meal times. A specific exemption exists for water bottles.

Water Bottle Guidelines:

1. Water bottle must be transparent. Bottle cannot be shared.
2. Container must have a closeable lid of some sort. Screw-on, push top, flip top lids are acceptable.
3. Water only! Bottles are to be filled between classes and should not disrupt class time.
4. Classroom teacher will determine a safe location within the room to store water bottles.
5. Students are responsible for any damage as a result of their water bottle.

HEALTH SERVICES / ILLNESS / FIRST AID

The school nurse is available to provide medical treatment for your child on an as needed basis.

Students who become ill during the school day should report to the nurse's office. If a student is too ill to stay in school, the nurse will notify a parent. Students may not leave school until a parent has been notified and suitable arrangements have been made. All students must be picked up by a parent or parent designee. This includes those students who have driven to school in their own vehicles. Students who contact their parent without going through the nurse's office will need to have a parent sign them out of school and, if necessary, a disciplinary referral will be made. Students who leave early (before 11:00 am) due to illness will be recorded as absent excused for ½ school day.

If your child needs to take any medication (example: pill, inhaler, nebulizer med, epi-pen) during the school day, the school nurse is required to have a physician's order on file each school year. Medication orders are required for both prescription as well as over-the-counter medications and herbal remedies. A parent/guardian or a responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian must deliver all medications to the school. **No student is permitted to transport their medication to school.**

Physician's Order: When the parent/guardian brings the medication to school they must also bring a physician's order for the medication OR have the Physician Order Section of the Ridgway School Medication Authorization already completed and signed by the physician. The Medication Authorization form is available in the nurse's office.

Parent Permission: The school nurse needs written parental permission on file each school year for medication administration. When the parent/guardian brings the medication to school, in addition to signing the Parent Permission Section of the Medication form they will sign a medication delivery form. On this form they will document the medication, dose, and quantity of medication they are delivery to the school nurse. This will also be used if they are picking up medication for any reason. No more than a thirty (30) school day supply for the medication will be stored at school.

The medication must be in its original, labeled container. Medications in plastic bags or containers other than their original pharmacy container are NOT acceptable. Most pharmacists will duplicate the prescription bottle for the school as they are aware we need the original prescription to dispense medication. The school nurse can be available to receive medication the few days prior to the start of the school year to receive medication.

If your child requires emergency medication such as an asthma inhaler or Epi-pen and needs to have it on their person, there is a specific procedure to do so.

If a student is to carry either of these medications on their person, the nurse will need to have a physician order and parental permission for this to be permitted. If the student is permitted to carry their epi-pen or inhaler on their person they should be diligent to have the medication on them at all times, including field trips and school activities.

A student who presents a statement signed ...persons (no changes)

A student who presents a statement signed by his/her parent or guardian that a medical examination at school is contrary to his/her religious beliefs shall be examined only when the Secretary of Health determines that the student presents a substantial health menace to the health of other persons.

Students who have been injured at school must report the injury to the teacher and/or school nurse at the time the injury occurs. The school is responsible for investigating the injury and filing an accident report. However, if the student fails to report the injury, the school cannot complete a thorough investigation and file an accurate accident report.

The school is not responsible for providing medical insurance for students in the event of an accidental injury at school. Parents/guardians are responsible for making sure that their child has appropriate medical insurance in cases of accidental injuries. Please contact the principal or guidance counselor to inquire about insurance options in the event that you do not have insurance for your child. These options may include, but are not limited to parents purchasing insurance through the school, CHIP, medical assistance, etc. Parents may also contact the local medical assistance office for help purchasing insurance for their child.

PARENT AND GUARDIANS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF IN THE EVENT THAT

THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IS DIAGNOSED WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION. THIS INFORMATION IS VITAL TO ENSURE THAT THE STUDENT IS RECEIVING REASONABLE EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT. Note to Parents: if you believe that your child's mental health condition is negatively affecting his/her academic or behavioral performance within the school setting, please contact the Office of Student Services at 814/776-4255

HEALTH INFORMATION / MANDATED SCREENINGS IMMUNIZATIONS.

The School Health Code requires that an individual health record be kept on every child. This health record includes your child's immunizations, boosters, and screenings that they have received during the school year. It is also used to record the results of the mandated screenings throughout your child's school years. The following are mandated through the state:

1. Height and weight - All children in grades kindergarten – 12th. Completed yearly.

2. Vision Screening – All children in 6th through 12th grade are given a vision screening by the school nurse yearly. If the student does not pass the vision screening a referral is sent home to the parent for a more extensive eye exam to be completed by an eye doctor. This form should be taken to and completed by an eye doctor and returned to the school as soon as possible and returned to the school nurse upon completion. Every child should have a complete eye exam performed annually by an eye doctor regardless of the results from the school screening.

3. Hearing Screening – Children in grades 7 and 11 are given a hearing screening test. If they fail the initial screening, they are rescreened in two weeks by the school nurse. Further failures result in a referral being sent home to the parent for a follow up with the family doctor. This form should be completed by the family doctor and returned to the school as soon as possible. Children in other grades are tested upon request.

4. Scoliosis Screenings – students in grade 6 and 7 are given a scoliosis screening. 6th grade students are given this screening by their family doctor when their 6th grade physical is completed. All 7th grade students are screened by the school nurse. If the results are not adequate, the parent is sent a form requesting additional follow up with their family doctor. This form should be completed by the family doctor and returned to the school as soon as possible.

5. Body Mass Index (BMI) – all students have body mass index calculations performed annually. Parents are notified annually of the results these screenings in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Department of Health.

6. Physical Exams– Physical examinations are required by Pennsylvania law for all students upon a child's original entry into school, 6th grade and 11th grade. These examinations may be performed by the District's school physician in school, or parents may have the school medical examination performed by their private family physician and reported to the District on forms provided by the District. These forms are available in the nurse's office and on the school website (rasd.us) under the middle-high school's nurse's page. The private medical examinations can be completed up to one year before the required school year. If the private medical examination form is not received by the District by this deadline, the District will begin to work with you to schedule your child for a physical utilizing the school physician. The private medical examinations can be completed up to one year

before the required school year (which begins on July 1st each school year).

7. Dental Exams – According to State Law a dental exam is required on all children upon original entry into school, 3rd grade, and 7th grade. This exam is to be performed by the child's own dentist. The parent and/or guardian is required to provide the results of the dental examination to the school district/school nurse. Dental exams can be completed one year before the required school year. Private dental forms are provided in order for your child to complete this mandate. These forms are also available on the school website (RASD.us) under the MS/HS nurse's page. Please return the completed forms to the school. If your child does not have a dental exam completed by his/her dentist, they have the option to see the school dentist. A permission form will be sent home for parental consent for the exam. No student will be seen by the school dentist without parental consent.

The following immunizations are required on the first day of school by all students:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis* (DTaP) (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella **(MMR) (1st dose on or after 1st birthday)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B (appropriately spaced, 3rd dose must be on or after 6 months of age, 4th dose may be required if 3rd dose is not administered after 6 months of age)
- 2 doses of varicella (chicken pox) or evidence of immunity (1st dose on or after 1st birthday)

*Usually given as DTaP – one dose must be after the 4th birthday

**Usually given as MMR

Children entering 7th Grade are also required to have the following immunizations in addition to those above on the first day of their 7th grade year:

- 1 dose of Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)

Children entering 12th grade are also required to have the following immunization in addition to those listed above on their first day of 12th grade.

- 1 dose of Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)

If a child is missing any of the required immunizations on the first day of school, they will not be permitted to attend school and will be sent home until the immunizations are received. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child receives these vaccines prior to entering school.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Physicians occasionally submit a written request for a student to be placed on homebound instruction for medical reasons. The request must give the specific reason(s) for the homebound instruction and the expected duration of the instruction.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Pennsylvania Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (PA ECYEH Program) assures execution of the federal legislation, *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act* of 1988; also incorporated into the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act*. Implementation of this program ensures that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same, free, appropriate, public education; including preschool education, as provided to other children and youth. If you have any concerns with any student that may be experiencing homelessness, please contact the Middle/High School Assistant Principal/Homeless Liaison for the Ridgway Area School District. You may also contact Andrea Sheesley, Region 6 Coordinator for Students Experiencing Homelessness:

Andrea Sheesley
Regional Coordinator
Phone: 724-463-5300 x1235
Email: asheesley@iu28.org

LOCKERS

Lockers are assigned to each student. Students are to occupy lockers assigned to them. Students should be aware that lockers are school property and subject to search. When reasonable suspicion exists that a student is in possession of contraband or has violated the student code of conduct school officials or other authorities directed by school officials will search lockers. The administration reserves the right to remove anything which is contrary to school rules or is detrimental to the school's orderly function. BOOK BAGS AND GYM BAGS ARE TO BE KEPT IN LOCKERS AT ALL TIMES. Students will sign a locker regulation form that is distributed on the first day of school.

LOITERING

Students not participating in an extracurricular activity or not supervised by a staff member must be out of the building by 2:35 pm. Students are not to loiter in or around the building before 7:10 a.m. or after 2:35pm. This includes the student parking areas.

MEAL PROGRAM

Meal Purchase Procedures

The Ridgway Area School District Cafeteria is responsible for providing students with high quality, healthy meals at a minimal cost to families. It is our responsibility to collect fair payment for meals served while supporting those families who require financial assistance to access school meals.

To meet these responsibilities, RASD Cafeteria will:

- Provide clear information about applying for federally subsidized school meals
- Provide help, when needed, in applying for federally subsidized school meals
- Provide easy methods for submitting payment to the school district for meals
- Provide on line access for families to monitor their student's cafeteria account
- Identify issues and follow up with families before excessive charges occur

Accessing Cafeteria Account

RASD Cafeterias use a computerized declining balance system for tracking student purchases and deposits.

- Students access their account at the time of service via a five-digit PIN.
- Cashiers complete the transaction by entering meal and additional items purchased. The computerized system recognized students' eligibility status for free or reduced price meals and charges the appropriate price.

- Students not eligible for free meals are expected to have cash on hand or money in their accounts in anticipation of purchases.

Middle and high school students may deposit funds in secure boxes located throughout the school. They may also bring funds to the cafeteria during the meal service.

- Students who receive free meals do not need funds for meal purchases. They are welcome to maintain an account balance for the purchase of milk or other a la carte items as they desire.

- To avoid unwanted purchases, parents/guardians may request restrictions be placed on their student's account. This can be accomplished by contacting the food service director.

- Electronic deposits can be made online. A link to the online system can be found on the District website at www.rasd.us. One payment can be split between several members of the household. Ridgway School District receives no profit from this payment system. It is offered as a convenience for our busy families.

- Cash payments sent to school but not received by the cafeteria cannot be honored. Checks or on line payments are encouraged as the safest payment methods.

Providing account balance information

- The easiest and surest way of monitoring your student's account balance is by creating an account This is a FREE service that allows purchases and fund balances to be monitored. The online system provides low balance email alerts.

- In addition to alerts, cashiers in the middle and high schools shall verbally provide account balance information to all customers. This will be done in a gentle quiet manner so as to be helpful and not threatening or embarrassing. Once a student's account is in arrears, all communication will be directed to the parent/guardian.

- Low balance and negative balance email alerts will be sent to parents/guardians on a weekly basis.

- Negative account balance letters will be mailed weekly to accounts greater than \$10 in arrears.

Charging/ IOU's

- Students may not charge a la carte (extras) purchases.
- Students will never be denied a complete meal. A lunch tray will never be taken away from a student.

- The Food Service Director, or his/her representative, will review account balances and contact parents/guardians of students with negative account balances greater than \$10.00.

- The Food Service Director will work actively with administrators and parents to avoid excessive charges, to support the repayment of funds, and to approve families for subsidized school meals.

Breakfast and Lunch Balance Collections

_Parents/Guardians will be informed of the district's policy regarding meal charges and collection procedures in the student handbook on an annual basis.

A written notice will be sent to parents/guardians indicating that charges are accruing and advising the parents/guardians of the district's collection policy. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the charges on their student's account and their responsibility for payment on a weekly basis. Parent's/Guardians will be contacted by telephone regarding such matters if there has been no response to the written communication.

Collection Procedures

Student account balances will be reviewed semi-annually. Any account that has reached \$50.00 by January 30, and June 30 will be turned over to a third-party collection agency and any fees incurred will be charged to the parents/guardians.

The district will attempt to collect payment for checks returned due to insufficient funds. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for all cost and fees associated with the returned check. Following the receipt of two (2) returned checks, the parent/guardian/student will be required to pay cash and or a U.S. Postal Service money order or certified check for all school meals.

Year End Balances

- Students' account balances, both positive and negative, are maintained on record at the end of the school year and carried over as the beginning balance for the next school year.
- Families will be provided information about year end balances and repaying charges in May of each year.
- At the start of each school year families will be provided information about beginning balances.

Account Closures/Refunds

- Refunds are provided with the intent of closing the student's cafeteria account or when student's meal status changes from paid to free. When students withdraw from the district a refund check will be issued to the parent/guardian upon request. If a refund is not requested:
 - If possible, the remaining balance will be transferred to a sibling's account.
 - If there is no sibling and the remaining balance is greater than \$5.00, a refund check will be issued and mailed to the last known address.
 - If there is no sibling enrolled and the remaining balance is less than \$5.00, the remaining balance is forfeited and is transferred to the Bad Debt Fund.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will not be penalized for non-participation while on a doctor's medical excuse. All medical excuses must be in accordance with school guidelines and from a practicing physician and on file in the nurse's office. Long and short-term medical excuses will result in an appropriate written or physical alternative activity which may include providing assistance to the teacher for grading purposes.

While on a medical excuse, the student who may not participate in physical education class may not participate in any interscholastic athletic practice or competition nor in

intramurals/open gyms until released from the medical excuse.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

In the interest of good taste and common courtesy, students are not to engage in public displays of affection while at school. Hugging, kissing, embracing or exhibiting other physical contact in the school building, on school buses, on school property, or at school-sponsored events is not permitted.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Safety/ Security Drills

There will be periodic drills throughout the school year to better prepare the staff and students in case of a real emergency. Drills will include weather emergency, lock down procedures, fire drills, and evacuation procedures. These types of drills are to dismiss any fear of being prepared in case of a real emergency and address any concerns or needs for the safety of all MS-HS occupants.

Terroristic Threats

Ridgway Area Middle-High School recognizes the danger that terroristic threats and acts present to the health, safety, security and welfare of other students, staff, and community. The school district realizes the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving such a threat or act. The School Board prohibits any district student from communicating terroristic threats or committing terroristic acts directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or school building.

Terroristic threat - shall mean a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another, to cause evacuation of a building, or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard to the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience. Terroristic act - shall mean an offense against property or involving danger to another person. Terroristic threats may be written, verbal, through technology but not limited to inform. Any threat directed at school personnel, and/or the student population will be immediately investigated by school personnel and law enforcement.

Unlawful Harassment

The physical safety and well-being of Ridgway students and staff forms the foundation of many guidelines in the building. A school's group setting restricts certain actions otherwise acceptable as an individual. Safety becomes an important factor in transporting students to and from school events, in curricular activities (e.g. Physical Education, Practical Arts, Science), and in extra-activities (e.g. Athletics, Programs).

A safe, positive school environment includes freedom from harassment. It is the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which harassment in any form will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to report such incidents to administration.

Harassment includes but is not limited to slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age or handicapping condition.

The following are some examples of unlawful harassment: sexual advances, touching of a sexual nature, graffiti of a

sexual nature, displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, and written materials; sexual gestures, sexual or dirty jokes, pressure for sexual favors, touching oneself or others sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others; spreading rumors about or rating other persons as to a sexual activity or performance.

Students involved in the unlawful harassment of another student shall be subject to a minimum full suspension of 7 days and depending upon the severity of the incident may result in expulsion. Report any complaints of unlawful harassment to either Mr. Podpora- Middle/High School Principal or Mrs. Heather McMahon Vargas - Superintendent of Schools.

Bullying

The Ridgway Area Middle-High School does not tolerate bullying in any form. Bullying is defined as intentional written, electronic, verbal, or physical acts that are

- Directed at another student/ students
- Occurs in a school setting
- Severe, persistent, or pervasive
- Involve a real or perceived imbalance of power

Bullying can create a threatening environment and disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may rise to "unlawful harassment." Students are encouraged to report any bullying to the administration.

Disciplinary consequences will follow for offending students which will vary depending upon the seriousness and pervasiveness of the incident. Consequences may include counseling, detentions, suspension, and referral to the Board of Education.

SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM

In conjunction with the IU9's Career and Technical Center, senior students in good academic standing are eligible to participate in a certified Cooperative Education program for credit. This program offers the opportunity for full time students to work during the school day and earn school credits. In unique circumstances a junior student may be permitted the opportunity to participate in the program. Please contact the high school guidance department for specific guidelines.

STUDENT SEARCHES

The Ridgway MS-HS administration reserves the right to search the school and its grounds. This includes lockers and automobiles. Students are to have no expectation of privacy with regard to lockers or vehicles parked on school property. Searches may be unannounced, and may utilize canines to detect contraband such as stolen items, drugs, alcohol, and weapons. Legal authorities may assist the administration during a search.

A student's person and/or personal effects (including backpack, purse) may also be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of illegal and/or unauthorized material. A student's failure to permit and/or cooperate with a search will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action including suspension from school and law enforcement notification.

SURVEY POLICY

Any effort to obtain information from a student in the form of survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following information must have the prior written consent of the parent or student (if the student is not an emancipated minor):

- A. Political affiliations;
- B. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family;
- C. Sex behavior and attitudes;
- D. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- E. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.)

TECHNOLOGY/CELL PHONES

The Ridgway Area School District encourages the use of technology to advance student learning. A clear distinction exists between educational technology and entertainments technology. The use of entertainment technology such as radios, CD players, earphones/buds, electronic games, iPods, MP3 players, pagers, cellular phones, laser pointers, etc. is not normally permitted to be used during school hours. Entertainment technology must be turned off and put away between 7:30 AM and 2:24 PM. Devices being used during this time will be confiscated, turned into the office, and a discipline referral will be issued to the student. For first offenses, students may pick up the device at the end of the school day.

The exceptions technology expectations are cell phones and educational technology (kindles, iPads, personal computers, electronic books and tablets).

Cell phones must be off/silenced and concealed during the instructional periods 1-5 and common remediation unless, a teacher has integrated cell phone use into the instructional lesson plan (legitimate educational purpose). **High School Students (grades 9-12)** are permitted to use cell phones in the hallways between class transitions, traveling to and from the cafeteria during lunch periods, and while in the cafeteria during lunch. ***Students who violate the cell phone exception and who fail to surrender their cell phone will earn a discipline referral for insubordination and will be subject to disciplinary action as per the student code of conduct.***

Educational technology (kindles, iPads, personal computers, electronic books and tablets) ***may only be used in coordination with classroom instruction (designated in lesson plan as a legitimate educational purpose) and when granted permission by the course instructor/supervising professional staff. Professional employees/supervising professional staff have the discretionary authority to determine whether student use of technology has a legitimate educational purpose or whether it is being used for entertainment.***

Cell phones/electronic devices may never be used by students to take pictures or videos during the instructional day.

Bringing technology to school is a risk assumed by the student. The Ridgway Area School District nor its employees are

responsible for lost, stolen or damaged technology brought to school by students.

The Ridgway Area School District provides students and employees with a wireless high speed computer network for internet and e-mail. To access the internet, all students must obtain parent/guardian permission and sign a release. Also students are required to sign a District user agreement indicated their understanding of and willingness to abide by the District's procedures and regulations. Network storage accounts and folders are treated like a student locker. The administration and network administrators audit student use logs to maintain security, system integrity and responsible use. If a student violates the rules of appropriate use, they will be held accountable for their actions and may lose network privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

TELEPHONE USE

School phones may only be used for urgent purposes and use must be approved by the main office. Use of a school phone without permission during the school day is a disciplinary offense and will be treated accordingly.

TEXTBOOKS

Upon issuing students a textbook, teachers will record the number and condition of the book. This recorded information will be retained for each book. Students will be required to pay for a lost or damaged text book before receiving a replacement. Payment must be made in the main office. The receipt will serve as an authorization slip for the issuing of a new textbook. Students will pay the full value of the replacement cost for the lost book.

TRANSPORTATION

Bicycle racks are provided for the students' convenience by the bus loading area. It is recommended that students have locks for their bicycles. The school is not responsible for theft or damage to bicycles while on school property.

Driving to school is a privilege extended to those students who have their parents' permission to drive and who agree to abide by the school's student driving regulations. Students may not revisit their vehicles during the school day without the approval of the building administration. Parking is limited to the designated areas (upper parking lot above the auditorium, tennis courts area (available after football season), parking spaces beside Heindl Sports Complex, and legal area off school grounds. Students who violate the regulations will have their driving privileges suspended and may be subject to further disciplinary action. Student vehicles on school property are subject to search per handbook and RASD policy. If a vehicle is not registered to a student, but owned by another party, such as a parent or guardian and the registered owner wishes to be present for a search, he/she should contact the Principal at the beginning of the school year. If the registered owner fails to contact the administration his/her consent to search the vehicle without being present is implied.

Students who ride the bus to school are to abide by all RASD Policies and procedures so that everyone may have a safe and enjoyable ride to school. Should a student choose to violate these policies and procedures, parents must be aware of the following disciplinary actions:

Violations of RASD Transportation Policies:

1st Violation – Parents will receive a warning letter from administration detailing the behavior(s) of their child that occurred on district transportation services. This warning letter will include future disciplinary actions (**detention**) against their child should there be another violation of RASD School Board transportation policies.

2nd Violation - Parents will receive a discipline letter from administration detailing the behavior(s) of their child that occurred on district transportation services; in addition to the issuance of a detention. This discipline letter will include future disciplinary actions (**suspension**) against their child should there be another violation of RASD School Board transportation policies.

3rd Violation - Parents will receive a discipline letter, and a telephone call from administration detailing the behavior(s) of their child that occurred on district transportation services; in addition to the issuance of a suspension. This discipline letter will include future disciplinary actions (**Suspension and possible removal from district transportation**) against their child should there be another violation of RASD School Board transportation policies.

VALUABLES

Students are encouraged to bring to school only those things necessary to function during the school day. The school cannot be held responsible for money or valuables lost at school.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome to visit our school. Visitors must register at the main office and will be issued a visitor's badge. Students are not to bring student guests from other schools. Students considering transferring to Ridgway Area Middle-High School should make arrangements with the administration to set-up a visit.

WORKING PAPERS

Working papers are available in the office for students employed in Pennsylvania. These are available at no charge and may be issued to any student fourteen or older. When applying for working papers, students need to bring their birth certificate or driver's license as proof of age.

Be advised that in accordance with Pennsylvania state law, students that cannot maintain adequate academic progress may have their working papers revoked.

ACADEMICS.....

Planning a program of study for successful completion of graduation requirements should involve careful consideration by the student and parents, and should be made on the basis of a student's interest, abilities, and career goals. It is advisable to work closely with the guidance department in the selection of courses.

Some instructional areas such as art, music, family and consumer sciences, and technical education require the use of materials which are to be purchased by the student.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Student Classification

Grade level courses should be taken in the sequence in which they are offered.

- a. To be classified as a **freshman** (9th grade), a student must successfully complete eighth grade.
- b. To be classified as a **sophomore** (10th Grade), a student must have accumulated a minimum of six (6) credits prior to the start of the school year.
- c. To be classified as a **junior** (11th Grade), a student must have accumulated a minimum of thirteen (13) credits prior to the start of the school year.
- d. No student shall be considered a member of the **senior** class (Grade 12) unless the student has, prior to the start of the academic senior year, a sufficient number of credits which added together with number of credits being taken during the student's senior year would make the student eligible to graduate at the next commencement ceremony.
- e. The administration reserves the right to assign students to a grade level classification based on individual circumstances.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from Ridgway Area High School, a student must successfully complete the requirements of their individualized educational program and/or the following:

a. CULMINATING PROJECT

Each student will complete a culminating project. Each student must successfully complete a written paper and an oral/visual presentation of his/her culminating project according to the following description:

- (1) This project will require the student to utilize skills he/she obtained through the regular curriculum in order to encourage the following:
 - (a.) Higher order thinking skills
 - (b.) Problem-solving
 - (c.) Analysis
 - (d.) Logical sequencing
- (2) The student will be required to demonstrate the knowledge gained by this project at the Senior Project Open House held in the spring.
- (3) The student will be required to use individual skills based on his/her interests in life.
- (4) This project will require the student to become more competitive, career-oriented, and marketable in the working world.

b. CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

- (1) A high school diploma will be presented to students meeting the following (Minimum) course credit requirements:

English.....	(4 credits)
Social Studies.....	(4 credits)
Math	(4 credits)
Science.....	(4 credits)
Health.....	(1 credit)
Phys. Ed.	(2 credits)

Arts/Humanities.....	(1 credit)
Electives	(Equivalent to meet total 28 credits)
Total.....	Equal or exceed 28 Credits

NOTE: Students must take at least one credit each school year in English.

c. COMMUNITY SERVICE- JOB SHADOWING

Students must complete approved community service and job shadowing experiences as outlined below in order to meet graduation requirements.

Community Service Hours – Students must complete a total of 50 hours of community service. Freshman must complete 5 hours, while Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors complete 15 hours each year. Students not meeting the annual community service hour requirements are assigned an additional 5 hours for each year in which the requirement has not been met.

Job Shadowing - Two job shadow experiences must be completed by the end of the junior year. Students who have not met the deadline for job shadow experiences receive an additional 5 hours of community service assigned to be completed.

Course Changes / Add-Drop Window

Course selection should be a firm decision which is thoughtfully made by students after careful consultation with parents, teachers, and counselors. Prior successes, failures, special individual interests, aptitudes, and future college and career plans should be taken into consideration when a student plans a course pattern.

Final schedules will be released during the summer months. Requests for schedule changes will be granted only under certain circumstances and prior to the start of the school year. The add/drop window will close on September 13, 2019.

Grading System

a. REPORT CARDS

- (1) Report cards are issued at the end of each nine week marking period.
- (2) At the end of each school year, all books must be returned and any other unfinished school business must be taken care of in a proper manner before the final report card will be released on the Tyler portal.

b. CUMULATIVE AVERAGE

- (1) The cumulative average is a procedure for calculating a student's scholastic average on a scale of 0 to 100. It represents an average for the final grades earned where credit is given for subjects taken. The cumulative average begins with courses taken in the ninth grade. Students who transfer in from other schools will bring with them their current school average.
- (2) Each course is assigned a value, called credit. Credits are based on the number of meeting times per week and the length of the course.
- (3) The student with the highest cumulative grade point average is ranked number one. If two students have the same cumulative average, they will be assigned the same rank while the following number will be left unassigned.

c. HIGH HONOR/HONOR ROLL

- (1) The honor roll contains the names of students having an average of no lower than a 3.00 GPA for all courses that have numerical grades and the high honor roll contains the names of students having an average of a 3.67 GPA or better in all numerical grades. A student who receives an incomplete mark "I" or has a grade of 69% or less in any course is not eligible for either honor roll.
- (2) A student who believes an error exists in either honor roll list should immediately report the discrepancy to the guidance department.

d. MARKING SYSTEM

- (1) Students will receive a numerical grade for each course at the end of every quarter. The quarter, semester, and year-end grades will all be numerical grade point averages. Work which is incomplete at the end of the fourth quarter will be given a "zero" for the incomplete assignments and averaged with other grades given during that quarter.
- (2) The following grading scale/ system of marking applies:

A	95-100	4.0 GPA	C	78-81	2.00
A-	93-94	3.67	C-	75-77	1.67
B+	90-92	3.33	D+	73-74	1.33
B	87-90	3.00	D	71-72	1.00
B-	85-86	2.67	D-	70	0.67
C+	82-84	2.33	F	69 or below	0.00

e. TESTING

- (1) Teachers shall administer tests in their classes during each 9 week marking period during the school year. Those tests should be progressive and comprehensive in nature by including information learned in previous course work. The tests shall be appropriate to the student's age and ability and consistent with the academic standards established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Teachers shall use multiple assessment techniques to evaluate the student's progress including, but not limited to, reports, individual or group projects, discussions, homework and teacher observation.

- (2) Students shall receive a grade at the end of each 9 week marking period. The final grade is the average for the four marking periods (20% each quarter) and the final exam grade (20%). FINAL EXAMS are given at the end of the school term/course. Students will not be excused for family educational trips during FINAL EXAMS. The FINAL EXAM accounts for 20% of the final grade in a course.

f. HOMEWORK

- (1) Homework assignments should complement the school instruction. The assignments should develop student responsibility, good study habits, and organizational skills. Homework assignments should provide practice and reinforcement of skills already presented by the teacher,

broaden areas of interest through enrichment, and provide an opportunity for parents to know their child is studying.

- (1) Homework should not significantly consume a student's time beyond the regular school day. The teachers recognize that students have commitments that continue to develop their social, emotional, physical, and family relationships. The weight of homework is specified in each teacher's syllabi which presented to students at the beginning of the school year/semester.
 - (2) Assignments will be reviewed and returned within a reasonable amount of time, depending on each type of assignment.
 - (3) Teachers should discuss with the students the value and meaning of homework in each course at the beginning of the school year.
 - (4) No one subject should comprise too great a majority of homework assignments.
 - (5) Homework will not be assigned as busy work or as a form of punishment in any of the grade levels.
- (2) Homework Support: RHS Campus Center/ RMS Homework Club is a free service available to all students that operates Monday's thru Thursday's from 2:30- 4PM. A certified professional teacher is available to supervise and assist students. Attendance at Campus Center is mandatory for ineligible students participating in extra-curricular activities.

In addition, all RMS and RHS students are able to access teachers for additional support during "Common" remediation time each school day. Student planners are also available in the main office. The first copy is free. Replacement fee is \$5.

g. SUMMER SCHOOL

- (1) Students who fail required courses may be allowed to attend summer school or participate in a correspondence course program in order to acquire the credit. To qualify for summer school, the final course average may not be below a 50%. A maximum of two courses may be completed during summer school.
- (2) Allowing summer school or correspondence course work to make-up for failed courses is at the discretion of the administration. The student is responsible for all costs, fees and transportation related to summer school programs.
- (3) Students who successfully complete summer school or correspondence school requirements will receive a grade of 70% and course credit for the course taken.

h. PROMOTION- RETENTION

Middle School students who fail two or more major academic courses during a school year shall be retained in the same grade level for the next school year. Students who experience two grade level retentions will be referred to the Office of Student Services for an evaluation to determine if the student has a disability and is in need of specially designed instruction.

i. ACADEMIC HONORS

The top academic students in each graduating class will be determined by the final cumulative grade point averages and will be honored at the Senior Recognition Night and at commencement. The following awards will be recognized:

- (1) 1st Honor (Valedictorian) - Highest cumulative average among academic students.

- (2) 2nd Honor (Salutatorian) - Second highest cumulative average among academic students.

j. INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL AND ACADEMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM (IBAR)

This program provides education for students in grades 6 through 12 who exhibit to a marked degree any or all of the following conditions:

- (1) Disregard for school authority, including persistent violation of school policy and rules.
- (2) Display of or use of controlled substances on school property or during school-affiliated activities.
- (3) Violent or threatening behavior on school property or during school-related activities.
- (4) Possession of a weapon on school property, as defined under 18 Pa. C.S. Section 921 (relating to possession of weapon on school property).
- (5) Commission of a criminal act on school property.
- (6) Misconduct that would merit suspension or expulsion under school policy.
- (7) Habitual truancy.
- (8) Students who are placed in IBAR for disciplinary reasons will remain on the ineligibility list for the duration of this placement.
- (9) Students displaying severe academic struggles in several subject areas. Students will be placed in the Intensive Behavioral and Academic Recovery Program based on administrative recommendation, which will include input from teachers, counselors, and the students' parents/guardians.

The IBAR program is designed to run nearly parallel to the daily school schedules, yet operate in a more restrictive fashion. Classroom teachers shall assist by supervising/monitoring students' academic progress. To this end, the program aims to target reshaping of established behavior patterns while at the same time maintaining the academic needs of the student so that reentry to the regular school program remains as seamless as possible.

While placed in IBAR, students will: Remain under the supervision of the counselor and monitoring teachers for a minimum of five consecutive school days, but could very likely be placed for longer periods. Be socially isolated from the remainder of the student body for approximately 50 percent of the day; Complete assignments provided by regular education teachers or through online courses; Cooperate and participate in counseling prescribed by the administration

k. GRADUATION CEREMONY

The graduation ceremony is a monumental occasion. In order to insure that it is a memorable event for parents and students, there are specific expectations that students are required to follow. Students who do not meet the graduation requirements are not permitted to participate in the ceremony. Often, a specific teacher, staff member or school employee has had a significant impact on a student's education and life. Students may select a maximum of two current or retired employees (teacher, custodian, aide, coach, guidance counselor, administrator, maintenance worker, board member, etc.) of the school district to present them with their diploma during the graduation ceremony. Employees who have resigned or are otherwise no longer employed by the District are not eligible for this honor.

I. INDEPENDENT STUDY/ STUDY ABROAD

Independent Study

1. All courses offered via RHS faculty members as independent study and/or courses being taught by RHS faculty members via distance learning or through advanced technology is voluntary on the part of the faculty instructor and must be pre-approved by the administration.
2. Students enrolled at RHS are required to take courses offered as part of the School Board approved District curriculum.
 - a. In the event that a significant and irresolvable schedule conflict occurs between a senior being unable to take the required courses necessary for graduation (not elective courses); in consultation with superintendent, the building principal may approve the student taking a course outside of the School Board approved District Curriculum. This is handled on a case-by-case basis. Note: the significant and irresolvable schedule conflict cannot be the result of academic failure.
3. Students are permitted to take courses from post-secondary institutions for the purpose of personal growth and enrichment and/or for the purpose of earning college credits. However, these courses will not be counted toward RHS graduation requirements, will not count in the weighting process and will not appear on the student's high school transcript.

Scheduling Requirements for Study Abroad Programs

(in addition to the above-specified requirements):

1. Students who study abroad may take courses required for graduation from RHS via distance learning/advanced technology.
2. The RHS faculty must voluntarily agree to the requirements and the arrangement must be pre-approved by the building principal.
3. Students studying abroad are required to meet with the principal and guidance counselor no later than the last day of school prior to the school year the student will be studying abroad. During this meeting the student will develop a schedule of courses that they would have taken had the student not been studying abroad. This schedule will be compared to the courses being offered/available. The student will be notified both verbally and in writing regarding the course schedule.
4. Students studying abroad may take no more than nine courses during a school year. (e.g. if a student is taking five courses at a high school placement abroad, then he or she would be eligible to take 5 courses from his/her home school; given that those courses are offered via distance learning/advanced technology).
5. Courses taken abroad cannot duplicate a course that the student has already taken and earned credit for in his or her course of study.
6. Using an official transcript from the placement abroad, a committee will determine the weight of the courses taken abroad. This determination shall be made based upon a comparison of detailed course description/syllabus/course requirements with the District's course description / syllabus / course requirement.

Note: Students who choose to study abroad are considered in the class ranking process. Students who study abroad are not guaranteed to maintain their class rank.

m. ELECTIVE CREDIT/ EXTRA-CURRICULARS

High school sophomores, juniors and seniors meeting eligibility criteria may earn elective credit for participation in extra-curricular activities such as marching band, concert choir, musical productions. Students must have traditionally earned 6 elective credits prior to earning extra-curricular credits in this manner. Up to 2 credits may be earned through this procedure. These credits will be awarded pass/fail. Specific forms are available in the guidance office and additional requirements do apply.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR SERVICES

All students in the Ridgway Middle/High School will be scheduled for individual or group conferences at some time during the school year. Seniors and juniors will be individually interviewed to discuss graduation projects and future plans. In addition to the scheduled conferences, students should feel free to consult their counselor at any time concerning individual problems that may arise.

Students are informed of upcoming college representative visits and SAT/ACT application deadlines throughout the year via guidance newsletter, announcements and high school guidance page updates.

In addition to discussing individual problems with students, counselors assist them with course selection based on their interests, abilities, and future vocational plans. It is important for you to realize that the guidance staff is a service for you to use. Your guidance counselor is trained to help you cope with any academic, social, or emotional concerns you may encounter throughout the entire school year.

Students are also assessed through an extensive testing program provided under the direction of the middle school and high school guidance counselors. All high school students can take the PSAT and SAT/ACT. Sophomores and Juniors are encouraged to take the PSAT. Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors are strongly encouraged to take the SAT. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is administered to all juniors. The Ridgway High School complies with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's regulations and guidelines regarding the administration of Keystone exams and will continue to do so in accordance with state regulations and school board policy.

Careercruising.com is a tool that is used by the high school counselor both in career exploration classes and individual meetings with students. Each student sets up an account which creates an online portfolio that they can change or add to over their high school career and beyond. They are able to use this resource to research careers, complete career inventories, match careers with their interests, research colleges/trade schools that have their major, save a resume, etc.

Students are eligible to participate in a work study program as juniors and seniors, provided that they are on track to graduate, maintain passing grades, are in good standing, have a job or are taking college classes off campus. To participate in this opportunity, students and parents/guardians should meet with the administration and school counselor to discuss scheduling options and to fill out the appropriate paperwork.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EMERGENCY NEEDS, ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO SECURE A PASS BEFORE REPORTING TO THE GUIDANCE OFFICE DURING CLASS TIME.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment is a program where a student takes a course that awards both high school and college credit. Tuition will be assessed and must be paid to the college prior to commencing the college portion of the class. Dual enrollment courses offered through the University of Pittsburgh are open to students in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 as per the requirements of the post-secondary institution.

ATTENDANCE.....

Pennsylvania Compulsory Education laws mandate enforcement of regular school attendance by students. Parents and students are responsible for the student's attendance. The law allows for severe fines to be levied for non-attendance.

We believe students need to be in class if students are to learn to their fullest capability.

Absent students miss the dialog and expertise the teacher shares with the students and is detrimental to learning. In many cases, just a few absences can result in a serious detrimental lowering of the students' grade. **Excessive absences can result in failure, denial of credits, and possible retention.** Although the school keeps parents informed of excessive absences so that lower grades or failures should not come as a surprise, it should be understood that the legal responsibility for attendance rests with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Additionally, future employers and college admission officers are favorably impressed if a student has a good school attendance record, as it is a good indicator of future success.

ABSENCE GUIDELINES

1. If a student is to be absent from school, the parent/guardian should call the school (773-3164) the morning of the absence prior to 7:30 a.m.
- 2- Prior to the start of school on the day a student returns from the absence(s), he/she must submit a written excuse signed by the parent/guardian to the Main Office (Middle School) or the attendance secretary (High School). This excuse slip indicates whether the absence is excused for a lawful reason or if it is unlawful/unexcused. It is the responsibility of the student to ascertain the assignments missed.
3. In accordance with Pennsylvania state law, if a student has been absent ten (10) days total for the school year per lawful parental excuse, a *doctor's excuse* becomes required to verify subsequent absence(s) beyond the 10-day limit. The principal has the duty to review long-term illnesses and habitual absenteeism on an individual basis.
4. **The following conditions constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:**
 - Sickness
 - A death in the family
 - Confirmed medical or legal absence
 - Religious holidays
 - Certain appointments that cannot be scheduled during non-school hours
 - School activities approved by the administration
 - School approved authorized educational trips
 - Visitation to colleges/universities
 - Suspension from school

- Impassable Roads

5. Illegal/ Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Not knowing there was school
- No clean clothes to wear
- Missed the bus
- Went out of town
- Overslept
- Baby-sitting
- Work
- Vacation (unless approved in advance)
- Hunting or fishing (unless approved in advance)
- Haircut
- Shopping
- Personal reasons
- Car problems
- Because my cousin is visiting (or any other relative)

6. If no written excuse from the parent or guardian is presented by end of the third day following your return to school, the days absent will be considered unlawful or unexcused. Written excuses must contain the student's name, dates of the absence, and the reason for the absence.

7. Family Educational Trips- The district recognizes that situations arise when students must visit colleges, travel, or go on vacations with parents. When absences are considered educational in nature, students can be excused. The proper procedure is as follows-

- To be considered for a lawful excuse, an "Educational Field Trip" (EFT) form must be completed and submitted to the office prior to the date of the trip for approval. These forms are available in the main office. To be excused, the parents must indicate the educational benefits for the requested date(s). NOTE: A request for an EFT may be denied in cases where students are in poor academic standing or have poor attendance.
- The student is responsible for securing signatures on the form from his/her teachers
- The form must be returned to the MS-HS Office prior to the trip
- Students will be responsible for making-up school work missed

A maximum of 5 days will be excused each school year for educational trips. All absences for educational trips, regardless of their length, will count toward this 5-day limit. Absences in excess of the 5-day limit will be marked unexcused. In extenuating circumstances, approval may be granted by the administration for additional days. Educational trips taken without prior approval will result in unexcused absences for the days missed.

8. If a student becomes ill at school, the student must see the school nurse. If the school nurse determines that a student is ill and should be sent home, the time missed will be marked excused. However, any student circumventing seeing the nurse and calling home without

the nurse's medical recommendation will be marked unexcused or unlawful.

9. Any student arriving to school after 8:30am will not be permitted to participate in or attend any extracurricular activities on that day unless approved by the principal for special reasons, such as a delayed school bus, doctor's appointment, or funeral.
10. **85% Attendance Rule-** Student attendance is compiled on a period –by-period basis. To achieve credit for a course, students must be in attendance for 85% of the instructional time for each course and satisfactorily complete all course work as per teacher syllabi. A student's academic insufficiencies resulting from attendance may be mitigated by a student and parent appealing to the building Attendance Committee for relief and reinstatement of academic credit.
11. **Appeal Procedures-** Students who have attendance issues relating to 85% attendance, illegal absences, etc. may file a written appeal to the building principal. The parent and student will appear before the Attendance Committee for credit/exemption from the 85% rule, illegal absences. If unsatisfied with the ruling of the Attendance Committee, the parent/student may appeal to the Superintendent.
12. **Corrective action will take place for all unexcused and unlawful absences** according to the age of the student as outlined below.

a. Students Less than 17 Years Old:

- First Offense and Second Offense: Attendance Letter mailed home and given to student.
- Third Offense: Parents will be served with a legal notice indicating that there have been three (3) or more days of unlawful absences. The building administration will convene a Truancy Elimination meeting with the parent (s) and student. A Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) will be developed and implemented.
- Fourth Offense: Meeting with student, parent, and building principal to review TEP guidelines and consequences.
- Fifth Offense: Whenever a student reaches five illegal absences, a student will be placed on the "**Loss of Privileges List**". **Participation in field trips, clubs, will be denied due to lack of compliance with TEP guidelines.**
- Additional Offenses - Citations will be served through the local district judge's office whenever a student reaches 6 illegal absences. (NOTE: Each unlawful absence may result in substantial fines up to \$300 per day plus court costs may be imposed by the district magistrate.)
- Concurrent with the filing of the first citation with the district magistrate, a referral will be made to Children and Youth Services for the respective county of residence. Children and Youth Services will conduct a home visit to the student's/family home.

b. Students 17 Years or Older:

- First Offense and Second Offense: Attendance Letter mailed home and given to student.
- Third Offense: Parents will be served notice indicating that there have been three (3) or more days of unlawful absences. A mandatory student

- conference will be scheduled with the administration to develop an improvement plan
- iii. **Fourth Offense:** Meeting with student, parent, and building principal to review guidelines and consequences of proper school attendance.
 - iv. **Subsequent Offenses** - Additional unexcused absences will result in Level II disciplinary action. A parent conference will be required with the Principal and/or Superintendent depending on the number of offenses. The administrative staff will review chronic absentee cases on an individual basis.
 - v. **LOSS of PRIVILEGES:** Students who have accumulated 5 or more unexcused absences will lose privileges for the remainder of the school year (fieldtrips, assemblies, dances, lunch outside, clubs).

TARDINESS GUIDELINES

It is not only important that students be in school each day but they should also be on time! Tardiness is not arriving to an assigned location prior to the designated time. There are two types of tardiness, being tardy to school and being tardy to class.

- a. A student tardy (late) to school for an unlawful or unexcused reason for the first and second time, he/she will receive a warning from the office.
 - b. For each subsequent unexcused tardy, the student will be assigned a detention.
 - c. Beginning with the fifth unexcused or unlawful tardy to school, the student will be assigned consequences in accordance with Level II of the school Discipline Code.
1. Tardiness to class is defined as not being in their assigned seat or area when the tardy bell rings.
 - a. Classroom tardiness should be will be dealt with by the assigned teacher. Teachers may assign an after-school detention. Chronic offenders will be dealt with according to the Discipline Code.
 - b. Late passes issued by the main office will only be for those students detained by office personnel. Teachers detaining a student after the tardy bell must write a pass for the detained student to show their assigned teacher. It is the student's responsibility to secure a pass before reporting to class late from the person detaining them. Otherwise, the student is considered tardy unexcused. Students will not be allowed to go and get a pass.

APPOINTMENT GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule appointments outside the school day. However, a doctor's or dentist's appointment must occasionally be scheduled to occur during school hours. These guidelines must be followed for a student to be dismissed from school:

1. The parent must bring in or send in with their child either a signed written note or the appointment card to the main office before the start of school on the day of the appointment.
2. The student will be issued a "Permit to Leave the Building." This permit will indicate the time the student is to be dismissed from class to report to the main office for the appointment.

3. At the time indicated on the permit to leave, the student must report to the main office with the permit and sign out before departure.
4. After the appointment, the doctor or dentist should give a note to the student to re-enter school, depending on the time, either after the appointment or the next school day.
5. In the case of a student being requested to leave school for an emergency situation, the parent(s) are requested to call the principal in person. The student is expected to return to school with a written excuse as soon as the emergency is resolved.

WITHDRAWAL or TRANSFER

If a child is to be withdrawn from Ridgway Area Middle / High School, the parent or guardian must complete the withdrawal process in person prior to the withdrawal date to avoid possible penalties.

Students new to the district need to register for school in the main office. The Board requires parents at the time of registering their children to file statements concerning previous expulsion for offenses relating to weapons, alcohol or drugs, or willful infliction of injury. In order to enroll new students in the correct program, the enrollment process cannot be completed until official records and all other documentation have been received from the previous school.

EXTRACURRICULAR.....

GENERAL GUIDELINES

As a member of an extra-curricular activity in the Ridgway Area Middle-High School the student will follow the Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct including the policies listed below.

1. Attendance - The student must be present in school by 8:30am in order to participate in any practice, game, or activity on that particular day. If a student is tardy after 8:30am, he/she will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities that day unless he/she submits a doctor or dentist appointment slip upon arrival to school after the appointment. Those students coming from a doctor or dentist appointment must be in school a minimum of a half day (at least four hours) and submit a doctor's slip. As in all cases, tardiness will be reviewed by the high school principal. The principal reserves the right to accept or reject tardiness on an individual basis depending on the circumstances.
2. Dress and Conduct – Whenever representing the school district, students will be expected to dress well and present a neat appearance. As representatives of their school, students involved in extra-curricular activities will conduct themselves as good citizens at all times. They will not show disrespect to any athletic official or personnel of their school or any other school.
3. Eligibility - Eligibility is composed of three major responsibility areas: Academics; Attendance; and Discipline.
 - A. Weekly - Students involved in extra-curricular activities must maintain a grade point average of 70% or above in all but one (1) full credit course for the

weekly period, enrolled full-time and passing at least four (4) credits of subjects as per PIAA requirements. They must meet attendance and discipline regulations per day and cumulatively. If the student does not meet these guidelines, they are ineligible for a one-week period (Sunday-Saturday). Grades are checked on Fridays after 9:30 am. The weekly ineligibility lists are prepared and distributed each Friday afternoon. Ineligibility notices for parents are given out to students on each Friday. Parents are reminded that they can check grades on the Tyler parent portal.

- B. **Marking Period** - Students involved in extra-curricular activities must maintain a grade point average of 70% or above in all but one course for the 9-week marking period, enrolled full time passing at least four (4) credits of subjects as per PIAA requirements. If the student does not meet these guidelines, they are ineligible for a period of 15 school days beginning the day report cards are issued. If their failures were in the last marking period of the previous school year, they are ineligible until the sixteenth (16) school day of the next term.
- C. **Exceptions** - Students participating in athletics may participate in practices at the coaches' discretion during the period of ineligibility. Students may be removed from the team if ineligibility continues to be a problem.
- D. **Campus Center- Homework Club:** All ineligible students currently participating in a sport must attend Campus Center/ Homework Club during the period of ineligibility.
- E. **Attendance** - In addition to the attendance rules in section 1 above, the PIAA requires that any student missing 20 or more school days will be ineligible until they are in attendance of school for sixty school days following the twenty day of absence.
- F. **Discipline** - Students are ineligible to participate on days when they have been suspended or expelled from regular attendance or while they are in placement at alternative discipline programs. Any student suspected of serious breaches of the extra-curricular code of conduct will be brought before an Extra-Curricular Eligibility Committee comprised of the principal, athletic director, and a teacher at large. Decisions of the committee may be reviewed by the Superintendent or Board of School Directors. The school will also follow any rule changes that the PIAA may make.
- G. **Period** - The ineligibility period will run Sunday through Saturday for weekly violations and will begin the day of report card distribution for nine week violations. Exceptions are noted above.
- H. Any student on the academic ineligibility list will not be permitted to travel with the sports team or associated activity of which they are a member.
- I. **Deadline for Participating in Interscholastic Athletics** -Students are strongly encouraged to begin participating on a sports team the first day of practice. Students will not be allowed to join a sport already in

season if it is beyond the first two weeks of a winter or spring sport or by the end of the first week of school for a fall sport.

Transfer students must immediately declare their intent to participate and commence practicing if they transfer during the season and are eligible to participate.

J.. **Drug Testing of Students / Board Policy 227.1**

All students who participate in competitive extracurricular activities consent to a random urine screen during the period of activity in which he/she participates.

DANCE POLICY

Attendees. Dances are restricted to Ridgway Area students in grades 6-8 (Middle School) and grades 9-12 (High School) The specific event organizers have the right to limit the grade levels of a particular dance, if granted approval from the administration.

Ridgway Area High School students who are eligible to attend a dance may invite a non-Ridgway Area guest in grades 9-12 or up to and including the age of 20. The administration must approve, in advance, all guests who wish to attend a Ridgway Area dance/prom.

Time. In general, dances may be scheduled between 6 and 10. Specific times may be set by faculty advisors in coordination with the administration. Late arrivals (during the last hour) will not be admitted. Once students leave the building, they may not re-enter; students may be required to sign-out if leaving early.

Dress Code. For a semi-formal event, girls should wear dress-slacks, a skirt or dress—no jeans, sweatshirts, or T-shirts; boys should wear dress pants, collared shirts, and/or sport coats—no jeans, sweatshirts, or T-shirts. A formal dance or prom requires formal, not casual wear.

Conduct. The behavior guidelines of the school apply to all school events. Those in attendance who choose to violate those guidelines will be asked to leave and may be subject to disciplinary consequences. Students and guests may be required to participate in a random test for alcohol.

Music/DJs. Faculty advisors should preview music played at all school activities.

Chaperones. Faculty advisors coordinate supervision with the assistance of adult chaperones. All school events require adult chaperones based on the number of student attendees. Events lacking sufficient supervision will be cancelled.

INSURANCE

School accident insurance is available to students and parents per Bollinger.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student organizations at Ridgway Area Middle- High School will be organized in an attempt to encourage students to develop wide and varied interests, to assume individual and group responsibility, and in a measure, to foster opportunities for social relationships which might not otherwise exist. Each organization may have particular requirements for

membership and expectations for members as described by the faculty sponsor.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society was established over 90 years ago to recognize young people for their achievement in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, and service. The Faculty Council, appointed each year by the principal, reviews the returned information sheets that the academically eligible students fill out. Based upon their accomplishments in these four NHS criteria, students are asked to join NHS.

For the criteria of Scholarship, Ridgway Area High School Juniors must have a cumulative average of 4.0 and Seniors must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.7 or greater for membership consideration. Each academically eligible student is given an informational sheet to fill out and return to the NHS Adviser. This sheet allows the student to provide information on their school and out-of-school activities that demonstrate their achievements in the other qualities. Because the attributes of Character, Leadership and Service are not as concrete as Scholarship, the following list is provided to illustrate examples of the attributes:

The student who exercises leadership:

- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Inspires positive behavior in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, or in other school/community activities

The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school

The student of character:

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside of the classroom

Invitations to join the Elk Chapter of NHS at Ridgway Area High School are extended to those students whom the Faculty Council determines to meet the criteria. A special Induction Ceremony is held each spring to welcome the new members into the National Honor Society.

Student Council

The purpose of the Student Council is to assist the faculty and the administration in creating a healthy school climate, to stimulate interest in school activities, and to promote self-

discipline in students. The Student Council consists of MS representatives from Grades 6, 7, and 8, and HS representatives from Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. A president, vice-president, secretary, and a treasurer are chosen annually prior to the end of the school year.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES for AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students are expected to follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Refrain from throwing objects of any sort on the gym floor.
2. Refrain from harassing students, school officials and visitors from other schools.
3. Refrain from using obscene gestures or profanities.
4. Fighting will not be tolerated.
5. If attending a home athletic event, sit on designated side of the gym for Ridgway Area.
6. Walk around the outside of boundaries and not on the competition areas.
7. Keep all beverages taken into the gymnasium in a closed container.
8. Do not block the doorway into the gym.

Consequences:

- a. 1st Offense - Banned from attending all extra-curricular activities for one (1) week (except practices).
- b. 2nd Offense - Banned from all extra-curricular activities, including practices, for up to four (4) weeks.
- c. 3rd Offense - Banned from all extra-curricular activities for up to one (1) year.

If the offense is a Level III or IV behavior as described in the Student Behavior Code, the consequences may accelerate without following the above sequence.

PUPIL SUPPORT PROGRAMS.....

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program is a state-mandated program designed to help students overcome barriers to learning. A core team of trained staff and faculty are available for the identification and referral of students recommended for SAP services. With parental consent, students may be referred to out-patient counseling services, school-based services, case management, or monitoring. All services are strictly confidential.

Screening Procedures

Each year, the school district routinely conducts the following screenings for students in the grade level(s) indicated:

- BMI Grades 6-12
- Hearing Acuity Grades 7 & 11
- Visual acuity Grades 6-12
- Scoliosis Screening Grades 6 & 7

Gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social/emotional skills are assessed by school personnel on an on-going basis. Students who did not attend preschool are evaluated at the time of registration. Any parent/guardian with a concern may request a screening/evaluation of their child at any time.

Data from each screening source are noted within the child's health record. These records are always available to parents upon request. Information from the records is released only when the appropriate authorization has been obtained (signed permission by parents/guardians for outside agencies).

OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students who are eligible for and in need of special education programming, related services, and gifted education services shall receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)/22 PA Code- Chapter 14; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/22 PA Code - Chapter 15, or 22 PA Code- Chapter 16 (Gifted Services). If a child is eligible for services through Gifted (Chapter 16) and IDEA (Chapter 14), the procedures in Chapter 14 shall take precedent. Child find procedures begin with parental permission. Parent/guardians will be notified of the applicable procedures related to the process and the reason a recommendation for a formal evaluation is being made.

Child Find

RASD is responsible to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of being a child with a disability who may be eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services. RASD utilizes various screening methods across grade spans to determine a student's needs and to identify instructional interventions, supports, and services that will enable a student to make reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum despite learning challenges.

Screening activities include but are not limited to: review of a student's individual grade level performance based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records and report cards), hearing screening, vision screening, motor screenings, and speech and language screenings. In the event that instructional interventions, supports and services do not result in a student making reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum, the data collected through the screening activities, in addition to evidence obtained through a formal educational evaluation will be used to assist school staff and parents in determining if a student is possibly an exceptional school aged person eligible for and in need of special education programs and related services.

Screening

Early Intervention (Birth to School Aged)

Parents, who believe their infant, toddler, or young child (age three to school age) may have a developmental delay or be in need of early intervention services, may request an evaluation at any time. Developmental delays include physical; adaptive (self-help skills); communication (language and/or speech); cognitive (thinking, learning, reasoning, problem solving) or social and emotional development (relationships, interactions with others, responding to others' feelings). Other risks factors that could indicate possible disabilities include: brain injury; infection before, during, or after birth; growth or nutrition problems; abnormalities of chromosomes and genes; babies born prematurely; poor diet and health care; substance abuse during pregnancy; and child abuse can also have a negative effect on the development of a child.

Evaluations are available at no cost to parents. Requests for an evaluation may be made in writing to any

school administrator. Evaluation procedures for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) are provided by the Cameron/EIK (CE) Early Intervention Services. CE Early Intervention services (814-772-8111) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates and times as they occur throughout the year. The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine handles screening and evaluation procedures for children of age three to school age. The Intermediate Unit's Early Intervention Office (814-887-5512) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates, times, and locations as they occur throughout the year.

Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School (Transitional Kindergarten to Grade 5)

Upon Kindergarten enrollment, Kindergarten screenings are conducted. The screening addresses Kindergarten readiness skills including literacy, numeracy, fine motor, gross motor, social/emotional and speech and language skills. Kindergarten screenings are conducted in the spring of the year, prior to the school year that the student will be admitted. Kindergarten students' whose speech and language screening at Kindergarten registration (spring prior to admission) indicates delays are screened again within the first two weeks of school. At that time, existing concerns are shared with parents and appropriate staff. The progress of the student is monitored to determine if there is a need for a follow-up evaluation for speech and language services.

FSG Elementary School also conducts local assessments at each grade level. These local assessments include STAR early literacy, STAR reading, STAR math, Aims Web, and Study Island. Student data from local assessments is analyzed and reviewed in the context of grade level data team meetings. Through data analysis at data level team meetings, students' in need of academic and/or behavioral supports/intervention are identified. The student's parents/guardians are notified regarding the concerns and the data is discussed with the student's parent/guardians. Instructional/behavioral interventions are put into place to meet the students' needs. The implementation of interventions occurs through a tiered intervention and support program. If reasonable progress is not being made, parents will be notified regarding a need for an evaluation. An evaluation will assist school staff and parents in determining if the student is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services.

At any time, a parent may initiate a referral for an evaluation that will determine if their child is eligible for and in need of special education programming and specially designed instruction. Referrals at FSG may be initiated through the elementary principal or by contacting the supervisor of special education.

Ridgway Middle School (RMS) and Ridgway High School (RHS)

At the Middle and High School, student progress, growth, and achievement are monitored through curriculum based assessment data analysis and through local/standardized assessment data (including DIBELS (6th grade), PSSAs, study island, and Classroom Diagnostic Testing (CDT)) analysis. Student data is analyzed approximately every four and one half weeks at RMS and every nine weeks at RHS. Following each grade level team meeting, parents are notified if their child is demonstrating academic and/or behavioral concerns that are interfering with the student's ability to make reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum and interventions are discussed. Based on data analysis and parental discussions, interventions are

recommended and implemented by grade level teams. The effectiveness of interventions is monitored via grade level team meetings. If, through grade level team meetings, it is determined that students are not making progress or showing growth within the regular education curriculum, students are referred to the Secondary Instructional Support Team.

More specific and individualized interventions are implemented. Data continues to be collected and analyzed by the team to determine if the interventions are meeting the student's specific needs. In the event that the student is not making reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum, the parents are contacted by school staff and the students is referred for further evaluation to determine if the student is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services. A parent may initiate a referral for an evaluation by contacting the middle or high school guidance counselor or principal or by contacting the supervisor of special education.

RASD Gifted Screenings

RASD conducts Gifted Screenings at 3rd grade. Students who indicate the potential for being eligible for and in need of Gifted Education services through Chapter 16 are referred for a Gifted Evaluation.

In addition, students can be identified as potential candidates for a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) by classroom teachers, parent/guardians, or other school personnel. Referrals are made by written request to the building principal or supervisor of special education. The building principal or supervisor of special education will immediately, upon receipt, give the written request to the School Psychologist. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the written request, the School Psychologist will acknowledge the referral in writing by sending a letter to the parents/guardians explaining the gifted screening process, including procedural safeguards.

PLEASE NOTE: Screening activities do not serve as a barrier to the right of a parent to request a formal evaluation, at any time, including prior to or while conducting screening activities. Informed parental/guardian consent is required prior to the initiation of a formal evaluation process.

Evaluations

Chapter 14 (Special Education)

Evaluation is the procedure used to determine if a child has a disability and if the disability is of the nature and extent that a child would be eligible for special education programming and related services. Evaluation procedures used are determined by an Evaluation team, which includes the parent/guardian. Parents are asked to provide permission to conduct the evaluation via a Permission to Evaluate form (PTE). The evaluation team takes into consideration cultural issues as they determine the assessment tools that will be administered for the student. A single test or procedure cannot be the sole factor in determining if the child is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services. The initial evaluation shall be completed and a copy of the evaluation report shall be presented to the parent/guardian no later than 60 calendar days after the District receives written parental consent.

Chapter 16 (Gifted Education)

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) follows state guidelines for assessment and eligibility; see the "Parent

Guide to Special Education for the Gifted" for details. The GMDE includes administration of a psycho-educational assessment, which includes an intelligence test and achievement test, at minimum. Information gathered throughout the screening process is compiled into a Gifted Written Report (GWR). If the student scores a Full Scale IQ greater than or equal to a standard score of 126 and exhibits multiple criteria of giftedness (as shown in the Parent/Guardian and Teacher Input Forms), the student is deemed Mentally Gifted. The district will convene a Gifted Individual Education Plan (GIEP) team meeting in order to develop an appropriate educational plan for the student. If the criteria are not met, the student is ineligible for gifted services under Chapter 16 and a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) will be issued with the final copy of the Gifted Written Report (GWR). Parents/Guardians are kept informed at every stage of the screening process and their input is actively sought. Parents also have the right to contest the decision made.

Independent Educational Evaluation:

The parent/guardian of a child with a disability has the right under 34 CFR Part 300 to obtain an independent educational evaluation of his/her child, subject to the provisions outline below. RASD will provide to the parent/guardian upon request for an independent educational evaluation, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained, and the LEA criteria applicable for independent educational evaluations as set forth below. An "independent educational evaluation" means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the LEA and "public expense" means that the LEA either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.

If a parent/guardian requests an independent educational evaluation, the District may ask the parent/guardian's reason why they have objection to the public evaluation. The explanation by the parent/guardian is not required and the District shall not unreasonably delay either providing the independent evaluation at the District's expense or initiating a due process hearing to defend the District's evaluation.

Parent Initiated Independent Evaluations:

If a parent/guardian obtains an independent educational evaluation at private expense, the result of the evaluation must be considered by the District; if it meets, the District's criteria in any decision made with respect to the provision of FAPE to the child and may be presented as evidence at a hearing under this subpart regarding that child. (34 CFR §300.502)

Program Development

RASD is required to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who are determined, through the evaluation process, to need special education and related services under IDEA and 22 Pa. Code 14. If a child is identified by the District or an Early Intervention (EI) provider as possibly being in need of special education and related services, the parent/guardian will be notified of applicable procedures and receive a copy of the Procedural Safeguard Letter/Notice. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

Autism/ Pervasive Developmental Disorder	Hearing Impairment	Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	Emotional Disturbance (ED)
Deaf- Blindness	Other Health Impairment (OHI)	Traumatic Brain Injury	Speech or Language Impairment
Visual Impairment (Including Blindness)	Multiple Disabilities	Developmental Delay (ages 3 to beginners)	Mentally Gifted
Deafness	Intellectual Disability	Orthopedic Impairment	

The legal definitions of these disability categories, which schools are required to apply under IDEA, may differ from those used in the medical and clinical practices. Under section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with disabilities Act, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the criteria outlined above might be eligible for special protections, adaptations, and accommodations in instruction, facilities and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to one or more areas of the school program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) intends to provide greater access of children with disabilities to the general curriculum. Such programs are also available at the Elk County Prison.

After an evaluation team has determined that a child with a disability is eligible for special education, an IEP team develops an educational program. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is based on the evaluation that identifies the type of service, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention. The IEP team must include: LEA representative, general education teacher, special education teacher, child's parent, and the student (if 14 years of age).

The IEP team determines the type and intensity of special education and related services that a child needs based on the individualized program of special education and related services that is developed. Parents/guardians of the child have the right to be notified of and to participate in all meetings of the IEP. The IEP is revised as often as warranted, but must be reviewed annually. The law requires that the program and placement of the child, as described in the IEP, be reasonably calculated to ensure meaningful educational progress to the student at all times. IEPs contain a statement of present educational levels of performance, annual goal(s) established for the child, and a statement of the special education services and/or related services. For students who are 14 years or older, the IEP also includes an appropriate transition to assist in the attainment of post-secondary objectives. RASD must invite the child to the IEP team meeting at which the transition plan is developed.

A student's special education placement must reflect the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which the student's educational needs can be addressed. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled as determined by the IEP team. Service include a continuum of

support from itinerant support services to pull out support services. In addition, the District collaborates with a variety of PDE approved educational programs and placement outside the students regularly attended school District.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

In compliance with state and federal laws, and 22 Pa. Code, Chapter 15, the school district will provide to each protected handicap student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, the related aides, services or accommodation which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of school programs and extra-curricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

To qualify as a protected handicapped student, the student must be of school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits life activity and prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for handicapped students are different from those applicable to all students eligible for or thought to be eligible for special education services. Parents may initiate an evaluation of the student at any time. Parents who are in need of more information pertaining to the process, procedures or provisions of services to protected handicapped students, should communicate with the Superintendent at 814-776-4255.

Procedural Safeguards (Mediation, Prehearing Conference, Due Process Hearing)

Procedural Safeguards protect the rights of students and parents/guardians. These safeguards include the understanding that parental consent is always required to conduct an initial evaluation, conducting a re-evaluation, initially placing an exceptional or eligible child in a special education program, and disclosing unauthorized persons personally identifiable information. Parental consent may be revoked at any time.

RASD will notify parents/guardians in writing whenever it wants to begin, change, or discontinue special education and related services and in doing so will provide parents with a comprehensive written description of their parental rights. The District will notify parents in writing when it proposes to or refuses to: conduct an evaluation or re-evaluation or initiate or change the identification or placement of a child. The District will notify parents/guardians when it refuses to provide an independent educational evaluation at public expense, conduct an evaluation that the parent requests, and/or make changes to an IEP when requested to do so by parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians who disagree with actions, proposed or refused by the District have the right to request mediation, pre-hearing conference, a due process hearing or file a complaint as outlined in IDEA. Parents/guardians may request mediation by checking their choice on the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement or by letter. A pre-conference hearing is between the District and the parents/guardians. Either party may waive the right to a pre-conference hearing. Through this process, the District, parents/guardians, and attorneys representing each attempt to resolve the dispute. If the dispute is not resolved, the parent/guardian may request an impartial due process hearing with an independent hearing officer, or if a hearing has been scheduled, move to the due process hearing. Parents/guardians requesting a due process hearing must notify the school in writing of the nature of the problem with the school's proposed or existing program, placement, evaluation, or identification; the facts

relating to such a problem; and a proposed resolution to the problem to the extent known and available to the parents/guardians at the time. This notice is required and failure to provide such notice may diminish or extinguish a claim for attorney's fees and costs if counsel represents the parents/guardians.

Upon request, RASD will make available the following printed information in the Office of Student Services:

- information regarding special education programs and services
- procedural safeguards
- due process right
- information pertaining to the awarding of or prohibition of attorney's fees
- information regarding guidelines for parental claims for tuition reimbursement
- information pertaining to the discipline and suspension/disciplinary exclusion of eligible students
- information relating to the procedures to be followed when a referral to law enforcement and judicial authorities is pursued.

Complaint with the Bureau of Special Education, Department of Education

Parents/guardians who believe the special education procedures and requirements outlined in federal and state laws have not been adhered to by the District in regards to the identification, evaluation, educational plan development, and/or implementation of the IEP may file a written complaint with the Bureau of Special Education by calling the Special Education Consult Line at 1-800-879-2301.

Communication

If a person has questions regarding the contents of any of this notice or is in need of further information about child find, screening and evaluation procedures, (including purpose, time, and location), provisions of special education programs and services, and/or on the rights of parents and children, including the right to due process procedures, should contact any school administrator or guidance counselor at the following telephone numbers:

Superintendent	773-3146
School Psychologist	776-4255
Secondary Administration and Counselor	773-3164
Elementary Administration and Counselor	776-2176

Visit the District's website at www.rasd.us

If the parent/guardian needs this document in his/her native language, an interpreter or support for assistive technology for communication purpose, the school district will arrange for the services for the parent/guardian. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are essential to the successful delivery of formal education at the elementary and secondary levels. Student records are maintained, used, and destroyed in a manner consistent with privacy rights guaranteed by state and federal law.

Notice of Rights under FERPA for:

1. Elementary and Secondary Students of the Ridgway Area School District
2. Parents and Eligible Students Who Reside in the Ridgway Area School District
3. Parents of Incarcerated Students and Incarcerated Eligible Students Who Are Housed at the Elk County Prison

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the date the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parent or eligible students may ask the Ridgway Area School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal or other appropriate school administrator, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding their request for the amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorized disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company which whom the district has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney,

auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task. A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the district discloses educational records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll upon request. The district may also disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance, etc. In the event a parent or eligible student does not want directory information disclosed, the parent or eligible student must inform the district in writing through the appropriate school administrator within forty-five (45) days of the publication of this notice.

4. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

The Ridgway Area School District may maintain records in two categories:

CATEGORY A – This file contains the minimum personal data necessary for the operation of the school system. Identification of student (name, social security number, student identification number, etc.), names and addresses of parents or guardian, last known home address and telephone number, birth date, attendance record, classes attended and academic levels completed or services received, year of program or service completion, and when applicable, grades or marks received, grade level completed, and whether a diploma was received. The file may also include achievement test scores, honors, awards, activities, photographs, suspension records, or other similar types of information. CATEGORY A DATA SHALL BE FILED FOR 100 YEARS.

CATEGORY B – This file's data is verified information of clear importance such as intelligence and aptitude scores, interest inventories, health data, family information, teacher or counselor observations and reports of serious acts of misbehavior and behavior patterns. This file also contains the documents that pertain to evaluation procedures to determine if a student was eligible for special education services or for other accommodations such as Chapter 15 Service Agreements. CATEGORY B DATA SHALL BE DISCARDED SIX YEARS AFTER THE STUDENT IS GRADUATED OR, IN THE CASE OF A TRANSFER OR DROPOUT, WHEN THE STUDENT REACHES AGE TWENTY-ONE. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY ALSO REQUEST A COPY OF THEIR CATEGORY B FILE BEFORE IT IS DESTROYED.

NOTICE IS HEARBY GIVEN TO PARENTS OR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED IN 2007 OR EARLIER AND TO STUDENTS WHO ARE TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE THAT DID NOT GRADUATE FROM THE DISTRICT DUE TO TRANSFER OR DROP OUT THAT ALL DATA MAINTAINED IN THEIR CATEGORY B FILE WILL BE DESTROYED AFTER JUNE 30, 2013. If the records are requested, the original documents will be provided. The original documents will be provided at no cost to the parent, student or district. However, for this to occur records must be picked up in the Office of Students Services during normal business hours. If the district is not contacted before the designated date, the District will presume that the parent or eligible student does not want this information. For an appointment to examine your Category B file, contact: TBA, Supervisor of Special Education Services at (814) 776-4255 before April 29, 2016.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE.....

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY - GOALS

School policies, procedures, rules, and regulations are grounded in two basic premises:

1. **The safety, health, and welfare of all school students and personnel are paramount.**
2. **The educational process must not be disrupted.**

To provide a safe and effective learning community, the Ridgway Area School District maintains a discipline code. This code will govern circumstances or actions that have impact upon the district, its employees or students, or the educational process. This code gives a general description as to the consequences that the school will impose through its system of discipline.

The discipline outline herein will be carried out in accordance with the laws of Pennsylvania and the policies of the Ridgway Area School District (Board Policy #218). However, this code cannot anticipate every possible circumstance or type of misconduct. It is intended to serve as a general guide applicable to most, but not all, situations.

Parents have the responsibility to be aware of the school's Behavior Code and to work with the school in reinforcing appropriate behavior. Communication between the school and the home must be open and supportive in both directions.

Students have the responsibility to be familiar with the limits and consequences defined in the code and to behave in a positive manner.

Due Process-

Any student charged with a violation of the discipline code will be informed of the violation and provided the reasons for any discipline action. Students charged with a violation of the discipline code are afforded an opportunity to be heard prior to the assigned consequence by school personnel/building administration.

Disciplinary action may result in:

- a. Loss of privileges of membership in any student organization.
- b. Loss of eligibility for athletic competition.

- c. Loss of privilege of participation in any student activity, such as clubs, publications, trips, musical or dramatic productions.

In each discipline situation it is a **primary aim of the school officials to impress on each student**, by effective faculty counseling and guidance, **the need, value, and advantage of good conduct**. Students, regardless of age or marital status, are subject to all rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook and district policies.

BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES

Lunch Detention

Lunch detentions are the lowest level of disciplinary consequences assigned. Lunch detentions require a student to eat lunch outside of the cafeteria under the supervision of a staff member. Lunch detentions may be assigned for cafeteria violations, minor classroom disturbances, general misbehavior. Whether a student is assigned lunch detention or regular detention is at the discretion of the administration based upon the nature of the incident and the discipline history of the student.

Regular Detention

A detention is assigned for misbehavior which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. Detentions will be scheduled Monday's thru Thursday's. One hour detentions run from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 pm. and two hour detentions conclude at 4:30pm. Failure to serve an assigned detention leads to more serious consequences as outlined in the discipline code. Parents may request a detention be reassigned for emergencies or extenuating circumstances, but a detention will not be rescheduled for practices, games or other programs. If the student is absent the day of the assigned detention, she/he must serve the detention the next day it is held upon their return to school. Transportation arrangement is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Suspension

A **temporary** suspension may be assigned for acts directed against persons or property which may result in seriously endangering the health or safety of others in school, behavior that seriously disrupts the educational process. It may last from 1-3 days and be either in-school or out of school, at the discretion of the administrator based on the nature of the incident and/or history of the offending student. The student is excluded from all extra-curricular activities for the day(s) of suspension. Parents will be notified by telephone or in writing as soon as possible.

In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

- All students serving an in-school suspension are provided direct supervision by a teacher or administrator. In both an ISS and OSS assignment, students are provided with regular coursework and assignments provided by the student's teachers. Special education students are provided with all accommodations outlined in said students IEP, including all specially-designed instruction.

A **full** suspension will be assigned by the administration or Board of School Directors. It will last four (4) to ten (10) days out of school (OSS) under parent or guardian supervision.

Student and/or parent will be afforded an informal hearing before an administrator prior to the full imposition of punishment. Out-of-School suspension may warrant SAP (Student Assistant Program) referral. The student is prohibited from school property for the day(s) of suspension.

Superintendent Referral

Any student suspended for a Level II or III offense the second time will be referred to the Superintendent. Any student to be suspended for a Level IV offense will be immediately referred to the Superintendent. A conference will be held with the Superintendent to determine the student's educational placement.

Board Referral

Any student suspended for a Level II or III offense the third time may be referred by the superintendent to the Board of School Directors.

Fourth Suspension

Any student suspended for a fourth time, regardless of the offense or its level, will automatically be referred to the Superintendent for consideration of an expulsion hearing.

Expulsion

Expulsion may be imposed only by a vote of the Board of Education. The administration will request a formal hearing before the Board of Education when the situation warrants. All disciplinary hearings will be conducted in compliance with chapter 12 of the State Board of Education Regulations.

Referral to Civil/Criminal Justice System

Many offenses that occur in the school, during transportation or at school sponsored activities will result in referral to the police, district attorney or district magistrate. The district has a zero tolerance for these types of offenses. Examples of these offenses include: possession, use, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, alcohol or weapons; assault; theft; fire equipment offenses; vandalism; etc. Many of these offenses may result in harsh fines or other penalties.

BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS

Behavioral contracts may be used with students under IEP's, with students that have a history of behavioral noncompliance, non-resident students or at the instruction of the board of school directors, superintendent or principal. These contracts will define specific behavioral limits to be observed, consequences or strategies to be used that are consistent with the student's needs.

TOBACCO/ E-CIGARETTE POSSESSION or USE

Tobacco possession (Level II), in any form, has been made a summary offense by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Any student caught or observed with tobacco on school property, at school events or on the school contracted transportation system will be referred to local law enforcement and may be subject to charges, court appearances, and/or fines. Referral to SAP will be made and the completion of the Tobacco Clinic will be required.

Any student found to be in possession or in use of, any type of E-Cigarette product(s) will be referred for disciplinary action

and a referral to SAP will be made and the completion of the Tobacco Clinic will be required.

Ridgway Middle/High School

Examples of Offenses – Level I

Misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. Parental contact will usually be made by mail and/or telephone when a detention or other disciplinary is assigned.

These behaviors are usually handled by an individual teacher, but may require intervention by the school administration. The administration reserves discretion in all instances.

Examples of Offenses	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Bus Misbehavior	Warning and Letter to Parent	Suspension of Bus Privileges (minimum 2 days)	Suspension of Bus Privileges – Referred to Building Principal
Dress Code Violation	Warning/ Changing of Inappropriate Clothing	Changing of Inappropriate Clothing. Send to office, Parental Contact & Detention	Moves to Level II
General Disregard of Classroom or School Rules	Warning/ or Detention	Detention	Moves to Level II
Lavatory Violations	Detention	Temporary Suspension	Moves to Level II
Misconduct Specific to Cafeteria	Detention during Lunch Time and/or Detention	Loss of Cafeteria Privileges for up to 30 Days	Moves to Level II
Inappropriate/Offensive Language	Detention	Temporary Suspension	Moves to Level II
Parking Lot Violations	Warning	Detention/ Loss of Privilege to Drive for 1 Week	Moves to Level II
Hall Pass Violation	Detention	Detention & Loss of Privilege (30 Days)	Moves to Level II
Inappropriate Public Display of Affection	Warning	Detention	Moves to Level II
Tardy to Class 3 times (up to 10 minutes)	60 minute Detention	90 minute Detention	Moves to Level II
Disrespect to Staff	Detention	90 minute Detention	Moves to Level II
Inappropriate use of electronic devices/cell phone	Detention	90 minute Detention/Parent Must pick up device	Moves to Level II
Tardiness to School (Unlawful or unexcused)	Detention assigned on 3 rd tardy. No credit for missed work.	Detention.	Moves to Level II
Fifth Violation or more of any combination of Level I Offenses	Moves to Level II for Chronic Level I Behavior	Moves to Level II for Chronic Level I Behavior	Moves to Level II for Chronic Level I Behavior

Ridgway Middle/High School

Examples of Offenses – Level II

Level II infractions tend to disrupt the learning climate as a result of their seriousness. Also included as Level II incidents are misbehaviors which represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

These behaviors require intervention by administrative personnel. The administration reserves discretion in all instances.

Examples of Offenses	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Chronic Level I Behavior	Temporary or Full Suspension based on previous offense. Parental conference required. Possible SAP Referral.	Temporary or Full Suspension based on previous offense. If temporary, 2 day's suspension. Refer to Superintendent.	Temporary or Full Suspension based on previous offense. If temporary, 3 day's suspension. Meeting with School Board Committee**
Major Classroom Disturbance	2 hour detention.	Minimum One half-day ISS	Temporary or Full Suspension
Failure to Serve Detention	2 Hour Detention & Parental Notification	Minimum One half-day ISS	Temporary Suspension
Forgery, Falsifying Records, Filing False Report,	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification	Full Suspension & Refer to Superintendent	Full Suspension & Meeting with School Board Committee
Major Insubordination	Temporary Suspension & Parental Conference	Full Suspension & Refer to Superintendent	Full Suspension & Meeting with School Board Committee
Leaving School Without Permission/ Skipping Class	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification	Full Suspension & Refer to Superintendent	Full Suspension & Meeting with School Board Committee
Misuse of Technology (Internet/Intranet, Computer, Telephones, Public Address System, Sound System)	Temporary Suspension & Restriction of Internet Use Privilege for 30 Days	Full Suspension & Internet Restriction for Remainder of the Year	Full Suspension Meeting with School Board Committee
Obscenities Directed toward Staff	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification	Full Suspension & Refer to Superintendent	Full Suspension Meeting with School Board Committee
Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, Cheating	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification – Zero on Assignment	Full Suspension Refer to Superintendent – Zero on Assignment	Full Suspension Meeting with School Board Committee – Zero on Assignment
Tobacco Violations	Temporary Suspension - Parental Notification – Completion of Tobacco Clinic – Charges Filed. SAP Referral.	Full Suspension - Refer to Superintendent – Charges Filed	Full Suspension – Meeting with School Board Committee – Charges Filed
Vehicular Violations	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification	Full Suspension & 9 Weeks Loss of Driving Privileges - Refer to Superintendent	Loss of Driving Privileges Remainder of Year Police Notification Possible
Behavior that Threatens Other Students	Temporary Suspension & Parental Notification	Full Suspension & Refer to Superintendent	Full Suspension Meeting with School Board Committee

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Examples of Offenses – Level III

Acts directed against persons or property which may result in seriously endangering the health or safety of others in school. Restitution of property and damages will be required when appropriate. Parental contact will be made for all offenses.

Level III acts will be handled by the building administration. These acts may be criminal and referred to police for appropriate legal action.

Examples of Offenses	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Chronic Level I, II Behavior	Temporary Suspension for 3 Days – Early Dismissal , Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Refer to Superintendent, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Meeting with School Board Committee. Legal Action as Appropriate
Fighting or Physical Contact with the intent to do bodily harm	Minimum Temporary Suspension – 3 Days – Early Dismissal, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Refer to Superintendent, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Meeting with School Board Committee. Legal Action as Appropriate
Harassment – May include Sexual, Racial or Ethnic	Minimum Temporary Suspension Up to 3 Days – Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Refer to Superintendent, Possible Police Referral, Mental Health Referral as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Meeting with School Board Committee, Police Referral
Indecent Exposure	Minimum Temporary Suspension – 3 Days – Early Dismissal. Police Notification.	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Refer to Superintendent. Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Meeting with School Board Committee. Legal Action as Appropriate
Possession of Dangerous Object such as Lighters, Matches, Fire Crackers, etc.	Minimum Temporary Suspension, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal. Refer to Superintendent. Legal Action as Appropriate.	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Meeting with School Board Committee. Legal Action as Appropriate
Theft or Possession of Stolen Property	Minimum Temporary Suspension, Restitution, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Restitution, Refer to Superintendent, Police Referral	Full Suspension, Meeting with School Board Committee, Police Referral
Vandalism	Minimum Temporary Suspension – 3 Days, Early Dismissal, Restitution to School District, Police Referral	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Restitution to the School District, Referral to Superintendent, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Early Dismissal, Meeting with School Board Committees. Legal Action as Appropriate
Major Misuse of Technology such as Distributing or Taking Inappropriate Pictures, Posting Inappropriate	Minimum Temporary Suspension, Legal Action as Appropriate	Full Suspension, Refer to Superintendent, Police Referral	Full Suspension, Meeting with School Board Committee, Police Referral

Material on Social media			
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Ridgway Middle/High School

Examples of Offenses – Level IV

Illegal behaviors which pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of the student or others. A full suspension will be issued in each case. A mandatory informal hearing will be held with the student and parents within three school days of the offense. Students will be referred to the SAP team and appropriate agencies such as Elk County Probation, Children & Youth, and Drug & Alcohol. The police will be notified and appropriate charges pressed.

Examples of Offenses	Every Offense
Chronic Level I, II, & III Behaviors	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Any Threat or Acts of Violence Directed Towards Staff	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Arson	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Assault / Battery	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Bomb Threat	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Extortion	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
False Fire Alarms, Tampering with Fire or Safety Equipment or School Security System	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Furnishing or Selling Any Unauthorized Substance (Alcohol – Drug – Controlled Substance)	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Possession or Use of Any Unauthorized Substance (Alcohol – Drug – Controlled Substance)	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Possession, Use, or Transfer of Explosive or Incendiary Devices	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Possession, Use, or Transfer of Dangerous Weapon	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Refusal to Comply with a Reasonable Search	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Theft, Possession or Sale of Stolen Property	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion
Trespassing on School Property	Full Suspension; Student dismissed from School with Parent; Mandatory Parent Conference; Police Notification; Referral to Superintendent for Hearing and Possible Expulsion

BUS TRANSPORTATION & DISCIPLINE

1. Buses arriving in the morning will unload at the main gymnasium entrance. The buses will reload at designated areas beginning at 2:24. Students riding on buses are under the jurisdiction of school authorities, who are responsible for their conduct from the time they board a bus in the morning until the time they are delivered home after school. The bus driver is in charge at all times and is authorized to assign seats. Boisterousness endangers everyone's safety and will not be tolerated. Remember, your driver has a great responsibility for your safe transportation. When your bus arrives after classes have begun, report in the office so that your name may be taken off the absentee list.
2. If a student(s) is/are causing a general disturbance on a bus, it is the bus driver's responsibility to contact the building administration. Parents will be informed that further problems could result in the student losing his/her bus privileges.

The following procedure will be used:

- a. 1st Offense - The bus drivers must present the Conduct Report to the bus contractor. The bus contractor will refer the Bus Conduct Report to the elementary or high school principal. Typically, a warning will be issued and a letter from the respective principal will be sent to the parent after the first offense. (If the incident warrants, the student may lose the privilege to ride the bus for three (3) days, seven (7) days, or for the remainder of the year. Action taken depends upon seriousness of the offense.)
- b. 2nd Offense - Same procedure as above, with an automatic suspension of bus privileges for three (3) days, seven (7) days, or the remainder of the year. (Action taken depends upon seriousness of the offense.) A letter will follow the second offense or any bus offense thereafter.
- c. 3rd Offense - Automatic suspension of bus privileges. It could be for the remainder of the year. Referral will be made to Superintendent.
- d. 4th Offense - The student loses bus privileges for the remainder of the year. Referral will be made to the Board of School Directors.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE.....

The Ridgway Area School District recognizes that substance abuse (policy #227) presents a major problem in our society. This policy and its associated guidelines are an effort by the district to respond effectively to the potential and current use and abuse of drugs by members of its student population.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Ridgway Area School District finds any student drug involvement unacceptable. The District will seek to establish an effective prevention/intervention program through the coordinated efforts of the administration, faculty, staff, Student Assistance Program, parents and appropriate referral agencies. As an extension of this policy, the following guidelines shall be used by all Faculty, when responding to drug-related situations.

They are intended to provide a consistent means for effectively responding to drug-related situations that may occur at school or at school sponsored events. They have been written with due consideration for the legal rights and responsibilities of administrators, faculty, students and parents who may find themselves involved in such situations. The Board reserves the right to use any extraordinary measures deemed necessary to control substance abuse and use.

Definition of Terms

Drugs include any alcohol or malt beverage, any drug listed in Act 64 (1972) as a controlled substance, chemical abuse substance, or medication for which prescription is required under the law and/or any substance which is intended to alter mood. Examples of the above include but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, marijuana, hashish, chemical solvents, glue, look-alike substance, and any capsules or pills not registered with the school nurse.

Student Support Program is a multi-disciplinary team composed of school personnel. This team has been trained to understand and deal with the issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse and dependency and will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention.

Cooperative Behavior is the willingness of a student to work with school personnel in a reasonable and helpful manner, complying with requests and recommendations of the members of the Student Support Program and/or the administration.

Uncooperative Behavior is the resistance or refusal, either verbal, physical or passive on the part of the student to comply with the reasonable request or recommendations of school personnel. Defiance, assault, deceit, and flight are examples of uncooperative student behavior.

Uncooperative behavior shall also include the refusal to comply with recommendations of the Student Support Program.

Drug Paraphernalia is any utensil or item which in the school's judgment can be associated with the use of drugs, alcohol, or mood-altering substances. Examples include but are not limited to roach clips, pipes, and bowls.

Policy Categories

1. The use of a drug by a student is suspected, but no evidence of violation of law or school regulation has been found.

This situation may involve:

- a. The student who is suspected of using drugs but does not show extreme behavior changes and no evidence is available.
- b. The student who contacts a teacher in regard to the drug use of a friend or another student.
- c. The student who volunteers information about personal drug use.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The school personnel may talk with the individual and will refer him/her to the Student Support Program.

INVESTIGATION - The investigation will consist of discussion with the student and/or referral to the Student Support Program

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - Parents will not be notified unless the immediate safety of the individual is in danger. Parents will be notified of behavior and performance indicators if warranted.

CONFIDENTIALITY - The information will be limited to only those involved.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - N/A

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - To be determined by Student Support Program.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - N/A

2. A student demonstrates symptoms associated with drug use (staggering, slurred speech, dazed appearance, incoherence, inability to respond). This situation shall be handled as a health problem and potential emergency.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - Seek immediate medical attention by notifying the administration and school nurse who will take whatever steps are necessary depending on the severity of the situation.

INVESTIGATION - The Investigation will involve determining the substance taken, if possible, and the source. The principal will investigate possibly searching the student's locker, car, and possessions. The student will be referred to the Student Support Program.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS -The parent will be immediately notified of the incident and of the action taken and will be requested to transport the student for medical evaluation or meet the student at the hospital, if the situation warrants.

CONFIDENTIALITY - The information will be limited to those directly involved in the situation.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - If the substance is discovered at the time of an emergency, further action will be taken depending on the appropriate category.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - Disciplinary action will coincide with appropriate situation/category. The student will be referred to the Student Support Program.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - Police will not be notified unless a safety emergency exists or the student is found in possession.

3. A Student possesses drug related paraphernalia.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The teacher will summon the principal or escort the student to the principal's office. The paraphernalia will be confiscated and the staff member will write an anecdotal report of the incident.

INVESTIGATION - The principal may search the student, his/her desk, locker, and other possessions.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - The parent will be notified and the situation described.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the parties involved and the parents.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The paraphernalia will be confiscated and sent for analysis if warranted.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - The student will be referred to the Student Support Program. The student will also be assigned to after-school detention. If there is evidence of a further violation, see the appropriate category.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - The police will be notified at the discretion of the principal.

4. A student is found in possession of, using, or under the influence of a drug or drugs. This is a first offense and the student is cooperative.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The teacher will summon the principal or escort the student to the principal's office. The staff member will write an anecdotal report of the incident.

INVESTIGATION - The principal, or designee, will ask that the student empty his/her pockets and/or purse and volunteer all drug-like substances. The student's locker, car, desk, and other possessions may be searched.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - The parent will be contacted, the situation described, the parent requested to provide transportation for student, and an immediate conference arranged.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the initial parties involved, the superintendent, the parents, and the police.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The substance will be sealed, marked, and turned over to the Pennsylvania State Police with a request for analysis.

DISCIPLINE REHABILITATION - The student will be immediately suspended for a maximum of three (3) school days. Following an informal hearing, the student may be assigned suspension for a maximum seven (7) school days. The student will be referred to the Student Support Program. Within ten (10) days the student will be required to have an assessment by an agency approved by the Student Support Program and comply with the recommendations made by that agency.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - The police will be notified.

5. A student is found in possession of, using, or under the influence of a drug or drugs. This is a first offense but the student is uncooperative.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The teacher will summon the principal or escort the student to the principal's office. The staff member will write an anecdotal report of the incident.

INVESTIGATION - The principal, or designee, will ask that the student empty his/her pockets and/or purse and volunteer all drug-like substances. The student's locker, car, desk, and other possessions may be searched.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - The parent will be contacted, the situation described and the parent requested to come to the school immediately. The parent will be asked to provide transportation and a conference arranged.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the initial parties involved, the superintendent, the parents and police.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The substance will be sealed, marked and turned over to the Pennsylvania State Police with a request for analysis.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - The student will be immediately suspended for three (3) school days. Following an informal hearing the student may be suspended for a maximum of seven (7) additional days and/or assigned to the I.S.S. for a maximum of ten (10) school days. The student will be referred to the Student Support Program. A formal school board hearing to consider expulsion from school will be considered. The administration will request that conditions for the return to school following a possible expulsion include an assessment by a drug/alcohol agency approved by the Student Support Program and compliance with recommendations of that agency.

6. A student is found to be in possession, using or under the influence of a drug or drugs when attending any school-sponsored function.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The chaperone will contact the group advisor, administrator or staff chaperone. The staff person will confiscate the drug if available and try to isolate the student. The names of any witnesses should be noted as well as a description of the student's actions. An anecdotal report of the incident will be written and submitted to the principal.

INVESTIGATION - The principal or designee will ask that the student empty his/her pockets and/or purse and volunteer all drug-like substances. The student's locker, car, and other possessions may be searched.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - The parent will be contacted, the situation described and the parent requested to provide transportation for the student.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the initial parties involved superintendent and parents.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The substance will be sealed, marked and turned over to the Pennsylvania State Police with a request for analysis.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - The student will be referred to the Student Support Program. Further discipline as provided by the appropriate situational category will be administered following the principal's investigation.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - Police will be notified if evidence warrants.

7. A student is involved in a repeated offense of category 4, 5, or 6.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The teacher will summon the principal or escort the student to the principal's office.

INVESTIGATION - The principal, or designee, will request that the student empty his/her pockets and/or purse and volunteer all drug-like substances. The student's locker, desk, and all personal property will be searched according to policy.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - A parent will be contacted immediately and the situation described.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the initial parties involved, superintendent and parents.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The substance will be sealed, marked, and turned over to the Pennsylvania

State Police with a request for an analysis and possible use in further proceedings.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - The student will be immediately suspended for three (3) school days. If charges are validated during an informal hearing, the student will be suspended for an additional seven (7) days. The principal will report the results of the informal hearing to the superintendent and a formal hearing to consider expulsion will be recommended. The administration will request that conditions for the return to school following a possible expulsion include an assessment by a drug and alcohol agency approved by the Student Support Program and compliance with the recommendations of the agency.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - Police will be contacted.

8. A student is distributing a drug, or drugs or drug paraphernalia.

IMMEDIATE ACTION - The teacher will summon the principal or escort the student to the principal's office. An anecdotal report describing the incident will be written. The police will be notified.

INVESTIGATION - The principal or designee will request that the student empty his/her pockets and/or purse and volunteer all drug-like substances. The student's locker, desk, and all personal property will be searched according to policy.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS - The parent will be contacted immediately, the situation described and the parent informed that the police have been called.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Information will be limited to the initial parties involved, superintendent, parents and police.

DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE - The substance will be sealed, marked, and turned over to the police as evidence. An analysis will be requested and possibly used in further proceedings.

DISCIPLINE / REHABILITATION - The student will immediately be suspended for three (3) school days. If charges are validated during an informal hearing, the student will be suspended for seven (7) school days. The principal will report the results of the informal hearing to the superintendent and a formal hearing will be considered. The administration will request that conditions for the return to school following the alcohol agency approved by the Student Support Program and compliance with the recommendations of the agency.

NOTIFICATION OF POLICE - The police will be notified and involved in this situation.

**RIDGWAY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARENTAL RELEASE FORM
2019-2020**

STUDENT NAME: _____ **GRADE** _____

INTERNET MEDIA & PUBLISHING

I understand that any work published on the school's web site is available worldwide to anyone with access to the Internet. I also understand that the School or the Local Authority cannot protect my student's classroom work or photograph against unauthorized uses or copyright violations. I agree to hold the School, the Local Authority, and its officers, employees or agents harmless for any unauthorized uses or copyright violations arising from the publication of my student's work and/or photograph published on the school's web site or cable channel. In addition, I release any claims against the School, the Local Authority, and its officers, employees or agents for any damages, awards, claims, or liabilities that may arise from any unauthorized uses or copyright violations of my student's picture, work and/or photograph.

I give permission for the Ridgway Area School District to publish work, including but not limited to drawings, materials, or writings, from my student's classroom. This includes individual work by my son/daughter and/or photographs of school activities that may contain my son/daughter's photograph.

Please put an X beside the following media that you give permission for your son/daughter to be published with:

_____ Local Newspapers

_____ RASD Website (www.rasd.us)

_____ Cable Channel 18 (Ridgway Cable System)

Your signature below indicates that you have read, you understand, you had the opportunity to ask questions, and you have agreed to the terms of the media & publishing policy.

Military Recruiter/Institutions of Higher Education (Access to Secondary Students)

For Juniors and Seniors ONLY!

Please check ONE of the following:

INCLUDE my child's name and directory information from the list of juniors and seniors being released to armed services and institutions of higher education.

OR

Do not release my child's name and directory information to armed services and institutions of higher education without my prior written parental consent.

Failure to return this form signed by the first day of school will result in your child's name, home address, and phone number being released to these agencies.

Student Responsibilities

Your signature below indicates that you have read, you understand, you had the opportunity to ask questions, and you have agreed to the terms of Student Responsibilities.

Student Handbook

Your signature below indicates that you have read, you understand, you had the opportunity to ask questions, and you have agreed to the terms of the Student Handbook.

Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement

Students

I understand and agree to abide by the terms of the Ridgway Area School District Network/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement. I have read the document and I agree to use the Network/Internet in a responsible and appropriate manner. I further understand that any violation of this policy is inappropriate and may result in cancellation of these privileges and/or disciplinary action by school or law enforcement officials.

Parent/Guardian

As parent (guardian) of this student, I have read the Network/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement of the Ridgway Area School District and give permission for my child to utilize these informational tools. I also understand this access is permitted for educational purposes only.

I further understand that the Ridgway Area School District may unblock a blocked site for legitimate educational, instructional and research purposes as requested by individual faculty members for educational purposes and for a specific and limited time period. I understand that while my child has access to an unblocked site, he/she will be directly supervised by the classroom teacher who requested to utilize a blocked site. I am aware that any blocked sites that have the potential to be a security risk to the District's network and technological infrastructure and/or that are determined to be detrimental to my child will not be unblocked and will be denied.

MUST CHECK ONE:

Yes, I give permission for my child to access unblocked sites (sites which were previous blocked) for educational purposes AND under direct teacher supervision.

No, I do not give permission for my child to access unblocked sites (sites which were previous blocked) for educational purposes AND under direct teacher supervision.

This permission is valid for the 2019-2020 school year, unless sooner revoked by me in writing.

Student's Name Printed

Grade

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date