

CODE OF CONDUCT



Middle School

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Rochester Academy Charter School! This new school year means a new beginning and new futures. The administrative team is excited to welcome you for this coming school year. The staff at Rochester Academy Charter School is caring, competent, dedicated and willing to assist you. We are working very hard to provide the best possible learning atmosphere for our students.

We believe that education is a shared responsibility and that the successful operation of a school depends on the cooperation of everyone concerned: students, parents, and staff. The mission of the Rochester Academy Charter School is to create a partnership among the members of this triad. Each of us is responsible for doing our part to make our school a place where we can work and play together in harmony.

Rochester Academy Charter School is a reflection of all of us. All of our policies are intended to provide a safe and orderly environment that will be conducive to learning. Our faculty and staff look forward to sharing their expertise in academics, special programs, and extracurricular activities. We will encourage your child to get to know our school, its programs, activities, and schedule. As parents we hope that you become an active participant in our school as well. Students and families can get involved through classes, clubs, and activities.

This handbook is an overview of our school's goals, services, and rules. It is an essential reference book describing our expectations and procedures. Read it carefully; discuss it with your children. It has been written to provide you and your student with the information that will make your year purposeful and rewarding in every aspect. Keep this handbook because you will use this information throughout the school year.

On behalf of the entire Rochester Academy Charter School staff and community, best wishes for a great school year!

Sincerely,

RACS Administration

Because of the nature of its mission, Rochester Academy Charter School does not discriminate against any member of its community on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disabilities or handicap in educational programs or activities.

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Mission

The mission of the Rochester Academy Charter School (RACS) is to provide students with rigorous, challenging academics through hands-on, meaningful learning opportunities that will provide them with the skills necessary to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally.

RACS aims to create a partnership among the triad of student- teacher-parent that will provide our youth with the support necessary to reach their highest potential. Since adolescents thrive in a diverse environment, we strive to create a variety of learning opportunities and to integrate multi-cultural aspects into our curricula. Our students are encouraged to make contacts with other cultures by participating in our student exchange programs and Academic Olympiads.

Our Beliefs:

- Every child can learn and reach high levels of academic achievement
- Literacy in Math and Science is critical for participation in civic and economic life
- Motivation is vital for success
- Families are integral to students' successes
- Students learn when teachers continuously participate in professional development opportunities
- Every child can make a significant contribution to the school and community
- All of us grow when we embrace diversity

Our Key Features:

- Provide students with the skills and experiences necessary that will help them master the knowledge detailed in the New York State Core Curriculum Content Standards
- Provide a strong focus on Mathematics and Science
- Use national competitions and science fairs to motivate students
- Build a strong supervisory and monitoring system that will provide individualized attention to each student
- Provide broad tutoring services that will help students address learning needs and/or issues with specific content
- Build strong parent/student/school relationships
- Require enhanced professional development for staff members
- Build partnerships with community organizations and other educational institutions

General Information

RACS Email System

Parents or guardian who wishes to contact any Rochester Academy Charter School Staff member may do so via email. Simply type the last name of the staff member followed by **@rochester-academy.org** to send an email directly to that person. For example, Mrs. Jane Dolphin would be dolphin@rochester-academy.org.

Parent Portal

Rochester Academy Charter School offers all parents and/or guardians the opportunity to access their child's school related data such as grades, progress reports, and attendance by using the Internet. In order to access this information you will need an assigned RACS password. If you have not already received this information in the mail, please contact the main office.

School Closing Announcements And Delayed Opening

If Rochester City School District is closed due to inclement weather then Rochester Academy Charter School will also be closed. Parents should watch Channels 13 or YNN for notification of school closing or consult the school website at www.racshool.com. Suggested viewing time is from 6:00 am through 7:45 am. If the school is closed mid-day for any reason, you will receive an automated phone call from the school.

Emergency School Closing

Parents should arrange with neighbors or other responsible individuals to receive and care for their children in the event of an emergency early dismissal. Children are to be instructed by the parents exactly what they are to do if this should occur.

Early Dismissal – Due To Inclement Weather

In this situation, we strongly recommend parents wait for the dismissal of their children at the time prescribed by the school. This will allow for the smooth, efficient and safe release of all students. Harsh weather conditions do not always result in early dismissal. Please consult the school web page at www.racshool.com for early dismissal information.

Emergency Pick Up Procedures

In case of emergency, where a parent must pick up their child during the school day, the parent or guardian must complete the appropriate sign out form in the office. Parents are then to wait in the office until their child is called from class. No student will be released unless a parent or guardian is present. Please see attendance policy for details.

General Student Information

Security Video Surveillance

During your days here at Rochester Academy Charter School, expect to be under video security surveillance once you enter school grounds. Camera's circumnavigate the entire building/grounds and are at key positions inside the building itself. Not only are you on camera often during the day, but you are also recorded for playback as the need arises. If necessary, in an extreme case, be aware we could use this film as evidence in a court of law. Our objective is simply to run a safe school in a safe environment. Anything other than peace, tranquility, and the pursuit of academic success is not acceptable at Rochester Academy Charter School.

Photographs/Video Tape – Public Relations

There may be occasions when your child may be photographed or videotaped participating in school functions. If you **DO NOT WISH TO HAVE YOUR CHILD PHOTORAPHED OR VIDEO TAPED**, please notify the school principal in writing.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices such as hand held video games, MP3 players, IPods, tablets, and CD players etc. are not permitted in school. Not only do they disturb classes, but also they may be lost or stolen. Any student found in possession of electronic item that will have it confiscated and turned over to the administration. Only parents or guardians may pick up the item from the office and disciplinary action will be imposed at the discretion of the administration.

Audio Video Recording Devices

The use of audio and video recording devices of any type is prohibited, and will result in disciplinary consequences. Any student found to be in possession of audio and video recording devices will have the device immediately confiscated. Only parents or guardians may pick up the item from the office and disciplinary action will be imposed at the discretion of the administration.

Laser Pointing Devices

These devices project a powerful, intense and potentially damaging point of light. They are not permitted on school property at any time. Any student found to be in possession of a laser pointing device will have the device immediately confiscated. Only parents or guardians may pick up the item from the office and disciplinary action will be imposed at the discretion of the administration.

Loitering

Students are prohibited from congregating or loitering anywhere in the school, but particularly in the hallways and the playgrounds. Repeat offenders are subject to out-of-school suspension.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker, which must be kept clean, orderly, and locked at all times. Students will receive locker numbers from homeroom teachers. The serial numbers and combinations are on file

with the office of the building administrator. Students are cautioned not to give out locker combinations to anyone since the locker is to be used only by the individual to whom it is assigned.

Please note:

- A. A maximum of two students are assigned to a locker.
- B. Students must utilize the assigned lockers only.
- C. Lockers must be closed and must not be left on pre-set.
- D. Combinations must not be given to other students.
- E. Malfunctioning lockers must be reported to the main office immediately.
- F. Allowing others into your locker not only is a violation of the above school regulations but, more seriously, sacrifices your own security. Protect your valuables.
- G. We strongly recommend that valuables frequently left in lockers (i.e. coats, jackets, calculators, back packs, etc.) be marked in an inconspicuous place so that identification (if need be) is swift and undeniably accurate. Indelible ink is best suited for this purpose (not sewn/ironed on labels!).
- H. Carrying large amounts of money to school is not necessary or recommended. Talking about it or "flashing" bills is both foolish and irresponsible.
- I. *Middle school* students may go to their lockers before homeroom, before and after lunch periods, and after school. Students found at their lockers at any other time will be subject to disciplinary action. Teachers will not issue locker passes. It is your responsibility to be prepared for class with the proper books and homework. "Forgotten" items may not be retrieved during the class or in between.

High school students should come to class prepared with all materials before the bell. They may use their lockers between classes with the understanding that they must be in class on time. Teachers will not issue locker passes to students during class time except in emergency situations (not for instructional materials).

LOCKERS ARE SUPPLIED AS A CONVENIENCE TO STUDENTS. SCHOOL OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, RESERVE THE RIGHT TO INSPECT STUDENT LOCKERS BASED ON REASONABLE SUSPICION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION. STUDENTS SHOULD EXPECT THAT THEIR LOCKERS MAY BE OPENED FOR INSPECTION.

Homeroom Regulations

Every student in the middle school is a member of a homeroom group under the direction of a homeroom teacher, and every morning, after going to his or her locker, the student is to report directly to his/her homeroom and remain there unless excused by the teacher for some valid reason. The homeroom class assembles in the morning for the purpose of opening exercises, attendance, and announcements. During homeroom period teachers will meet with students at minimum once per month on a 1:1 basis to review grades and make a plan to address any issues.

It is essential to recognize that the homeroom period is as important as every other class. Therefore, it is imperative to attend homeroom regularly, and behave appropriately.

Pupil Records

Parents/guardians and adult pupils are advised that they have the right to review pupil records. Such requests must be directed to the building principal for prior approval.

Lost And Found

The school is not responsible for lost articles. Books and other items, which are found, are to be taken to the Main Office. All inquiries about missing items should be directed to the main office.

Hall Traffic

RACS students are expected to transition to their classes in an orderly and timely manner. Running and/or horseplay are not permitted and such actions are subject to disciplinary consequences. Once students have reached their classroom, they are to enter the room and remain there until the start of class. No student is to be permitted out of his/her homeroom after opening exercises.

Leaving The Building Without Permission

Students are not permitted to leave the school or any assigned period during the day without the permission of the teacher or principal. Leaving the building without permission is a serious violation of school rules and this action is subject to disciplinary consequences. Returning to school will not be permitted except through the principal's office, accompanied by one or both parents or guardian. Makeup work and/or tests missed during this time will not be allowed.

Fire Drills

All of the teachers will explain the directions you must follow during fire and lock down drills. These directions are placed in a conspicuous place in each room of the school. For your own safety and that of your fellow students, follow all instructions carefully. Follow the following simple rules during all drills:

1. Do not talk from the time the alarm is sounded until you have returned to your room or place of instruction.
2. Move quickly; DO NOT PUSH OR RUN.
3. Form lines without any confusion.
4. Meet unusual situations with calmness and clear thinking.
5. In case an exit is blocked, proceed in orderly formation to the nearest exit.
6. In the event of smoke, stay low to the floor.
7. The first pupils who pass through an exit will hold the doors open.

Telephone

Generally, telephone use is prohibited during the school day. In case of a problem or an emergency during the school day, the student may check with a secretary in the office who will make the call on the office phone.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to possess a cell phone, in any building at any time during school hours (7:45 am- 3:41 pm). Cell phones, including any communication device, must be powered off and handed to staff member when entering the building in the morning. Staff will place the phone in a labeled envelope and take them to the main office. Cell phones will be distributed to the students in the last five minutes of the last period. Cell phones may be turned on after school has concluded for the day.

Internet Access/Computer Access

RACS recognizes that as telecommunications and other technologies shift the manner in which information is accessed, communicated and transferred that those changes will alter the nature of teaching and learning. Access to telecommunications will allow pupils to explore databases, libraries, Internet sites, bulletin boards, etc. while exchanging information with individuals throughout the world. RACS supports access by pupils to information sources but reserves the right to limit in school use to materials appropriate to educational purposes.

RACS also recognizes that telecommunications will allow pupils access to information sources that have not been pre-screened by educators using school-approved standards. RACS therefore adopts the following standards of conduct for the use of computer networks and declares unethical, unacceptable or illegal behavior as just cause for taking disciplinary action, limiting or revoking network access privileges and/or instituting legal action.

RACS provides access to computer network/computers for educational purposes only. RACS retains the right to restrict or terminate pupil access to the computer network/computers at any time, for any reason. RACS retains the right to have school personnel monitor network activity, in any form necessary, to maintain the integrity of the network and ensure its proper use.

Standards For Use Of Computer Networks

Any individual engaging in the following actions when using computer networks/computers shall be subject to discipline or legal action:

- A. Using the computer network(s)/computers for illegal, inappropriate or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities. Illegal activities are defined as activities that violate federal, state, local laws and regulations. Inappropriate activities are defined as those that violate the intended use of the network. Obscene activities shall be defined as a violation of generally accepted social standards for use of publicly owned and operated communication vehicles.

- B. Using the computer network(s)/computers to forge documents, print illegal copies, violate copyrights, institutional or third party copyrights, license agreements or other contracts.

- C. Using the computer network(s) in a manner that:
 - 1. Intentionally disrupts network traffic or crashes the network;
 - 2. Degrades or disrupts equipment or system performance;
 - 3. Constitutes a commercial purpose, financial gain or fraud;
 - 4. Steals data or other intellectual property;
 - 5. Gains or seeks unauthorized access to the files of others or vandalizes the data of another user;
 - 6. Gains or seeks unauthorized access to resources or entities;
 - 7. Forges electronic mail messages or uses an account owned by others;
 - 8. Invades privacy of others;
 - 9. Posts anonymous messages;
 - 10. Facilitates the possession of any data which is a violation of this policy
 - 11. Circumvents district content filtering and/or security systems (including, but not limited to the use of proxy servers, anonymizers, circumventors).
 - 12. Engages in other activities that do not advance the educational purposes for which computer networks/computers are provided.

13. Use of computer as a tool of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (which includes a person's actual or perceived sex, as well as gender identity and expression)

Internet Safety/Protection

RACS is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and has installed technology protection measures for all computers in the school, including computers in media centers/libraries that block and/or filter visual depictions that are obscene as defined in Section 1460 of Title 18, United States Code; child pornography, as defined in Section 2256 of Title 18, United States Code; are harmful to minors including any pictures, images, graphic image file or other visual depiction that taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or depicts, describes, or represents in a patently offensive way, with respect to what is suitable for minors, sexual acts or conduct; or taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

The school district will certify on an annual basis that the schools, including media centers/libraries, in the district are in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and the school district enforces the requirements of this policy.

This policy also establishes Internet safety policy and procedures in the district as required in the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act. Policy 2361 addresses access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web; the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online; unauthorized disclosures, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

Violations

Individuals violating this policy shall be subject to the consequences, which includes but are not limited to:

1. Use of the network only under direct supervision;
2. Suspension of network privileges;
3. Revocation of network privileges;
4. Suspension of computer privileges;
5. Revocation of computer privileges;
6. Suspension from school;
7. Expulsion from school; and/or
8. Legal action and prosecution by the authorities.

Consent Requirement

No pupil shall be allowed to use the computer network and the Internet unless they shall have filed a consent form signed by the pupil and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Visitor Expectations

Visitors for educational reasons are welcome at RACS. Visitors must register with the office when they arrive. Parents also must check in at the office. Students wishing to bring visitors to RACS must complete the Student Visitor Form and receive approval from the office at least one (1) school day in advance. Do not bring guests to school without prior arrangements. No visitors will be allowed the last two weeks of each semester and during testing days. Also, no visitors will be allowed during the week prior to any school holiday. These procedures are designed to help keep our pupils as safe and secure as reasonably possible during the day and after school while in the school.

VISITORS ARE NOT PERMITTED BEYOND THE SCHOOL OFFICES TO DROP OFF FOOD, DRINKS, HOMEWORK, PROJECTS, NOTES, OR TO ACCOMPANY LATE PUPILS TO A CLASSROOM.

School Property

The appearance of your school grounds and corridors reflects upon the entire school, particularly the students. All waste paper is to be placed in the receptacles provided for that purpose. Marking or marring doors, walls, floors, lockers, desks or any other school property is prohibited. Students caught defacing school property will be subject to disciplinary action and parents will be held liable.

Public Areas: Hallways, Stairwells, And Lavatories

Hallways, stairwells, and lavatories are areas used by all members of RACS. Because everyone uses these areas, there are rules of conduct that all students must follow.

- You may not loiter in the halls, lunchroom or lavatories or on staircases.
- You may not eat in halls, lavatories, or on staircases.
- You may not run, roughhouse, push, or wrestle in the halls, lunchroom, lavatories, or on the staircases.
- You may not yell, scream, hit lockers or otherwise make excessive noise while in these areas.
- Do not leave belongings on the floor outside your locker.

During class time, students are not to be in the halls, stairwells, or lavatories without a pass from their teacher or the main office. Teachers and Student Support Staff will monitor student requests for bathroom passes and will limit student passes to those students who are out of class frequently.

Textbook And Supplies

RACS will provide students with the textbooks for each of their classes. RACS will hold each student responsible for the condition of the textbook issued to him or her. Each student should take care to see that these books are not lost, stolen, damaged, or defaced. Students will have to pay to replace any books that are damaged or not returned. Students will have the opportunity to keep textbooks they used during the year if they wish, provided their family has made a full payment for the textbooks.

When textbooks are distributed, make sure you write your name in the appropriate place. Teachers will write down the number of the textbook you have and the condition of the book. When you return the book, its condition will be checked. If you lose the book or damage it by writing it in or

ripping it so that another student cannot use it, you will have to pay to replace the book. Many of the classes will use consumable supplies – from materials to workbooks.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Frequently throughout the school year informal conferences between parent and teacher can take place via telephone; face-to-face conversations; written messages or email; and scheduled meetings at mutually agreeable times.

To initiate a conference with a teacher, parents should write a note to the teacher or email the teacher indicating the nature of the request and convenient times for a conference. Upon receipt of the written request, the teacher will contact the parent by return letter or telephone call whereby the time and the location of the conference can be mutually agreed upon. Parents are asked not to come to school expecting to meet with a teacher without an appointment. Our teacher's first priority is to teach students and with that in mind, we ask that parents refrain from contacting teachers during the teaching hours of the school day.

Fund Raising

No person may solicit contributions or collect funds for any purpose from students or school personnel on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation unless he or she has the written permission of the school principal.

Sales

Advertising may be permitted for approved school-related activities such as school newspapers, yearbooks, and other fund-raising projects. Advertising materials that promote the use of alcohol and tobacco are strictly prohibited. No person may display, offer to sell, or sell any item or service to students or school personnel on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation unless he/she has the written permission of the school principal.

Emergency Procedures

Fire, lock-down, evacuation, and shelter-in-place drill instructions will be discussed in each class during the first week of the semester. Students need to understand and follow these instructions. This is a life and death matter. The instructions will be posted on the bulletin board in each teacher's room and students should be familiar with the assigned drill areas.

When the alarm is sounded for a fire drill or evacuation drill, everyone is required to respond in a prompt and orderly manner, leaving the school building by a prescribed route as directed by the teachers. During the winter months, it is recommended that a sweater be provided to be kept in school.

Cafeteria Privileges And Procedures

Students are required to remain in the cafeteria during the established breakfast and lunch periods. Attendance will be taken. Students will be required to be in the cafeteria for lunch by the time the late bell rings. Students who fail to report to the cafeteria will be considered to have cut a class period. Use of the cafeteria is considered a privilege and, therefore, each pupil is responsible for keeping his/her place clean and neat. Students are **NOT permitted to order food from outside vendors or leave school grounds for lunch**. Any student who is found off school grounds during their lunch period will be

suspended from school for a minimum of 3 days. Each student is expected to conscientiously follow each of the following regulations:

1. In order to maintain a pleasant mealtime atmosphere, it is necessary for students to conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner.
2. Enter the cafeteria through designated entrances.
3. As you enter the cafeteria line, pick up a tray and other necessary utensils. A lunch menu is posted in each homeroom and in the cafeteria.
4. Remain seated at your table except when getting food or taking a tray back.
5. Never leave the cafeteria without permission from one of the teachers in charge.
6. NO FOOD IS TO BE TAKEN OUT OF THE CAFETERIA.

Student School Dress Code

Rochester Academy Charter School has a dress code policy to help create a safe and orderly environment, instill pride in our school community, and eliminate the competition and distractions caused by varied dress styles. You will be expected to arrive in dress code every day. Please cooperate, display modesty and neatness, and take pride in a clean, neat and attractive uniform. School Uniform can be bought from school.

SHIRTS

Interlock Performance Polo. Approved Colors: Navy blue or light blue uniform shirts with school logo

PANTS

Any style that fits properly, worn at the waist. Approved color: Khaki/ tan

SKIRTS

Knee-length, with no designs or logos. Approved color: Khaki/ tan

ATHLETIC WEAR

T-shirt, sweat pants or shorts at knee length. PLEASE NOTE: Athletic wear is only approved for PE and need not be of a specific color.

OTHER

- Jewelry and accessories should be appropriate for school and not attract undue attention. RACS reserves the right to assess the jewelry's appropriateness.
- Hats, caps, scarves and other headgear may not be worn in the building, with the exception of religious headgear.
- Flip-flops, slippers, heels over 1" or open-toed shoes are not allowed.
- Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. See through or fishnet fabrics, ripped clothing, tube tops, off the shoulder, spaghetti straps or low cut tops, bare midriffs, and skirts or shorts shorter than knee-length are prohibited.
- Glasses may be worn for vision correction only. No sunglasses, 3D glasses, or costume glasses are allowed.
- Cosmetics should be appropriate for school and not attract undue attention.

If a student arrives at school out of uniform, parents will be called, and the student will be kept out of classes until you are dressed appropriately. All class time missed will count as an unexcused absence.

NOTE: IN ALL INSTANCES, THE BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR SHALL BE THE FINAL ARBITER OF THE SCHOOL DRESS CODE.

Inside/Outside Decision During Recess And PE Classes

Whether pupils remain indoors or out-of-doors often is a difficult judgment call. Generally these factors are taken into consideration:

- Temperature usually must be at least 40 degrees grade 7-8.
- Black top areas must be dry or lack ice/snow.
- No threat of rain or lightning.

Parents are asked to dress their children appropriately for cold and windy weather conditions.

School Activities

Field Trips

Field trips are a privilege and attendance may be denied for behavioral or academic reasons. Because the safety of students is very important to us, specific rules will apply to these activities.

Field Trips offer exciting ways to learn. RACS students will have the opportunity to go on field trips at various times throughout the school year. For all field trips, you will be expected to follow these rules

- You must bring the Field Trip Permission Slip signed by your parents or guardian to school by the specified date. No phone calls will be accepted as permission.
- You must wear your school uniform unless otherwise specified.
- You must abide by RACS codes of student conduct while on the field trip.

Chaperones: Only teachers and approved chaperones are permitted on field trips. The principal shall approve all chaperones.

Return to School: Please plan to meet your child at the scheduled time of return. If a field trip returns prior to dismissal time and school is still in session, pupils will be sent to their appropriate class.

Overnight Field Trips: There is a separate set of guidelines for these trips. They will be issued by the principal if such an event is scheduled.

After-School Activities

There is no better way for students to enrich their education than by taking parts in clubs and after-school activities or working with a teacher. These opportunities will allow you to explore more deeply activities you already enjoy and to try other areas that sound interesting. If you stay for an after-school activity, you will be expected to follow these rules:

- You must be with a teacher or other staff member at all times.
- You must arrange for your own transportation to arrive promptly at the end of the activity.
- You must abide by the RACS Code of Student Conduct while participating in the activity.
- You may not stay after school to wait for another student.

A full list and description of after school clubs and activities will be posted after school starts and students will have an opportunity to explore each one that looks interesting.

Clubs, Intramural & Interscholastic Activities

The RACS program offers diversified clubs and intramural/interscholastic programs. The clubs serve to broaden interests and encourage development of well-rounded students. They also provide enjoyment and variety to the school day. Each student may select the club of his/her choice at the beginning of the school year. Sheets summarizing the activities of each club enable you to make your decision. Although clubs are provided for your enjoyment, each club can only be as good as its members help to make it. Cooperation and consideration of others is necessary.

CLUBS are provided to broaden the interests through participation with their peers in a variety of areas.

INTRAMURALS are programs provided to broaden the interests through active participation and competition in a variety of after school sports.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS are now sanctioned by Section V of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Eligible students will compete at the Varsity Level against students

from other Districts of similar size. Varsity Athletics are highly competitive and playing time is based on skill and hard work. Tryouts are held and medical physical are required for participation. Practice will occur outside the school day and may occur in a building at another school. Games will be played at 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14615.

Assemblies

Assemblies are periodically scheduled throughout the school year. Students are instructed on appropriate behavior, seating, and entrance and exit prior to the event. Students are expected to report to assigned seats quickly and quietly. Attendance will be taken and unauthorized absences will be considered a cut. Proper behavior is expected at all times.

Students' Bill Of Rights

Since all students have elected to apply to Rochester Academy Charter School, we anticipate that all students will not only accept their rights as members of our school community, but also their responsibilities to the school community. Rochester Academy Charter School (RACS) is based on a foundation of values including the following:

- Respect.** I will be responsible and give respect to all persons, property, education, and rules of the school.
- Accountability.** I will follow through with my commitments.
- Character.** I will communicate when I need help and will help others achieve their goals.
- Success.** I will be a part of the solution to achieve success in school and life supporting others as we achieve success together.

We ask each of you to carefully read over and sign the student contract on this page and do your best to behave in ways that will enhance your own and others' ability to learn. Entering the school building is a tacit agreement to follow the rules and procedures established in this Code of Conduct, failure to sign the contract allow for violations of this Code of Conduct.

As a student of the Rochester Academy Charter School, I will do my best to do the following:

- I will show consideration for the rights and feelings of others, being careful not to hurt them physically or make them feel bad.
- I will speak to others respectfully, not using profanity or uncomplimentary names.
- I will show respect for all people working or helping in the school.
- I will show careful regard for both my property and the property of others.
- I will always ask permission before I borrow other people's things, and I will return them promptly and in good condition when I am finished.
- I will attend school regularly.
- I will be in class on time with all necessary materials.
- I will make good use of class time, complete, and turn in assignments on time.
- I understand that I must make up assignments I missed because of an absence.
- I will remain on campus during school time, including the lunch period. I will not leave the school ground without the permission of the principal.
- I will do my best in my schoolwork, and I will let others do their best.
- I will ask for help if I do not understand.
- I will not bring any contraband items to school.
- I will help keep the school building and grounds clean and tidy.
- I will walk in the halls.
- I will follow the dress code, arrive, and leave school in my uniform.
- I will not participate in any behavior prohibited by the school.
- I will be responsible in my use of technology in the school.
- I will contribute to RACS mission of maintaining a school free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

Discipline Consequence Guide

All violations of the Code of Conduct will be investigated by the Student Support Team and the student will be questioned prior to being assigned a consequence. This guide is an outline only; administration reserves the right to adjust consequences based on professional judgment and the severity of the situation. More than one infraction type can be combined when assigning a consequence.

Level 1 Infractions

Infraction	Consequence
Antagonistic behavior/ Insubordination/Disrespect to Adults	Detention
Disrupting learning (includes any behavior that prevents other students from learning. It may include but is not limited to inappropriate language, eating or drinking during class, insubordination, and/or selling or trading personal possessions to other students.)	Detention
Excessive talking	Detention
Failure to Comply with School Regulations	Detention
Horseplay	Detention
Inappropriate Computer Use	Detention
Leaving the classroom without permission	Detention
Loitering	1 st offense Warning 2 nd offense Detention
Public Display of Affection (which are not appropriate for public places such as kissing, hugging, etc.)	1 st offense Warning 2 nd offense Detention
Unexcused tardy	Detention
Use of Obscene and Profane Language	Detention
Skipping class	Detention
Violation of Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy	Detention (Cell phone taken away and parent called. Parent needs to pick up phone from an administrator.)
Violation of the Dress Code	Detention (Office phone call home for parent/ guardian to bring proper attire in or leave message and change into RACS alternate used attire, \$3 for loan)
Other Offenses of Similar Seriousness	Detention

Level 2 Infractions

Infraction	Consequence
Engage in conduct which disrupts school or classroom activity or endanger or threaten to endanger the health, safety, welfare, or morals of others	Minimum 1 detention Maximum 1st offensive 1 day ISS Based on the severity and results of behavior.
Leaving the School Building or Grounds	1 day ISS
Bring inappropriate materials. Pornographic, criminal, hate related, laser pointer(s), lighter(s), water balloon etc.	1st Offense 1 day ISS
	2nd Offense 1 day OSS
	3rd Offense 3 days OSS and disciplinary hearing
Cheat on exams or quizzes, or commit plagiarism.	1 day ISS and automatic zero (0) on the assignment.
Encouraging or urging other students to violate school rules.	1 day ISS
Failure to Identify Self Properly	1 day ISS
Failure to follow instructions during an emergency drill	1st Incident: 1 day ISS with Emergency drill seminar (practice emergency drill with staff/ SSS during detention)
	2nd Incident: 1 day OSS with seminar (practice emergency drill with staff/ SSS during detention)
	3rd Incident: 3 day OSS and disciplinary hearing
Failure to follow instructions or directions on a field trip	1 st incident: 1 day of ISS and suspension from next field trip
	2 nd Incident: 1 day ISS and suspension from all field trips for remainder of the year.
Forgery	1st Offense 1 day ISS
	2nd Offense 1 day OSS
	3rd Offense 3 days OSS and disciplinary hearing
Open Defiance of Authority/Continued Willful Disobedience	1st Incident: 1 day OSS
	2nd Incident: 2 day OSS
	3rd Incident: 5 day OSS
	4th Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Participation in an Unauthorized Occupancy	1 day OSS
Skipping Detention	2 detentions
Skipping Saturday detention	1 day ISS
Possession, consumption or distribution of cigarettes or tobacco products	1st Offense 3 days OSS
	2nd Offense 5 days OSS and disciplinary hearing
Truancy	Parent conference

Level 3 Infractions

Infraction	Consequence
Possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medications or drug paraphernalia	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion. Police report will be made.
Assault on a Teacher or other school employee	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Arson	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion, Police 311 Report made
Bullying or Cyberbullying: unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can occur before and after school hours, in a school building, or on the internet. See the attachment for the school policy.	1st Incident: 1 day OSS
	2nd Incident: 3 day OSS
	3rd Incident: 5 day OSS
	4th Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Harassment: creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (which includes a person's actual or perceived sex, as well as gender identity and expression)	1st Incident: 1 day OSS
	2nd Incident: 3 day OSS
	3rd Incident: 5 day OSS
	4th Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Destruction of School Property	1st Offense up to 5 day OSS. Pay cost of damage or fix.
	2nd Offense Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, expulsion. Pay cost of damage or fix.
Engage in acts of sexual harassment, including but not limited to sexually related physical contact or offensive sexual comments.	1st Incident: 2 day OSS
	2nd Incident: 3 day OSS
	3rd Incident: 5 day OSS
	4th Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Extortion	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion. Police 311 report may be made
False Fire Alarm, Bomb Scare, Terrorist Action	5 day OSS disciplinary hearing resulting in long-term suspension, or expulsion, police report made. (Violation of state law subject to legal authorities. Subject to fines from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and jail terms.)
Fighting/ Assaulting another Student or Person	1st Incident: 3 days OSS
	2nd Incident: 5 days OSS
	3rd Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Gambling for profit/ actual money	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in

	long term suspension, or expulsion police report may be made
Larceny or Other Theft Offenses and/ or threatening to take another person	1st incident: Up to 3 day OSS; Parent notified, police report may be made
	2nd Incident: Up to 5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension , or expulsion
Possession of a Weapon/Intentional Use of Instrument for Harm	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion, police report will be made
Riot: four or more persons simultaneously engaging in tumultuous and violent conduct and thereby intentionally or recklessly causing or creating a grave risk of physical injury or substantial property damage or causing alarm.	5 day OSS with disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension or expulsion
Threatening/ Intimidation	1st Incident: 1 day OSS
	2nd Incident: 2 day OSS
	3rd Incident: 5 day OSS
	4th Incident: Disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Under the influence of drugs or alcohol	Call parent immediately to remove the student. police report may be made Consequences for "Alcohol/ tobacco/ drug related" will apply
Verbal or Physical Menacing of a Staff Member	1st Incident: 3 days OSS
	2nd Incident: 5 days OSS and disciplinary hearing resulting in long term suspension, or expulsion
Other Offenses of Similar Seriousness	Administrative discretion

Students involved with level 3 infractions will receive, at minimum, weekly counseling for at least four weeks.

Repeated Infractions

Infraction	Definition	Explanation
Repeated minor infraction	Level 1 or 2 infractions that are repeated five, six or seven times within a semester	ISS and mandatory parent meeting
Repeated minor infractions	Level 1 or 2 infractions that are repeated eight or more times within a semester	OSS and mandatory parent meeting or disciplinary hearing
Repeated major infraction	Level 2 or 3 infractions that are repeated two or more times within a semester	OSS and mandatory parent meeting or disciplinary hearing
Repeated skipping of detentions	When a student reaches 5 total unserved detentions	1 day of ISS; student detentions are removed after day is served

*Students start fresh each year or per counselor discretion.

Multiple Referrals

Infraction	Definition	Actions
10 Referrals	Any type of referral	Letter will be sent home
20 Referrals	Any type of referral	Mandatory parent meeting and behavior contract
30 Referrals	Any type of referral	Mandatory parent meeting to review behavior contract
40 Referrals	Any type of referral	Disciplinary Hearing

Discipline Programs

1. Teacher Detention – A management procedure to be used by the teacher for an infraction of classroom rules. Teacher will provide 24 hours’ notice to parents that the student must attend the assigned detention. Students should speak with their teachers to resolve misunderstanding and improve their standing in the class.
2. After School Detention – A discipline procedure used by the administration after procedural due process for violating school rules listed at levels I and II of the Code of Conduct. Detention will not be used for habitual offenders.
3. Saturday Detention – an option, designed to foster academic pursuits and modify inappropriate behavior (3 hours).
5. In-School Suspension- Assigned to a student only by the administration after procedural due process for violation of the Code of Conduct. This may be offered by the administration in lieu of Out-of-School Suspension.
5. Out-of-School Suspension- Assigned to a student only by the administration after procedural due process for pupils violating the Code of Conduct such that their presence in the building is disruptive to the school environment.
6. Expulsion – The disciplinary discharge of a student from RACS, student may not re-enroll without Director’s approval and not before the start of the next full academic year.

Detention Rules

1. Detention will occur during lunch and advisory or recess time. Students will bring materials to work on. (Homework, books to read from the Library, only school acceptable materials permitted.) Teacher may send classroom materials.
2. No sleeping.
3. No talking.
4. No leaving the room except in an emergency.
6. Students will adhere to the Code of Conduct and any rules stated by the proctor. Failure to comply will mean suspension (in/out school).
7. Any student assigned to the detention room must attend the entire session. Students refusing to attend will be suspended from school.
8. If a student arrives to the detention room 5 minutes after designated time without confirmed excuse, the student will not be allowed into detention room, and the miss will be considered unexcused. This will result in the student being assigned two detentions.

Suspension Policy

The policy of the RACS Board of Trustees shall be in compliance with Section 3214 - Chapter 16, Title IV, Article 65, Part I, which states that the board of education, board of trustees or sole trustee, the superintendent of schools, district superintendent of schools or principal of a school may suspend the following pupils from required attendance upon instruction: A pupil who is insubordinate or disorderly or violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Any student who is suspended "Out of School" is not permitted on school grounds unless accompanied by a parent.

NOTE: Some offenses require immediate suspension either in or out of school. Need for suspension will be determined by an Administrator in the building and parents will be notified by phone immediately and by letter within two business days.

Conduct that shall constitute good cause for suspension or expulsion of a pupil guilty of such conduct shall include, but not be limited to any of the following:

- A. Continued and willful disobedience;
- B. Open defiance of authority of any teacher or person having authority over the pupil;
- C. Conduct of such character as to constitute a danger to the physical well-being of other pupils or to oneself;
- D. Physical assault upon another pupil or upon any teacher or other school employee; if in the process of a violent act or assault you do not respond to a staff member's directive to stop, the degree of severity of the violation is raised. Further, if a staff member is harmed in any way through your involvement in the violence, the degree of severity is raised.
- E. Taking or attempting to take, personal property or money from another pupil by means of force or fear.
- F. Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property, or constitute a danger to school property.
- G. Participation in any unauthorized occupancy by any group of students in any part of any school or other building owned by any school district, and failure to leave such school or facility promptly after having been directed to do so by the principal or other person then in charge of such building or facility;
- H. Incitement which is intended to, and does result in, unauthorized occupation by any group of pupils or others of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school district;
- I. Incitement that is intended to, and does result in, truancy by other pupils;
- J. Knowingly possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or controlled dangerous substances on school premises, or being under the influence of intoxicating liquor or controlled dangerous substances while on school premises.
- K. Repetition of violence by the same individual can result in expulsion from RACS.

WE HAVE ZERO TOLERANCE FOR DRUGS, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS OR VIOLENCE. EXPECT SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE TO SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF OUR POLICIES, RULES, REGULATIONS AND STATE LAWS.

Suspension Procedure/ Process

A. All suspensions may be subject to a preliminary hearing held by the administration on request and shall consist of:

1. Notice of the charged misconduct
2. Explanation of the basis for the suspension
3. Statement by student
4. Decision rendered
5. Right of Appeal

B. Decision rendered may be appealed in writing within 2 school days by a parent/adult student (18 years or older) to the next higher administrative authority

The aforesaid notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to suspension of the pupil unless the pupil's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the pupils notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

C. GUIDELINES ON APPEALS

1. The nature of the appeal must address the act, which is alleged to have violated the rules, policies, and/or law.
2. The inherent restrictions on extracurricular activities, social events, graduation, and sports team involvement that may limit, restrict or ban the student's inclusion based on the offense are set by RACS.
3. Consider the strength of evidence prior to appeal.
4. Be prepared to present a case that defends the student with fact, not emotion.

D. A suspension administered on a Friday takes effect immediately and impacts on an individual's ability to participate in any event/game during the weekend following the Friday suspension.

E. If stipulated by the administration students who are suspended in- or out-of- school and their parent or guardian must attend an in-person conference prior to the return to school provided that this meeting does not extend the suspension beyond five days. Telephone conferences are not acceptable unless stipulated prior to the re-admit. There are no temporary re-admits. A student shall remain in the office until a parent or guardian arrives to re-admit him/her.

Expulsion

The decision to expel any student will be made in writing and will include the reasons for the expulsion by the Director after hearing about the events involved in a situation.

The parent/ guardian may appeal an expulsion within two (2) school days of the expulsion being issued. This appeal will be made to the Director in writing. You may not attend classes until the appeal is heard, but you will be able to turn in work for the classes you miss while waiting for the appeal and receive credit for that work. All disciplinary hearings on expulsions will be held within four (4) school days of the appeal being made. The decision of Director is final.

PBIS Point System

RACS has a variety of incentive programs to keep your child motivated to do well all year-round. RACS is committed to a system of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This system encourages rewarding our students for exhibiting exemplary behavior that is outlined in our behavior matrices that are posted throughout the building. The behaviors that we reward our students for showing are responsibility, accountability, character and success. When a staff member “catches” a student engaging in our targeted behaviors, they are rewarded with tickets. Students may hand in the tickets weekly for a prize or save up their tickets for bigger prizes including dress down days, gift cards, movie passes and more.

In addition to PBIS, students have the opportunity to be rewarded for their success at the end of every 5 weeks with a dress-down day if they are passing their classes and have not had more than 1 detention. Every 10 weeks, students are rewarded for their efforts and recognized by their staff and peers at an honor roll assembly. At the honor roll assembly, students may be presented in a number of awards, including honor roll, perfect attendance, and excellent behavior. This year, we have introduced our newest award: the Principal’s award. The Principal’s award goes to students who earn all three awards in the same quarter. Upon receiving the Principal’s award, the student will also receive financial reward.

Lastly, students may earn financial rewards for every Regents exam that they pass on their first attempt. On top of winning the financial rewards, they are also entered into a drawing to win an iPad at the end of the academic year.

Middle school uses the point system through student database in lieu of the tickets. The point system includes positive and negative points for the criteria listed below.

Positive

- Accountability (arriving early, taking responsibility)
- Character (leadership, random acts of kindness, making the positive choice)
- Respect (maintain school environment, above and beyond direction following, honesty, positivity)
- Success (scholastic excellence, teamwork, self advocating)

Negative

- Disrespect of self/school/teachers
- Inappropriate use of materials
- Poor decision making
- Tardiness

Fraternal Organizations/Gangs

All fraternities, sororities, secret societies and gangs are regarded as contrary to the good of the public school system and, therefore, are prohibited by state law. No student attending Rochester Academy Charter School is to wear any jewelry or article of clothing identified with any such organization. Furthermore, recruitment for any such group on our grounds is strictly prohibited.

Student Information Sheet

Please be sure your child's Student Information Sheet is kept current with emergency contact names and phone numbers. Send a note to the main office when a change is necessary at any time during the school year. It is especially important that the school has current information when emergency closings are announced. In the event you cannot pick up your child in an emergency closing situation, call the school with the name of person your child may be released to and be sure that person is designated on the Student Information Sheet. Please be sure that the phone numbers you submit for designated emergency contacts are phone numbers where contacts can be reached during school hours.

Policy Concerning Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco And Controlled Dangerous Substances

Policy Statement

Students are prohibited from possessing, consuming, or distributing drugs or alcohol in any form while at school, in co-curricular and extra-curricular programs, on school grounds, attending a school-related function on or off campus, and when coming to and going from school. Students are further prohibited from smoking cigarettes or using tobacco products in any form in school building.

Students suspected of being “under the influence” will be subject to five day suspension leading to a disciplinary hearing which could result in suspension longer than five days or expulsion.

RACS intends to use the disciplinary sanctions of this policy as a means of helping students recover from the debilitating effects of substance abuse.

Students Voluntarily Seeking Help

Students are encouraged to seek help for problems with or related to drug and/or alcohol use. School Social Workers are provided for direct assistance or confidential referral for students seeking help with an alcohol, drug or other problem related to their substance use or use by someone in a close relationship with them.

1. Voluntarily seeking help does not prevent the school staff from charging a student with suspicion of being under the influence at another time.
2. The School Social Workers will be allowed to maintain confidentiality of conversations with students meeting the following criteria:
 - a) The student’s health is not in imminent danger
 - b) The information does not make the staff member an accessory to an illegal action
 - c) The information does not indicate that the health or safety of the student or individual is threatened.

Students Suspected Of Being Under The Influence Of Substances

Staff members must immediately report any student exhibiting behavior, or a pattern of behavior, or whose physical condition is consistent with the signs and symptoms of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

1. When a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the steps below will be followed:
 - a) The staff member who expresses concern shall contact either the building principal or his/her designee
 - b) Parent or guardian will be contacted via phone.
 - c) The nurse, an administrator, and/or the School Social Worker will meet with the student as soon as possible.
 - d) If appropriate the parent/guardian shall be directed to take the student for an immediate examination by a physician of their own choosing, which shall then be at the family’s expense.

- e) When a student is in need of immediate medical attention, the building administrator will take appropriate action to ensure that emergency medical services or the police transport the student to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Students Returning From Treatment: Voluntary And Policy-Ordered

Students voluntarily (non-school ordered) attending a treatment program causing an extended absence will be readmitted only upon receipt of a written recommendation from the treatment program. The absences will be considered in the same manner as other “chronically ill” students.

Search And Seizure

NOTE: Lockers are school property and, therefore, subject to search by school administration at any time.

1. Searches conducted of students’ possessions, lockers or vehicles must be warranted by “reasonable suspicion” in compliance with standards established in U.S. vs. TLO.
2. These searches shall include the following guidelines:
 - a. “Reasonable Suspicion” shall mean suspicion based on statements of concern by staff or students, and physical condition and behavior of a suspicious nature, which indicates a violation of the Code of Conduct.
 - b. Searches of a “cursory” nature may be conducted, including a visual inspection and request that students empty pockets, purses and other belongings.
3. Students refusing to cooperate in “searches” will have their parent/guardian contacted immediately to inform them of the student’s refusal to cooperate, stressing possible police involvement in the incident.

Possession Or Distribution Of Alcohol And / Or Other Drugs

When a student is found to be in possession of any quantity of illegal substances (drugs or alcohol) on school grounds or at a school activity the Rochester Police Department may be called.

1. When illegal substances are found, it will be the responsibility of the Police to complete their normal reporting procedures and any other legal actions, including arrest, depending on the quantity of substances.
2. The Board of Education maintains the right to conduct an expulsion hearing on any student found selling, possessing or distributing illegal substances.
3. Students charged with distribution or intent to distribute drugs:
 - a. Out-of-School Suspension for a minimum of 5 days;
 - b. Will be subject to a Disciplinary Hearing to determine if expulsion or suspension longer than 5 days is warranted

Upon the second, and any subsequent offenses, or those involving action by the Court due to the quantity of substances involved, an automatic Disciplinary Hearing by the Director shall be held. Students arrested for non-school related drug or alcohol violations shall be permitted to attend school unless it is demonstrated that the student is a danger to him/herself, or to other students in the school. Based on reports from local police, if the school building Principal determines that the student’s continued attendance presents a danger to the health and safety of other students in the building, the offending student shall be suspended for a period of 5 days and be required to attend a Disciplinary Hearing that may result in expulsion or suspension longer than 5 days.

Attendance

The RACS acknowledges the importance of regular attendance in an effective instructional program. To this end, it will observe and enforce the laws requiring the attendance of all children between the ages of six and sixteen and establish its own rules for the attendance of all students. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session. In accordance with statute, the school shall require from the parent of each child who has been absent from school a written statement of the reason for such absence. An excuse written by a parent does not necessarily constitute a legal absence. **RACS reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each absence or tardiness.**

Absences should be phoned into the office (585 235 4141-Genesee or 585 467 9201-Portland) by the parent before the start of school on that date. Parents who fail to report the absence ahead of time will receive a phone call from the school. It is imperative that parents keep all contact information up to date to facilitate this process. A student must be present in school and/or class 90 percent of the school days per semester in order to receive credit for the subjects enrolled. A student may be absent due to illness approximately nine days per semester, eighteen days per year. Any days beyond nine days per semester, eighteen days per year, or eighteen individual class periods, may result in loss of credit.

Absences

Regular attendance is an expectation at RACS to ensure that our students are afforded every opportunity to grow, learn and be successful. Absences should be avoided when reasonably possible.

1. Students are permitted to accumulate 18 absences per school year without academic penalty. However, students are expected to meet with their teachers to make-up missed class work, homework and assessments. Failure to complete make-up work will have a negative effect on a student's grade.
Legal absences include:
 - a. Medical excuse from a health care provider
 - b. Medical, dental appointments
 - c. Death in family
 - d. College visits grades 10-12 (All college visits must be pre-approved by counselor and student must return with certification from college/university that student attended on specified day.) College visit days are limited to four per academic year.
 - e. Visits to government agencies including but not limited to: immigration, social security, child welfare etc.
 - f. Mandated Court Appearances – Documentation must be provided by the court and validated that the student appeared on that date.
 - g. School Sanctioned Field Trips
 - h. Religious Holidays as stipulated by the State Board of Education
2. After 5 unexcused illegal absences, a letter to parents is sent home; after 8 illegal absences, a parent meeting is held; after 10 illegal absences a home visit is conducted; after these three lines of communication and the above interventions have been conducted CPS may be called (after 10 unexcused absences). The 18th day letter will be sent informing the parent of the denial of credit at which time, the family must make contact with the school administration to appeal the decision.

Failure of the parent to respond within 5 school days of mailer will result in final denial of credit with no opportunity for appeal.

Tardiness

A tardy is defined as any time in which a student does not arrive to a class at the time of the bell stipulated by the school bell schedule.

1. All students are to arrive to school on time, properly prepared with their required assignments, and personal belongings in their locker.
2. All period 1 classes, including Physical Education and Health classes begin at the same time. Their attendance period is considered part of the instructional time and is duly noted in the student's attendance.
3. Any student arriving more than 22 minutes late to any class will be issued a tardy cut and penalized as a cut.

Early Dismissal

When a parent wishes to have their child dismissed early, the parent must provide the student with a note that is given to the office by 7:45 am the morning of the excuse. At the time of the early dismissal, a parent/guardian must sign the student out.

In case of family emergency a parent may sign their child out of the Main Office. In this circumstance, the student is limited to two "early excuses" per year. All others after will be deemed, unexcused.

Extracurricular Clubs, Athletic Practice, Game Participation, And School Attendance Policy

1. Extracurricular participants must have exceptional attendance. They must be in school to play, practice, or otherwise participate in extracurricular activities.
2. If absent or late, a student may not participate, practice, or otherwise participate in extracurricular activities unless the reason is legally excused. Written excuses from parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation must be turned into the Main Office upon arrival at School.
3. If the early dismissal is for excused reason, with the exception of subparagraph (b) below, the student may return to play, practice, or other participation in extracurricular activities.
4. If the student goes home ill, is suspended, or is otherwise absent, then he or she may not return to activities or games occurring on that same day.

Family Vacations

The school calendar provides for several possible vacation periods during the year at Thanksgiving, winter, and spring. Students should not take vacation trips outside of these periods. It is very important that students be present for all class meetings in each subject area. This ensures continuity of the learning experience and prevents long gaps, which are most difficult and, at times, impossible to make up. The school cannot approve any vacation time. Vacation absences will be considered as illegal/unexcused absences and work will be provided upon return to school.

Supervision

The school's responsibility for supervision of students begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. For students participating in extra-curricular activities, athletic and non-athletic, the school's responsibility for supervision begins at 4:00 p.m. and ends at the specific time each coach/moderator informs the student. Each coach/moderator will inform the students of the beginning and ending times of practices/meetings. A written policy from each coach/moderator who has consistent practices/meetings will be given to the student to take home. It is imperative for your child's safety that you are on time to pick them up at the end of a specific practice/activity. Failure to pick up your child promptly may result in his/her removal from co-curricular activities. **Loitering in the hall or on campus after 4:00 p.m. is NOT permitted.**

Penalties

1. Students who exceed the maximum number of allowable absences will remain in scheduled classes in order to earn grades, but will be denied graduation credit for their course work. Graduation/promotion credits may be earned by retaking the course the following year or attending Summer School.
2. Continued absences or failure to participate actively in classes in a positive manner may result in the student's reassignment of classes.
3. A zero will be given for missed class work as defined under Class Cuts. Parent and will be notified of the cut to class and the subsequent zero for a grade.

Religious Holidays

1. No pupil who is absent from school because of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence.
2. A pupil who misses a test or examination because of a religious holiday has the right to make up all work missed.
3. To be entitled to the privileges set forth above, the pupil must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent.
4. Any absence because of a religious holiday must be recorded in the school register or in any group or class attendance record as a legal absence.
5. Such absence must NOT be recorded on any transcript, application, employment form, or any similar form.

Overview

Denials of credit shall be issued at these four (4) levels of the Attendance Policy:

- Eighteen (18) tardiness to any one class;
- Eighteen (18) illegal/ unexcused absences from school for a full credit course
- Nine (9) illegal/ unexcused absences from school for a half credit course

School Work During Absences

1. All missed class work and homework assignments are to be made up within a time period specified by the classroom teacher or administrator, not to exceed 10 school days, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
2. Upon his/her return to school, the student is required to make up tests and missed assignments.

3. The student is expected to show initiative in seeking out each teacher to determine missed assignments and due dates.

[NOTE: SHOULD A STUDENT BE ABSENT DUE TO PARTICIPATION IN A FAMILY TRIP OR OTHER UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE FROM THE SCHEDULED SCHOOL CALENDAR, MISSED WORK WILL BE ASSIGNED AS HOMEWORK UPON RETURNING TO SCHOOL. NO WORK WILL BE PROVIDED PRIOR TO THE ABSENCE.]

Assignments For Absent Students

The policy for release of homework assignments for absent students is:

1. Students absent for one or two days are encouraged to obtain assignments from classmates.
2. Students who will be or are absent from school for three or more days may secure homework assignments through the main office using the following procedures:
 - a. Call the main office before 10:00 a.m. for homework assignments.
 - b. Be specific about whom, when, and where the assignments will be picked up. This is your responsibility.
 - c. Make sure assignments are returned to the subject teacher.

Withdrawal Policy

When a student must withdraw from RACS during the school term, the student should report to the office at least three days prior to the date of withdrawal stating the reason for withdrawal in writing. The student will receive a withdrawal form that will be signed by the Director or his designee. The withdrawal form must then be returned to the registrar for official release. The registrar will release student records signed by parents if the student is cleared.

Student Rights And Responsibilities

Participation In School Activities

All students have the following rights:

To have the opportunity to take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, sex, national origin, creed, or disability at a safe environment free of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

To address the school on the same terms as any citizen.

Records

The school will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records except as authorized pursuant to The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student under 18 years of age, or a student 18 years of age or older, is entitled to access to the student's school records by submitting a written request to the Director.

Freedom Of Expression

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by symbolic speech. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, and written expression of opinion must be signed by the author. Any form of expression that involves libel, slander, the use of obscenity, or personal attacks, or that otherwise disrupts the educational process, is prohibited. All forms of expression also must be in compliance with the Student Disciplinary Code and the school dress code, violations of which are punishable as stated in the Disciplinary Code.

Student participation in the publication of school sponsored student newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines and similar publications is encouraged as a learning and educational experience. These publications, if any, shall be supervised by qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high standards of journalism. In order to maintain consistency with the school's basic educational mission, the content of such publications is controlled by school authorities.

No person shall distribute any printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the Director. The Director may regulate the content of materials to be distributed on school property to the extent necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The director may also regulate the time, place, manner and duration of such distribution.

Chain Of Command For Questions Or Concerns

The RACS Board wishes to emphasize that concerns regarding programs, personnel or other issues must be handled through a proper chain of command. Using this procedure, a citizen must first address the concern with the employee directly responsible. If satisfactory results are not achieved, the citizen may then address that employee's direct supervisor. As an example, a normal chain of command regarding a concern with a classroom teacher would begin with the classroom teacher; continue through the Building Administrator (Dean of Middle School or Dean of Academics), then on to the Director and finally the RACS Board. Please use this chain of command until your concern is resolved or ask for guidance if you are not sure where to begin.

Academics

Curriculum Framework

Important decisions concerning the choice of subjects face each student when the school program is planned. The curriculum selected should be based on individual capacities, needs and interests. Please note that a major function of the college guidance counselor is assistance in subject selection. The assigned counselor has information available which provides insight into the student's strengths and weaknesses, as well as potential ability and past performance. The counselor can also provide insight into curricular choices to support an individual student's goals in terms of continuing education and career options.

Most students should plan to take seven academic subjects and a lunch. The master schedule is based on the tally of student requests for subjects after a counselor interview has been scheduled and parental approval has been received. While it is sometimes necessary to make changes in a student's requested schedule because of later subject failure, it is imperative that careful consideration be given to program requests so that a seat will be reserved for the student in the selected class.

REQUESTS FOR CHANGES IN STUDENT SCHEDULES WILL NOT BE GRANTED IN SEPTEMBER. ALL REQUESTS FOR CHANGES MUST BE MADE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS.

Please Note:

Parents and students should be aware that dropping a subject will result in a final grade of a "Withdrawn" on a student's permanent record.

Requirements For Graduation:

REGENTS DIPLOMA

REGENTS DIPLOMA REQUIRED COURSE CREDITS	
English	4
Social Studies	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Foreign Language	1
Art/Music	1
Health	0.5
Computer Course	0.5
Physical Education	2
Electives	3
TOTAL	22

REGENTS DIPLOMA WITH ADVANCED DESIGNATION

REGENTS DIPLOMA with ADVANCED DESIGNATION REQUIRED COURSE CREDITS	
English	4
Social Studies	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Foreign Language	3
Art/Music	1
Health	0.5
Computer Course	0.5
Physical Education	2
Electives	1
TOTAL	22

REGENTS DIPLOMA REQUIRED REGENTS EXAMS 5 Regents Exams Required (Passing Score of 65 and Above)	
English Language Arts Exam	1
Social Studies (Global History and US History)	2
Mathematics (Int. Algebra or Geometry or Algebra2/Trigonometry)	1
Science (Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry or Physics)	1
TOTAL	5

REGENTS DIPLOMA with ADVANCED DESIGNATION REQUIRED REGENTS EXAMS 9 Regents Exams Required (Passing Score of 65 and Above)	
English Language Arts Exam	1
Social Studies (Global History and US History)	2
Mathematics (Int. Algebra and Geometry and Algebra2/Trigonometry)	3
Science (Living Environment and Earth Science, Chemistry or Physics)	2
Foreign Language FLACS Checkpoint B Exam	1
TOTAL	9

*All students must take one unit of credit in laboratory science.

** Local examination. Students with IEP may be exempt from the foreign language requirement.

Credits

1 unit credit is granted for each subject held five times a week for a full year. Semester courses receive .5 credits. For courses meeting more or less often, the credits are adjusted accordingly.

Grading Scale

All classes at RACS will follow this standard scale for assigning letter grades for quarter and semester work. Individual teachers will establish the grading policies and procedures for their classes, and their grades will correspond to this scale.

Grade	Standard	Grade	Standard
98-100=A+	4.00	77-79=C+	2.33
93-97=A	4.00	75-76=C	2.00
90-92=A-	3.66	70-74=C-	1.66
87-89=B+	3.33	67-69=D+	1.33
83-86=B	3.00	65-66=D	1.00
80-82=B-	2.66	0-64=F	0.00

For final grading purposes, Rochester Academy Charter School has established five distinct Marking Periods. These Marking Periods are:

1st Marking Period 20% of final grade

2nd Marking Period 20% of final grade

3rd Marking Period 20% of final grade

4th Marking Period 20% of final grade

5th Marking Period (with combined average scores of Midterm and Final Examinations for high school/benchmark test for middle school) 20% of final grade

Records And Transcripts

Viewing Records: A parent/guardian has the right to view his/her child's a) academic record, b) academic standardized test results, c) health records and d) emergency sheet (emergency phone numbers, etc.). These records can be made available upon request.

Government Records: Records attached to publicly funded services provided through the local Board of Education such as Child Study Team Reviews, Comp Ed, Speech, ESL, etc., are the property of the Board. A parent/guardian who wishes to examine these records or to procure additional copies for his/her own use must apply to the Board. The school is not permitted to distribute this information to anyone, not even to a parent/guardian.

Permanent Records: A permanent record is maintained for every student who attends or has attended Rochester Academy Charter School. This record indicates all courses taken, grades, standardized test scores, and credits earned. Also included is a complete record of all absences as well as an account of tardiness (excused and unexcused). This is especially important to future

employers, who use this as an index of student reliability. Additional information relating to college entrance and scholarship as well as standardized test scores are also on file. Any student or parent wishing to see or forward a copy of the permanent record (transcript) to a college or employer should contact the Guidance Office.

Copies of transcripts are available through the Guidance Office. Official copies, those bearing the school's raised seal, must be forwarded by the school. Transcripts which accompany college applications will not be given to the student. There is a \$5.00 fee for each copy of an official transcript requested and a \$2.00 fee for faxed and unofficial copies.

Promotion And Retention

The Board recognizes that the personal, social, emotional, and educational growth of children varies and therefore students should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

A. Pupils in grades 7, and 8 may be promoted with one major subject failure and the recommendation that the subject be made up in summer school.

B. Pupils failing two full-year core content area classes (Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) will be retained unless one subject is made up in summer school. If Reading/Literature or Mathematics is one of the failed subjects, it must be the elected summer school selection. However, it is also recommended that the other failed subject be made up in summer school.

C. Pupils failing three subjects are required to make up two subjects in a summer school session.

D. Any pupil failing four or more subjects will be retained in that grade level.

Students Parent Contract

Parents and students have elected to apply to Rochester Academy Charter School; we anticipate that all students will not only accept their rights as members of our school community, but also their responsibilities to other members of the community. Rochester Academy Charter School (RACS) is based on a foundation of values including the following:

- Respect.** I will be responsible and give respect to all persons, property, education, and rules of the school.
- Accountability.** I will follow through with my commitments.
- Character.** I will communicate when I need help and will help others achieve their goals.
- Success.** I will be a part of the solution to achieve success in school and life supporting others as we achieve success together.

As a student of the Rochester Academy Charter School, I will do my best to do the following:

- I will show consideration for the rights and feelings of others, being careful not to hurt them physically or make them feel bad.
- I will speak to others respectfully, not using profanity or uncomplimentary names.
- I will show respect for all people working or helping in the school.
- I will show careful regard for both my property and the property of others.
- I will always ask permission before I borrow other people’s things, and I will return them promptly and in good condition when I am finished.
- I will attend school regularly.
- I will be in class on time with all necessary materials.
- I will make good use of class time, complete, and turn in assignments on time.
- I understand that I must make up assignments I missed because of an absence.
- I will remain on campus during school time, including the lunch period. I will not leave the school ground without the permission of the principal.
- I will do my best in my schoolwork, and I will let others do their best.
- I will ask for help if I do not understand.
- I will not bring any contraband items to school.
- I will help keep the school building and grounds clean and tidy.
- I will walk in the halls.
- I will follow the dress code, arrive, and leave school in my uniform.
- I will not participate in any behavior banned by the school.
- I will be responsible in my use of technology in the school.
- I will contribute to RACS mission of maintaining a school free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

RACS is committed to reviewing its policies, practices, and benefits continually. Accordingly, the policies, practices, and benefits outlines in this student handbook are subject to change at any time. RACS reserves the right to make final interpretation of all current or future policies, and to make the determination, entirely within its discretion, as to whether the facts of a particular situation warrant action on its part.

I understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined in The RACS Student Handbook. I understand and agree that my child will be held accountable for his or her behavior and consequences as outlined in this document. They will be held accountable at school, school-sponsored and school related activities, including school-sponsored travel. I understand that any student who violates the code of conduct is subject to disciplinary action as outlined in this Student Handbook and which may include referral for criminal prosecution. I further understand and consent to my parental responsibilities as outlined in this handbook.

We recognize the right and responsibility of the school to make rules and enforce them.

Parent or guardian name : _____

Parent Signature : _____ Date _____

Student name : _____

Student Signature : _____ Date _____

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE

Attachment: Student Bullying Prevention And Intervention Policy Philosophy, Goals And Objectives

The Rochester Academy Charter School (“RACS”) Board of Trustees (“Board”) is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality. The Board recognizes that harassment, hazing and bullying is detrimental to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of RACS to educate its students and disrupts the educational process. Such behavior affects not only the students who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

To this end, the Board condemns and strictly prohibits all forms of harassment, hazing and bullying on RACS grounds, school buses and at all RACS-sponsored activities, programs and events including those that take place at locations outside RACS but that materially and substantially disrupts the educational process within RACS or infringes on the rights of others.

Definitions

- *School Property* means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real boundary line of a RACS elementary or secondary school; and/or in or on a school bus.
- *School Bus* means every motor vehicle owned or leased by RACS or a public or governmental agency or private school and operated for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity, to or from school.
- *School Function* means an RACS-or other school-sponsored extracurricular event or activity.
- *Disability* means (a) a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic, or neurological conditions that prevent the exercise of a normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques; or (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in all provisions of this article dealing with employment, the term must be limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the complainant from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held, consistent with N.Y. Education Law §11(4) and Executive Law §292(21).
- *Employee* means any person receiving compensation from RACS or from a school district or the employee the contracting service provider or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to Title nine-B of article 5 of the social services law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to RACS or a school district, their students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involved direct student contact. (N.Y. Educ. Law §§11(4) and 1125(3)).
- *DASA* means the Dignity for All Students Act, as stated in Article 2, sections 801, 801-a, and 2801 of the N.Y. Education Law.
- *DASA Coordinator* means the employee approved by the Board as the DASA Coordinator for an RACS school building, who is trained in the handling of human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex.

- *Sexual Orientation* means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality.
- *Gender* means a person's actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression (N.Y. Educ. Law § 11(6)).
- *Harassment* means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with the student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional, or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause the student to fear for his or her physical safety; such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. (N.Y. Educ. Law § 11(7)).
- *Bullying* means a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. Bullying may be premeditated or a sudden activity. It may be subtle or easy to identify, done by one person or a group. Bullying is characterized by:
 1. **Power imbalance** – occurs when a bully uses his/her physical or social power over a target;
 2. **Intent to harm** – the bully seeks to inflict physical or emotional harm and/or takes pleasure in this activity;
 3. **Threat of further aggression** – the bully and the target believe the bullying will continue;
 4. **Terror** – when any bullying increases, it becomes a “systematic violence or harassment used to intimidate and maintain dominance.”¹
 5. **Social** – spreading rumors about someone, purposefully excluding or shunning others, telling other children not to be friends with someone or otherwise attempting to ostracize a student, causing someone's public embarrassment.
 6. **Physical** – hitting, punching, shoving, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's belongings, and making meaning or rude hand gestures directed toward someone else.

The term bullying includes hazing, as defined in N.Y. Penal Law §§ 125.16 – 125.17. In some instances, bullying or harassment may constitute a violation of an individual's civil rights. RACS is mindful of its responsibilities under the law and in accordance with School policy, 0100, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination and 5470 and 9010.2, Sexual Harassment.

There are at least three kinds of bullying: verbal, physical and psychological/social/relational.

- Verbal bullying includes, but is not limited to, name calling, insulting remarks, verbal teasing, frightening phone calls, violent threats, extortion, taunting, gossip, spreading rumors, racist slurs, threatening electronic communications, anonymous notes, etc.
- Physical bullying includes, but is not limited to, poking, slapping, hitting, tripping or causing a fall, choking, kicking, punching, biting, pinching, scratching, spitting, twisting arms or legs, damaging clothes and personal property, or threatening gestures.

¹ See Barbara Coloroso, *The Bully, The Bullied & The Bystander* (2003).

- Social, psychological or relational bullying includes, but is not limited to, excluding someone from a group, isolating, shunning, spreading rumors or gossiping, arranging public humiliation, undermining relationships, teasing about clothing, looks, giving dirty looks, aggressive stares, etc.

In the remainder of this policy and associated regulation the term “bullying” will be used to refer to harassing or hazing behaviors because that is the term most commonly used by students and parents.

Cyberbullying

As with other forms of bullying, cyberbullying is an attempt to display power and control over someone perceived as weaker. Cyberbullying involving School students may occur both on campus and off school grounds and may involve student use of the RACS Internet system or student use of personal digital devices while at school, such as cell phones, digital cameras, and personal computers to engage in bullying.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tools, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs).

Cyberbullying has the effect of:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; and
4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.

Also, cyberbullying that occurs off-campus, that causes or threatens to cause a material or substantial disruption in the school, could allow school officials to apply the “*Tinker* standard” where a student’s off-campus speech did cause a substantial disruption or threat thereof within the school setting [***Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist.* 393 U.S. 503 (1969)**]. Such conduct could also be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the *RACS Code of Conduct* and possible referral to law enforcement authorities.

Intervention

Intervention by adults and bystanders is an important step in preventing escalation and resolving issues at the earliest stages. Intervention will emphasize education and skill-building. In addition, intervention will focus upon the safety of the target/victim. Staff is expected, when made aware of bullying, either to refer the student to designated resources for assistance, or to intervene in accordance with this policy and regulation.

Reporting and Investigation

Students who have been bullied, parents whose children have been bullied or other students who observe bullying behavior are encouraged to make a verbal and/or written complaint to a teacher, coach, bus driver, social worker, counselor, supervisor, or administrator in accordance with the training and guidelines provided. At all times, complaints will be documented, tracked and handled in accordance with the regulations and procedures accompanying this policy, or, if applicable, other

RACS policies, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination, Sexual Harassment, and the RACS' Code of Conduct. When appropriate, such incidents will be included in the RACS Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR) system.

Disciplinary Consequences

While the focus of this policy is on prevention, bullying acts may still occur. In instances of student bullying, offenders will be given the clear message that their actions are wrong and the behavior must improve. Offenders will receive in-school guidance in making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration in accordance with the RACS' Code of Conduct, as applicable. If the behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted. In the case of employee discrimination or harassment, the incident shall be reported to the Director for evaluation and imposition of employee discipline as appropriate and consistent with Board policies and RACS regulations.

Non-Retaliation

All complainants and those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with State law and RACS policies, who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

Dissemination, Monitoring and Review

This policy, or a plain language summary, shall be published in student registration materials, student, parent and employee handbooks, and posted on the RACS web site.

Each year, as part of the annual review of the Code of Conduct, this policy will be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and compliance with state and federal law. If changes are needed, revisions will be recommended to the Board for its consideration.

In addition, the Board will receive the annual VADIR data report for each building and for the School as whole, with particular attention to the trends in the incidence of bullying. Based on the review of the data, the Board may consider further action, including but not limited to modification of this policy and additional training.

**RACS Student Bullying Prevention
And Intervention Regulation**

In conformance with the policy of the Rochester Academy Charter School Board of Trustees, the following administrative regulation is hereby established.

Reporting and Investigation

In order for the Board to effectively enforce this policy and to take prompt corrective measures, it is essential that all victims and persons with knowledge of bullying report such behavior immediately to their supervisor or the building administrator as soon as possible after the incident so that it may be effectively investigated and resolved. RACS will promptly investigate all complaints, whether they are made verbally or in writing or formally or informally. To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner, although limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation and/or take appropriate remedial action.

In order to assist investigators, individuals should document the harassment, hazing, bullying as soon as it occurs and with as much detail as possible including: the nature of the incident(s); dates, times, places it has occurred; name of perpetrator(s); witnesses to the incident(s); and the victim's response to the incident.

If, after appropriate investigation, RACS determines that a student, an employee or a third party has violated this policy, prompt corrective action will be taken in accordance with the code of conduct, applicable employment agreement or vendor agreement, School policy and State law. If the reported behavior constitutes a civil rights violation, the complaint procedures set forth in RACS policies regarding sexual and/or other prohibited forms of harassment or discrimination will be followed, as applicable.

Confidentiality

It is RACS policy to respect the privacy of all parties and witnesses to complaints of bullying. To the extent possible, RACS will not release the details of a complaint or the identity of the complainant or the individual(s) who are alleged to have engaged in discrimination or harassment to any third parties who do not have a need to know such information. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with RACS' legal obligation to provide due process to an accused student, employee, or vendor, as well as to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary remedial action, RACS retains the right to disclose the identity of parties and witnesses to complaints in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know. The staff member responsible for investigating complaints will discuss confidentiality standards and concerns with all complainants.

If a complainant requests that his/her name not be revealed to the individual(s) against whom a complaint is filed, the staff member responsible for conducting the investigation shall inform the complainant that:

1. the request may limit the School's ability to respond this/her complaint;

2. School policy and federal law prohibit retaliation against complainants and witnesses;
3. the School will attempt to prevent any retaliation; and
4. the School will take strong responsive action if retaliation occurs.

If the complainant still requests confidentiality after being given the notice above, the investigator will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request as long as doing so does not preclude RACS from fulfilling its legal obligations or responding effectively to discrimination or harassment and prevent the discrimination and/or harassment of other students.

Investigation and Resolution Procedure

A. Initial (Building-level) Procedure

Whenever a complaint of bullying is received whether verbal or written, it will be subject to a preliminary review and investigation. Except in the case of severe or criminal conduct, building DASA Coordinator or the building administrator should make all reasonable efforts to resolve complaints informally at the school level. The goal of informal procedures is to end the bullying and obtain a prompt and equitable resolution to a complaint. As soon as possible but no later than three working days following receipt of a complaint, DASA Coordinator or building administrator should begin an investigation of the complaint by:

- Reviewing any written documentation provided by the victim(s);
- Conducting separate interviews of the victim(s), alleged perpetrator(s), and witnesses, if any, and documenting the conversations; and
- Providing the alleged perpetrator(s) a chance to respond and notify him/her that if objectionable behavior has occurred, it must cease immediately and that the individual may be subject to discipline.

Parents of student victims and accused students should be notified within one school day of allegations that are serious or involve repeated conduct.

Where appropriate, informal methods may be used to resolve the complaint, including but not limited to:

- a. discussion with the accused, informing him or her of the School's policies and indicating that the behavior must stop;
- b. suggesting counseling, skill building activities and/or sensitivity training;
- c. conducting training for the department or school in which the behavior occurred, calling attention to the consequences of engaging in such behavior;
- d. requesting a letter of apology or reprimand; and/or
- e. separating the parties.

Appropriate disciplinary action shall be recommended and imposed in accordance with RACS Code of Conduct, the applicable employment agreement, RACS policies, and State law.

Upon the completion of an investigation and decision of appropriate remedial action, if any, the supervisor or the building administrator shall advise the victim, the accused, and, when appropriate, the person in parental relation, notifying them in writing and, when appropriate, in

person, of the outcome of the investigation and any remedial action to be taken. The victim shall report immediately if the objectionable behavior occurs again or if the alleged perpetrator retaliates against him/her.

If a complaint contains evidence or allegations of serious or extreme bullying, the complaint shall be referred promptly to the Director. In addition, where the supervisor, building administrator, or DASA Coordinator has a reasonable suspicion that the alleged bullying incident involves child abuse in an educational setting as defined in N.Y. Educ. Law, art. 23-b, or other criminal conduct, the Director shall be immediately notified, and the procedures stated in N.Y. Educ. Law, art. 23-b and/or other applicable law shall be followed.

Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation may request a School-level investigation by submitting a written complaint to the Director within 30 days.

B. School-level Procedure

The Director or his/her designee shall promptly investigate and resolve all bullying complaints that are referred to him/her, as well as those appealed to the Director following an initial investigation by a supervisor, building administrator, or DASA Coordinator. In the event the complaint involves the Director, the complaint shall be filed with or referred to the Board President, who shall refer the complaint to the Board's attorney or other appropriate person for investigation. The School investigation should begin as soon as possible but not later than three working days following receipt of the complaint by the Director or Board President.

In conducting the formal School-level investigation, the School will endeavor to use individuals who have received formal training regarding such investigations or that have previous experience investigating such complaints. If an investigation results in a determination that bullying did occur, prompt corrective action will be taken to end the misbehavior.

No later than 30 days following receipt of the complaint, the Director (or in cases involving the Director, the Board-appointed investigator) will notify the victim and alleged perpetrator, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation. If additional time is needed to complete the investigation or take appropriate action, the Director or Board-appointed investigator will provide all parties with a written status report within 30 days following receipt of the complaint.

Retaliation Prohibited

Any act of retaliation against any person who opposes bullying behavior, or who has filed a complaint, is prohibited and illegal, and therefore subject to disciplinary action. Likewise, retaliation against any person who has testified assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing of a bullying complaint is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, retaliation includes but is not limited to: verbal or physical threats, intimidation, ridicule, bribes, destruction of property, spreading rumors, stalking, harassing phone calls, and any other form of harassment. Any person who retaliates is subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination.

Discipline/Penalties

Any individual who violates this policy by engaging in prohibited bullying will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary measures available to school authorities include, but are not limited to the following:

Students: Discipline may range from a reprimand up to and including suspension from school, to be imposed consistent with the student conduct and discipline policy and applicable law.

Employees: Discipline may range from a warning up to and including suspension from school, to be imposed consistent with the student conduct and discipline policy and applicable law.

Volunteers: Penalties may range from a warning up to and including loss of volunteer assignment.

Vendors: Penalties may range from a warning up to and including loss of School business.

Other individuals: Penalties may range from a warning up to and including denial of future access to school property.

Training

All students and employees shall be informed of this policy in student and employee handbooks, on RACS website and student registration materials. A poster summarizing the policy shall also be posted in a prominent location at each school.

All employees shall receive information about this policy and regulation at least once a year. Administrative employees and other staff such as counselors or social workers, who have specific responsibilities for investigating and/or resolving complaints of bullying shall receive yearly training to support implementation of this policy, regulation and on related legal developments.

Training needs in support of this bullying prevention and intervention program will be reflected in the School's annual professional development plan, in curriculum and will be considered in the budget process.