

The Riverside School

Family Handbook



2008-2009

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INTRODUCTION

MISSION

The mission of The Riverside School is to develop active learners, patient leaders, and engaged citizens in a supportive community.

PHILOSOPHY

The Riverside School is dedicated to the ideal that children be involved, enthusiastic participants in their education. We nurture and encourage curiosity, creativity, and individuality, and we instill in students an appreciation for hard work. We believe that children can learn to be strong, effective leaders, and we are committed to developing in our students the skills necessary to take on leadership roles. We believe that students must be aware of and be active in the broader world around them in order to become ethical and compassionate members of society. Support for our students' growth as learners, leaders, and citizens must come from every element of the Riverside community, both in and out of the classroom; therefore, we value and rely on the deep involvement of parents, faculty, staff, and administration in the development of our students.

MOTTO

Cum patientia omnia possunt confici. With patience all things are possible.

EMBLEM

The Riverside School's emblem is the heron, symbolizing patience and persistence.

CURRICULAR FOUNDATION

1. A structured academic program based on English (literature, composition, grammar), mathematics, natural sciences, foreign languages (Latin and Spanish), history, current events, and geography;
2. An enrichment program in the arts and athletics;
3. Service that begins at School and extends to the greater community; and
4. Academic and community-focused field trips that help students become aware of the many unique opportunities in the Northern and Mid-Atlantic States and Quebec.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND GOVERNANCE

Head of School

Laurie Boswell

Business Manager

Audrey Rexford

2008-2009 Professional Teaching Staff

Laurie Boswell, BS, M.Ed Plymouth State University; doctoral candidate, UVM

Cornelia Dwyer, BA, Colby College, M.Ed, Antioch New England

Joel Gilbert, BS, Cornell University

Alice Lee, BA, Lyndon State College

Eleanor Monserud, BA, Mount Holyoke College

Nancy Phillips, BA, Kansas State University, Graduate studies in Educ. Arizona State Univ.

Peter Sahlin, AB, Harvard University

Suzanne Tanner, BFA, Kutztown State University

Molly Tobin, BA, Ithaca College

The Riverside School Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall policy of the School and the School's financial stability. The Board of Trustees hires, directs, advises, and evaluates the Head of School, its only employee. It formulates its strategic plan, which the Head implements for the improvement of the School.

The Head of School is directly responsible to the Board and acts in consultation with the Board. The Board entrusts the Head of School with the day-to-day operation of the School; the supervision of students; the hiring, supervision, evaluation, and development of staff; and the integrity and development of the curriculum.

2008-2009 Board of Trustees

Patty Emery, Chair

Sonia Peters, Vice Chair

Larissa Flynn, Secretary

Neil Stafford Treasurer

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Laurie Boswell, Head of School

Fred Cornell, Facilities Committee Chair

Robin Dwyer, Development Committee Chair

Peter Gair

James Newell

Kim Shillieto, Governance Committee Chair

Christopher (Topher) Waring

Merle Thompson, Emerita, Order of the Heron

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

IF YOU NEED HELP

If you forget where the restrooms are, where your next class is, or need a pencil, or you can't remember whether you swim this week, ask another student, a teacher, or someone in the school office. Everyone is here to help you!

SCHEDULE

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Students may arrive at school as early as 7:45 a.m. and will be supervised until 3:45 p.m.

Morning Assembly

Beginning at 8:00 a.m. and led by the students in grade 8, Morning Assembly serves as a community gathering to begin the school day. It may include announcements, poetry, ethical guidance, Vermont history, health tips, debates, all-school discussions, and current events. Riverside regularly schedules presenters as well. If you know of an engaging presenter, please call Nelia.

Break and Lunch

Each Riverside student is encouraged to bring a personal water bottle, along with a healthy lunch and snack. Both lunches and water bottles should clearly bear the student's name. Riverside's refrigerator and microwaves are available for students' use. On Wednesdays, students may order pizza by the slice from a local restaurant.

Lunches and snacks should *not* include candy, chewing gum, carbonated, or caffeinated beverages. The school asks parents to support these guidelines.

Clean Up

Riverside is a unique campus and historic place. In order to instill a physical appreciation for the School, daily clean up of the school's buildings and grounds is performed at the end of the day by student clean-up teams. Led by eighth-grade team captains, students complete chores such as vacuuming, cleaning counters and/or microwaves, washing eating utensils, sweeping, trash gathering, and recycling.

HOMEWORK

Homework strengthens academic skills, reinforces concepts learned in class, helps students learn responsibility, and develops positive study habits. Homework is a concrete means to help parents stay aware of students' work. Homework is assigned daily at Riverside, particularly in the upper grades. Homework is different from unfinished class work and make-up work from an absence.

Homework is an independent activity to be accomplished outside the school day and without teacher assistance to reinforce concepts learned in class. Students learn to use limited school study time efficiently to reduce the amount of work to be done at home. A regular schedule at home helps students complete their assignments. Set aside nightly study periods for yourself and assure a quiet place to work without distractions. The school encourages families to limit television viewing in any form (i.e., no videos, tapes or DVDs) to non-school nights.

If you encounter difficulty while completing an assignment, ask your family for help **only** in the form of questions and explanations. A great part of a student learning is accomplishing the work *on his or her own* with the *guidance* of the parent. Do not ask your parents to do your homework.

Teachers provide the explanation and direction required to ensure that students can accomplish the work with reasonable success. Teachers also check students' homework and notify the parent(s) promptly if a student is having problems with homework assignments. Teachers may assign extended homework projects for individual students as an opportunity for increased enrichment, as needed. If your parents wish you to receive extended homework, please discuss the idea together with your teacher.

Journals

Teachers may assign journal writing for students as part of their coursework. Teachers read all of the writing in the students' journals. If you wish to record private thoughts and do not wish the teacher to read them, please keep a separate, private journal that stays at home. Teachers are required to report all threats of, and references to, violence and/or suicide immediately to the Head of School who will communicate such concerns to parents immediately.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the theft of someone else's work, especially written work. Sometimes students plagiarize accidentally, as when a quotation mark or citation indicating authorship is left out of a paper. Accidental plagiarism may also occur when a parent has given too much help to the improvement of a student's written work. Sometimes plagiarism is a deliberate attempt to pass off another person's work as one's own. Accidental or not, plagiarism will be addressed as deemed appropriate by Riverside faculty. When assigning research-based work, faculty will instruct students on the importance of giving credit to the work of others and the seriousness of plagiarism. If plagiarized work is turned in, the teacher will directly address the student. If accidental plagiarism becomes regular or problematic, or if the case is believed to be intentional, the work will not be accepted and any late penalties for the work will be applied when it is turned in correctly.

ASSIGNMENT BOOKS

Homework assignments at Riverside are complex and numerous, and it is very important that students learn to keep track of them and to organize their time. It is particularly important for 8th graders to develop and improve organizational skills, as their course loads will increase after they leave Riverside. Students in grades 4-8 will need to use the standard Riverside assignment book, which is issued on the first day of school. Students must have the assignment book at school in every academic class each day, and must also take it home at the end of each day, so it will be available for parent(s) to review. Teachers monitor entries in the assignment book on a daily basis.

Your teacher will break down a long-term assignment into meaningful parts so that you can accomplish something each day toward the eventual completion of the assignment. Ask your parents if you need help at home organizing long-term projects. Even, and at times, especially, students who need extra enrichment also need extra help with organization. Your Teacher will help you plan your work in the assignment book so you know how much time you need to work every day to reach the goal. If you consistently fail to bring your assignment book to school, you will be issued a new one, and will enter all of the assignments given that day as well as current long-term assignments. The new assignment book will be charged to your School Store Account.

LOST AND FOUND

Unidentified student belongings are placed in the cubby room. From time to time, they are displayed in assembly and announcements are made in the Monday Memo regarding them. If they remain unclaimed after a reasonable period, lost and found items are donated to charity. Water bottles, food carriers, shoes,

sports articles, and clothing should be clearly identified. Your help in this area will minimize the amount of items that accumulate in the Lost and Found.

SCHOOL STORE

You may buy a limited array of supplies at school. The cost will be charged to your School account through the Business Manager. Students and parents should be clear with each other about expectations regarding charges to the School account. Families may give the Business Manager a School Store allowance amount, if they wish.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student council is elected after the Fall Field Trip. Two students from each grade 6 to 8 represent their classes. Two students will represent the grades 4-5 class. Student council coordinates community service projects, dances, and other events.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Riverside provides opportunities for community service throughout the academic year. Service begins at school by paying close attention to campus and school community needs. Students, teachers, and families regularly engage in service work during the Fall Field Trip. Community Service Day is a special event held before Thanksgiving vacation during which students and staff choose projects in the local community and contribute significant time and energy to helping others. In addition to these particular occasions, we work to integrate consideration of others and of community needs into many facets of curriculum. The Director of Community Service works with different groups of students to make explicit the opportunity for community service both within and outside the Riverside community.

ATHLETICS

The Riverside School highly values physical fitness and athletic endeavor. Riverside has traditionally organized inter-school soccer matches in the fall. The school also provides instructional and recreational opportunities such as swimming, ice-skating, and alpine skiing. The students must bring clothing appropriate for the physical education activity (in winter the students must be prepared for PE class: coats, snow pants, hats, warm mittens/gloves, and boots) and understand that these activities are required parts of the Riverside Physical Education Curriculum. Being unprepared for PE will be handled as it would be for any class—parents will be notified if repeated offenses occur. Students are asked to sign The Riverside School Commitment and Safety Agreement, demonstrating that they understand the value and purpose of these activities.

EIGHTH GRADE LEADERSHIP

Eighth graders at Riverside are given extra roles and responsibilities in the school community and are expected to maintain the best standards of behavior to role model for other students. Eighth graders participate in a leadership class once a week to address these qualities. Eighth graders lead assemblies, clean-up teams, and help new students feel welcome. They make special presentations at assemblies based on projects or personal interests, and carry on the many wonderful traditions that make Riverside a special place. They are often the stars of each year's all-school performance, and they take the major characters in school festivals. They compete at Latin Day on an intense level.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the school year the Riverside community engages in seasonal celebrations and special events to highlight curricular areas. Often the last day of school before a vacation is dedicated to a special event. In October we have Global Fair, Community Service Day in November, in December Mythology Day, in February Winter Carnival, in March Play Week and performances, in April Latin Day and the Poetry Celebration. We encourage family and friends to join us during these celebrations.

GENERAL PARENT INFORMATION

PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION

School life extends and develops the process of learning with the family. Riverside depends on parent involvement and support. Being informed is essential. Direct and regular communication with parents about expectations and progress is encouraged. Parents are encouraged and welcome to observe, participate in, or help with classroom activities.

The success of The Riverside School is owed in part to the high level of parent involvement. Their active support enhances our programs and represents a unique opportunity for involvement in each child's education. Parents participate in a variety of ways, meeting many of our needs. Tasks include minor maintenance work around the facility (sometimes on community clean-up days), transporting children to sports and field trip activities, providing food for special events, serving with trustees and teachers on strategic committees, assisting in classrooms, answering phones and working on fundraising events. Please refer to the Financial Information section for details regarding the Parent Group and parent involvement in fundraising.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

The Riverside School has 175 student school days. Students are expected to be in attendance and on time unless there is an illness or an emergency. While Riverside expects daily attendance, when a child has a fever, a persistent cough, and/or other symptoms of a contagious illness, keep him or her at home. If your child is late, absent, or must leave early, call the school as soon as possible. Any missed work must be made up. Participation in an after school activity after an absence will be left to the discretion of the faculty member in charge.

The school day begins at 8 a.m. with assembly in the barn. Students entering the barn after assembly has begun are very disruptive to the community time we value. Tardy arrival will be noted and after the 3rd tardy in a one-month period the Head of School will discuss the issue with parents.

The School believes that each day of instruction is important and, therefore, urges you to plan family trips so they coincide with allotted school vacations. Our annual schedule has been intentionally designed to cluster vacation days together and to be aligned with the schedules of our local high schools. If you plan an absence that will take place when school is in session, you must notify the school two weeks before the absence begins so that teachers have adequate time to arrange school assignments for your child. If the absence extends a vacation on either end, notify the school two weeks before the student's absence or the beginning of vacation, whichever is earlier. Assignments must be handed in no later than two weeks after the student returns to school. If exams take place during the absence, the student must take them upon return, according to a schedule arranged by the teachers. Recognizing that valuable learning may occur as a result of the travel experience, alternative assignments may be suggested in conversation between families and the teacher(s).

Students who are habitually and chronically absent from school are typically not gaining an adequate education. When students miss more than ten (10) days per semester, not related to extended travel or serious illness, the Head of School will notify the parent(s) and a meeting will be arranged to discuss the issue. In extreme cases of habitual and chronic absence, the school reserves the right to deny advancement to the next grade.

TRANSPORTATION

By observing these guidelines, you will assure the safety of your child, yourself, and/or other passengers in your vehicle.

- Do not block the driveway. Park where your vehicle does not obstruct traffic.
- All students must exit and enter vehicles *ONLY* at the ramp.
- Passengers must stay in your car until your car has reached the ramp.
- *Only* the driver may exit the car from the parking area. Students *must* be let out at the ramp.
- For safety's sake, always use the appropriate entrance and exit.

Parents are advised to ensure their children are aware of transportation arrangements. The following guidelines are given to parents regarding transportation to and from school.

If your child is not going directly home in the usual manner or with the usual driver, notify Audrey in writing, by note or e-mail. Be sure your child is aware of transportation arrangements.

The day for Riverside employees ends at 3:45. Assuming that an employee will be available to supervise your child beyond the stated 3:45 pick-up time is risky and does not consider the personal lives of our employees. Emergencies occasionally arise and the school endeavors to help. At 3:45, staff members leaving Riverside or a school activity may take students to the Cobleigh Public Library. No supervision at the Cobleigh Public Library can be guaranteed. The Cobleigh often closes at 5 p.m. and may close earlier without prior notification. On ski days at Burke Mountain, Riverside supervision ends at 4:00 p.m. Student(s) will be instructed to remain inside the lodge until the arrival of parent(s). Your compliance with pick-up times is greatly appreciated.

REGULAR COMMUNICATION

Monday Memo

Riverside provides timely and pertinent information about current events in the School community through the yearly calendar and weekly Monday Memo. Whether your family receives the Memo electronically or in hard copy, it is imperative that it is read thoroughly and in a timely manner. Many students are eager to read the Memo when they get it at school or choose to receive their own copy via email. At the very least it is recommended that families discuss its contents each week together. The Monday Memo includes a synopsis of each class's lessons for the upcoming week, a calendar of important dates in the month ahead, and notices about needs, events, and information from the School. Questions and suggestions are always welcome! Additions to the Monday Memo must reach Nelia by Friday the week prior to the Memo's publication.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports update parents on students' class work and are sent home weekly at the elementary level and monthly at the middle school level. The Progress Report offers general performance in academic subjects as well as current grade status in each class. Progress reports are issued to students according to the dates identified on the school calendar. The school keeps a copy of the progress reports on file. Please request that a copy of the progress report be sent to you if it does not come home with your child.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences

Conferences with parents and students are scheduled in the middle of each semester and may be held at any other time by specific arrangement.

NOTIFICATION OF DIFFICULTY

Parents are kept apprised of student academic performance through scheduled communication from teachers. Further, teachers will notify the parent(s) in person, by telephone, or electronic mail regarding any difficulty requiring more urgent notice. A student who is not passing one or more subjects, or who has received an Incomplete may, at the discretion of the teacher and the Head of School, be removed from other activities (like Electives) so that s/he may benefit from additional study time to improve or complete the work. When

the student completes the work to the satisfaction of the teacher(s), s/he may resume participation in the activities.

CONVEYING AND RESOLVING ISSUES

- If you have a question or concern about your child's work in the classroom, behavior with other children, or interaction with a teacher, contact the teacher directly.
- If a student feels uncomfortable about the way a teacher is treating him or her, the student should discuss the situation with the parent, who should request a meeting with the teacher.
- Should the parent or student feel a concern has not been addressed after using one the above, either may request in writing a conference with the teacher and the Head of School. The conference will help define the problem clearly and will initiate a reasonable and documented process leading to the resolution of the issue in a timely manner.
- If an action by a teacher is identified by a parent as a violation of law or of School Policy as defined in the Policies kept on file at School, the parent should discuss the concern immediately with the Head of School, who will document the complaint and take appropriate action as defined in state and/or federal regulations, or policy implementation as defined in other Riverside board and/or personnel policies.

If an issue involves the Head of School, the parent should first discuss the issue with the Head. If the issue is not resolved, the parent should convey the concern in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, who will arrange for a meeting with a parent and the Head to resolve the issue. If the parent identifies a violation of the law or School Policy as defined in the policies on file at the School, the parent should immediately write the Board Chair, who will document and investigate the complaint and take appropriate action as defined in state and/or federal regulations, or as defined in the appropriate Riverside board and/or personnel policies.

CURRICULUM

The Riverside School curriculum is aligned with the framework and standards of the State of Vermont. Teachers are responsible for using a complete, detailed curriculum, including concepts, goals, teaching methods, learning activities, and assessments. Teachers provide a synopsis of the upcoming week's lesson plans to the Assistant to the Head of School at the beginning of each week, and it is then published for families in the Monday Memo.

STUDENT ILLNESS AND INJURY

If a student is injured or becomes ill during the school day you will be notified. You may be asked to come to school to pick up your child. Emergency situations will be referred to Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital or the closest emergency medical facility to the school activity. If we are unable to reach a parent, guardian, emergency contact, or family doctor, we shall make the decisions necessary to ensure the child's well being.

MEDICATION

The following federal and state regulations apply if your child must take prescribed medication during the regular School day or during School-sponsored activities:

- 1) Your child must bring only the required dosage of prescription medication to school, along with written orders from your physician;
- 2) The physician's orders must state the name of the drug, the dosage, and the reason for prescribing the medication;
- 3) The medication must be in a container correctly labeled by the pharmacy or the physician.

If your child must bring non-prescription medication, the following regulations apply:

- 1) The medication must be accompanied by written instructions from the parent;
- 2) The instructions must state that your child has suffered no ill effects from the use of the medication;
- 3) Your child must bring *only the required dosage* to school.

ESSENTIAL FORMS AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Each student's Health, Medical, and Release Forms are due before the Fall Field Trip. Current work, home, and emergency telephone numbers must be on file in the school office.

PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

Riverside does not sell or give any information, such as postal, electronic mail, and/or residence addresses or telephone numbers to anyone outside the parent group. The school does not disclose recipients when e-mailing Monday Memos or other communications. Official school business, school-related fundraising, regular school communications, school-related volunteer opportunities, holiday greetings, and social events are the only allowed uses of the list.

FIELD TRIPS

The Riverside School arranges field trips in the belief that shared experiential learning has great value for the school community. Field trips are designed to be fun for all, and they are also working school days. The close relationships fostered by our fall field trip draws the community together, integrating new students, new faculty, and new parents with one another early in the school year. We recommend that parents plan to come along on at least one of each year's Riverside field trips. Field trips represent a wonderful opportunity for parents to become part of the school community.

Each person on the field trip will be assigned a room, cabin, or a tent. In our planning we carefully consider any concerns that you or your child may have, but please understand that these concerns cannot always be accommodated. If you or your child has any special needs or concerns, please let us know about them well in advance of the field trip.

An emergency telephone number (usually the number of the hotel or campground where we will be staying) will be given to all parents before our departure. We welcome the help of parents on field trips. They function as supervisors, as leaders of study groups, and as teachers. Every field trip is unique in its planned activities, and in the composition of the group. Some trips will accommodate younger siblings, while others, such as those involving lengthy museum visits or indoor activity, will need to be restricted. Please check with the Field Trip Coordinator for recommendations about a given trip.

Parents often assume responsibility for organizing the food and equipment, and students often set up and prepare the meals. Work crews are assigned for each meal and for clean up. On camping trips, our most experienced campers are assigned to the meals requiring the most preparation. Students practice the important skills of providing their own food and shelter with adult assistance and supervision.

After each field trip the students create a poster in commemoration of the experience. These posters are displayed in the barn.

Field Trip Health

The Riverside School has coped supportively with students who have never been away from home before and who may experience homesickness, allergies, carsickness, bed-wetting, and nervous stomach. If your child has recently been ill, use your discretion about whether he or she is well enough to go on a field trip. Please do not send a child if the child has a fever or is too ill to attend school. If your child needs medication

or has other special medical needs, be sure to inform the office. Please refer to the directions involving medications during school. These apply on field trips as well.

The Field Trip Coordinator will have a first aid kit, medical release slips, and the telephone numbers of all parents. If an accident or serious illness should occur, the staff and chaperones will act to safeguard the welfare of the child and will contact the child's parent(s) as soon as possible.

Equipment and Food

Before each field trip, the Field Trip Coordinator will post a Needed Equipment chart at the School. If you indicate that you have something to lend, the Coordinator will contact you about the use of your equipment. Mark everything with your name. After the field trip, all borrowed equipment and any found clothing and other unclaimed items will be left on the porch at Riverside for a week.

Food on our field trips is ample, appealing, and nutritious. As at school candy, gum, caffeinated, and carbonated drinks are not allowed. Nor are these items to be purchased or consumed on field trips. Do not permit your child to bring them on any field trip. These items will be confiscated.

Also as at school, no computer, video games, i-pods, cd-players, other music or digital devices are permitted. Neither are x-box, game-boy, playstation, or the like permitted. These items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the trip.

Behavior

All school rules apply on all school trips including field trips. Riverside students have a well-earned reputation as being the best behaved, most polite, most interested and most interesting group that our various field trip guides see each year. This reputation is enhanced every year by the pride the students have in themselves, each other, and their school. We admire and highly value this student-led and student-maintained heritage.

BIRTHDAYS

Celebrating birthdays at school is a Riverside tradition. On your child's birthday, you may provide cake, other treats, and drinks (no candy or chewing gum, carbonated or caffeinated beverages), for the entire student body at lunchtime. The school provides napkins and cups. We celebrate summer birthdays the last day of school.

DISTRIBUTION OF INVITATIONS

Distributing invitations in any manner at school for a social event outside of school, such as a birthday party, is **not** allowed unless everyone in the class is included in the event. Please instruct your child **not** to discuss any such events at school.

SNOW DAYS

Occasionally severe weather may require cancellation or delayed opening of school. As soon as conditions are assessed and a decision is reached, local radio stations and television stations will be informed. The Head of School will start the emergency calling network. When in doubt, call the school's recorded message, or call the Head of School.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

When a member of Riverside's professional teaching staff is absent, every effort is made to obtain a content-skilled person with teaching experience and a commitment to working collaboratively with students in their learning. The Head of School develops and maintains a list of qualified substitute teachers. Before being asked to substitute at Riverside, an individual visits the school, is interviewed by the Head of School or designee, and submits to a background check and a criminal records check. Parents are always welcome to

volunteer or contract as substitutes. Please contact the Business Manager to sign a release for the necessary background checks, and to make an appointment for fingerprinting.

TELEPHONE USE AND MESSAGES

You may leave a message for your child during the day, if necessary, by telephoning the school. Except in an emergency, classes are not interrupted.

BURKLYN ARTS COUNCIL

Burklyn Arts Council, a local not-for-profit run solely by volunteers, funds many of the following: student attendance at artistic performances, scripts for our yearly musical performance, teaching residencies with artists, professional development in the arts for teachers, and student scholarships for summer arts opportunities. Burklyn generates its funds through two Crafts Fairs each year, one the first Saturday in July, and the other the first weekend in December. Riverside helps Burklyn by donating home-baked cookies to sell at the December Crafts Fair and by volunteering at both fairs. If you would like to contribute cookies or volunteer, please contact Nelia or Audrey.

SCHOOL RULES

The Riverside School expects all students to maintain age-appropriate behavior in all school activities. Teachers will use signals, reminders, and redirection when possible to encourage appropriate school behavior. Logical consequences and apologies of action will be the next step. Parents and the Head will be asked to conference with the student and teacher when needed. Serious or repeated offenses will result in more serious consequences, which may include probation, suspension, or expulsion. Refer to the Policies on file at the School for more on disciplinary consequences, anti-harassment, anti-bullying, and anti-hazing.

At the beginning of each academic year the Eighth Grade develops a list of school rules to guide student behavior. They submit the list to the Student Council for approval and then present it to the school community.

CODE OF CONDUCT

I am kind

I am respectful of myself, others, the school and the environment

I accept responsibility for my actions

I will strive to do my best

BULLYING

Bullying means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- is repeated over time;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- occurs during the school day on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day at a school-sponsored activity.

Any staff members hearing reports by students of bullying will inform the Head who will investigate the reports. The Head will contact the parent or guardian of a student who commits a verified act of bullying of the response of the school staff and consequences that may result from further acts of bullying. Consequences of bullying may be suspension or expulsion.

HARASSMENT

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

It is against the policies of The Riverside School, and illegal under state and federal law, for any employee or student, male or female, to sexually harass another employee or student. It is a violation of this policy for an employee or student to engage in sexual harassment.

HAZING

Hazing is a kind of bullying and harassment that some people do to others to “initiate” them into a group. It is illegal and will not be tolerated at The Riverside School. Consequences for hazing may include suspension or expulsion.

DANGEROUS MATERIALS

The possession, use, or distribution of dangerous materials such as knives, fireworks, weapons, tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs of any kind will not be allowed at school or any school-sponsored activities. Any student violating this rule will face severe consequences which may include suspension or expulsion from school.

INTERNET USE

Internet access is available to students at The Riverside School. Access to network resources is a privilege, however, not a right, and this access brings with it the need for responsible behavior. The Riverside School has taken precautions to restrict student access to inappropriate subject matter, such as the rule that students only use computers at school under supervision by an adult. These precautions, however, are not foolproof. Proper educational exploration of the Internet network depends upon the principled conduct of computer users and the cooperation of parents in guiding their children as they do with other educational resources. To help students approach these privileges responsibly and to provide guidelines for students should they encounter inappropriate materials, there is an Internet Policy on file at School. If a student violates any of the provisions or guidelines explained in the Policy, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The school discourages behavior or activities that interfere with or otherwise prohibit normal conversation between people. For that reason the following items are prohibited: computer video games, i-pods, cd-players, other similar music or digital devices: X-box, Game-boy, Playstation, or similar items. Prohibited items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Students must be cleanly, decently, and presentably dressed at school and at school-sponsored activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, school plays, concerts, shows, competitions, field trips of any kind, whether you come as participant or audience member. Parent(s) will be notified and asked to bring a change of clothes if children come to School wearing inappropriate clothing. Children may be able to borrow appropriate clothing from the School if necessary (if it is available), or if parents are unavailable. On special occasions, such as concerts and commencement and at formal events on field trips, dressier attire is expected. The need for such attire will be announced in advance.

Students are encouraged to keep footwear in their cubbies to be worn only in the house. The goal is to keep the floors cleaner and the feet comfortable!

PROPERTY DAMAGE

If School property damage occurs as a result of a student's actions, whether intentional or unintentional, the student will be held responsible for the repair or replacement of the property.

ASSESSMENT

Each teacher at The Riverside School is responsible for designing his/her authentic assessment of the student in order to be able to communicate progress to colleagues and to families. Academic standing is periodically communicated in monthly progress reports and semester grades/narratives.

PROGRESS REPORTS

At the elementary level, 2nd – 5th grade, classroom teachers send home short notes each week with comments on student progress and behavior. Often these forms are signed and returned with comments or questions from parents. At the middle school level, 6th - 8th grade, Progress Reports for each subject area are sent home at the end of each month with grade summaries and short comments.

SEMESTER EVALUATION

Teachers evaluate students formally at the end of each semester. Students in grades 6-8 receive narratives and letter or number grades. Students in grades 2-5 receive narrative evaluations only. The narrative for each subject area contains a concise description of the course objectives, activities, and assessments. In addition, the report contains a discussion of the student's progress with that material, individual strengths, and suggestions for improvement.

Numerical grades are rounded to the nearest whole percentage value and are assigned to letters as follows:

93-100 A	77-79 C+
90-92 A-	73-76 C
87-89 B+	70-72 C-
83-86 B	65-69 D
80-82 B-	0-65 Incomplete

DEPARTMENT

To ensure students understand behavioral expectations in the classroom, teacher issue assessment standards for department. Within this set of standards are the expectations that students:

- Help facilitate classroom activities;
- Demonstrate engaged active learning through the class period;
- Make consistently strong, insightful contributions to the classroom activity with individual integrity and respect for others;
- Stay completely involved while working in groups, finish tasks on time, keep their voice levels low enough so as not to disturb others, and be individually responsible for the work of the group.

Middle school teachers incorporate the department of the student into grade averages according to the Department Rubric and report on it in both progress reports and semester narratives.

If a student is disruptive, the teacher will refer to the Discipline Policy. The School entrusts the teacher to use his or her discretion in assigning a student an appropriate consequence.

INCOMPLETES

If work due in a marking period is not finished, the student will receive an "Incomplete" on the report card. The student and parent(s) must make arrangements with the teacher to make up an "Incomplete" within two weeks of the next semester or the end of the school year. The work to clear the "Incomplete" must be done to the satisfaction of the teacher and the Head of School.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

As required by Vermont law, students in grades 3-8 from tuitioning towns will take the Vermont State Assessments. Students in grades 5 and 8 will be tested in reading, writing and mathematics. All other grades will take reading and mathematics assessments only. Pending state approval, all Riverside students in grades 3-8 will participate in the state assessment this school year.

National tests augment curriculum materials and help students develop test-taking skills. The National Mythology Exam and the National Latin Exam are administered annually to middle school students.

ADVANCEMENT

Students in grades 6 – 8 must successfully complete the course work, earn a passing letter grade of “D” in every class while maintain an overall “C” average in order to advance to the next grade the following school year. Students in grades 2 – 5 must successfully complete the course work and be prepared for the next year. When it is apparent that more time is needed for the student to become proficient with the material and that the child would benefit from additional time in the present grade, communication among teachers, parents, and the Head will commence as early as possible in order to plan an educational program best suited for the child’s individual needs. The Head of School will make an enrollment and/or a placement decision in consultation with Riverside teachers.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

The Riverside School guides its students toward several goals. Prominent among these are the development of self-confidence through support and achievement, a positive attitude toward learning, and the acquisition of basic and enduring learning skills. To achieve these goals the school provides a diversified and demanding curriculum that stimulates and challenges the student. Each student is admitted and sustained at Riverside with the understanding that he or she can know true success. The encouragement and recognition of this success is the daily work of the faculty and is also noted in semester comments and conferences. The faculty recognizes outstanding effort and achievement by students throughout the year. At commencement, the faculty gives formal recognition to students for outstanding achievement and effort.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To earn a Riverside diploma, a student must earn a passing grade in English, mathematics, history, science, and Latin.

If a student is in danger of failing a course and, consequently, of being ineligible to graduate, the teacher will notify the student, the student’s parent(s), and the Head of School at least six weeks prior to the date of Commencement. Ongoing progress reports and messages from the teacher(s) regarding these difficulties will have preceded this notification. A student’s diploma will be withheld at commencement if there is any assignment or schoolwork not completed.

In rare instances, a student who is struggling to complete grade 8 work may, at the discretion of the Head of School in consultation with the teachers, be invited to repeat the year at Riverside. The student must want to repeat the grade in order for the process to be successful.

If the student chooses to repeat the grade, s/he will be excused from the commencement ceremony, or s/he may sit with the undergraduates at the ceremony. If the student chooses not to repeat the grade, s/he will receive a certificate of attendance at commencement in lieu of a diploma. Students enter grade 9 at the receiving high school’s discretion.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

OPERATING EXPENSES

The Riverside School has only two sources of revenue: tuition/fee income and fundraising. Tuition/fee income covers approximately two thirds of the School's expenses. The School relies on fundraising to cover the balance of educating its students. All members of The Riverside School community help with fundraising to ensure Riverside's future. Each student attending Riverside is the beneficiary of many extraordinary acts of generosity on the part of parents, grandparents, staff members, alumni, trustees, and friends.

TUITION/FEES

Tuition for the school 2008-2009 year has been set by the Board of Trustees at \$11,000 for grades 2-5 and \$11,500 for grades 6-8. A \$500 credit will be given for each additional sibling. Tuition is unconditionally non-refundable. Tuition covers the professional staffing costs of academic, enrichment, athletic, elective classes, transportation, and the first copy (one per student) of the School Assignment Book.

Additional fees accrue and will be billed to the school store account. These fees include items such as: Wednesday pizza, school store supplies, and books. School store bills are mailed at regular intervals, however parents may request one from the Business Manager at any time.

Tuition Payment Dates

Tuition is due in three installments. The non-refundable deposit of \$500 is due with the signed contract on April 1, or, for new students, within ten business days of acceptance. This payment assures the student of a position in the school for the coming school year and must be paid on or before the due date. The **second** payment equal to 60% of the remaining balance is due on August 1. The third payment or the 40% balance is due on December 1. A **monthly** payment plan of direct deposits for tuition is available with a nominal interest charge. Arrangements may be made through the Business Manager. Tuition may be paid in full before the end of the plan.

Credit cards

Riverside accepts credit card payments. A 3% surcharge will be added to cover the cost to the school.

Town Tuition

Some Vermont towns pay tuition for children to attend Riverside. If this option is available, the parent(s) are responsible to make the arrangements with the town and ensure that tuition payments are received by each scheduled payment date. If the town refuses to pay any part of a child's tuition, the parents are responsible for paying the balance.

Tuition payment for returning students

For returning students in good standing, the school will forward a contract to the parent(s) in February. The signed contract is returned to the school with a **non-refundable \$500 deposit** on or before April 1 in order to retain a place for the coming year. The deposit is credited against tuition.

FUNDRAISING

If you would like to help Riverside with development, please contact the Chair of the Trustees, Patty Emery, who will connect you with the Chair of the Development Committee. The Trustees will appreciate help with any one of the following for Riverside:

- Help us identify prospects for giving
- Introduce us to prospects
- Accompany us on Cultivation Calls

- Participate in Fundraising

THE PARENT GROUP

The Parent Group is a key component of parent involvement in fundraising. The Co-chairs of the Parent Group work closely with the Board of Trustees' Development Committee, coordinating volunteers for School activities and fundraising events and providing orientation for new parents in the Riverside community. Each fall the Co-chairs ask parents to sign up to serve on committees during the year. Opportunities are available on a one-time or continual basis, and hours for many tasks are flexible. Parents can contact one of the Parent Group Co-chairs to explore ways they can contribute.

Annual Fund

Riverside families support the Annual Fund each year. Contributions range from \$10 to \$50,000. The School receives support from parents, alumni, past parents, grandparents, trustees, friends, and the faculty. Annual Fund gifts are essential, and we are grateful for them!

Annual Auction

The annual Riverside School Auction represents a significant means for the Riverside community to augment the School's operating budget. Trustees, families, students, and alumni are encouraged to solicit and gather donations. Antiques and objects d'arts, weekend stays at resorts, timeshares, summer or winter homes, donations from retail businesses, a day's labor, a signed book or poster, airline miles, a cord of firewood, a gallon of maple syrup—all are attractive auction offerings.

The food and informal entertainment provided during the auction are delightful, and the evening is enjoyable and memorable for everyone.

SOLICITATION

Soliciting Business Donors and Friends of the School

The Riverside School wants to protect friends and businesses from an overload of requests. We ask for an Annual Fund donation as well as for an Annual Auction donation from our business associates and friends. *Additional requests for donations are prohibited without prior permission from the Head of School.*

Soliciting for Other Organizations

We want to support every member of our school, but we cannot allow solicitation of students and staff at school without prior approval from the Head of School. Any poster, petition, handout, or flier must be approved by the Head of School before it is posted or distributed. The Policy on Fundraising, Solicitations and Distribution of Materials is kept on file at the School.