

# **Riverbend Middle School**

## **Student / Parent Handbook**

**2017 - 2018**



**1124 Union Street  
Iowa Falls, Iowa 50126  
Office: (641) 648-6430  
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[www.ifacadets.net](http://www.ifacadets.net)**

## ***Introduction***

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint students and their parents/guardians with our practices and procedures at Riverbend Middle School. The handbook rules and policies are meant to be as comprehensive as possible. However, it is impossible to anticipate every type of situation that may arise. We will make every effort to make decisions in accordance with the spirit of the rules while exercising good common sense. Any student or parent who has questions concerning the handbook or concerns about any facet of the middle school program is encouraged to contact the principal or any staff member at 641-648-6430. We welcome your suggestions and encourage you to maintain open lines of communication during the school year. Together, we will strive for academic excellence, clear expectations, and a safe and effective learning environment for each student.

## ***Mission and Vision Statement***

The vision of the Iowa Falls and Alden Community School Districts is “Striving for excellence in all we do.” The mission of the Iowa Falls and Alden Community School Districts is “Empowering every student to learn, lead, and succeed.” Iowa Falls and Alden Community School Districts value Commitment, Attitude, Dedication, Effort, Teamwork, and Success (CADETS).

## ***General Information***

### ***District Non-Discrimination Statement***

The Iowa Falls and Alden School Districts do not discriminate in their education programs or educational activities, or with students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services on the basis of race, color, creed, age (except students), religion, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities, hiring and employment practices.

It is also the policy for both districts to have curriculum and instructional materials reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and life styles open to women and men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias due to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a multicultural/gender fair society.

Any person who feels they have been discriminated against are encouraged to contact the Alden and Iowa Falls School District's Affirmative Action Coordinator. The Affirmative Action Coordinator for both districts is Dr. John Robbins, Superintendent and can be reached at either the Alden Elementary, 209 Center Street, Alden, Iowa, 50006, e-mail: [jrobbins@ifacadets.net](mailto:jrobbins@ifacadets.net), tel: 515-859-3393 or at the Iowa Falls Superintendent's Office, 710 North Street, Iowa Falls, Iowa, 50126, e-mail: [jrobbins@ifacadets.net](mailto:jrobbins@ifacadets.net), tel: 641-648-6400.

Any person having inquires concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3 is directed to contact for the Iowa Falls School District: Michelle Kriegel, High School Guidance Counselor, at IFA High School, 1903 Taylor Ave., Iowa Falls, Iowa 50126, e-mail: [mkriegel@ifacadets.net](mailto:mkriegel@ifacadets.net), tel: 641-648-6440 and for the Alden School District: Kim Nelson, Alden Principal at 209 Center Street, Alden, Iowa, 50006, email: [knelson@ifacadets.net](mailto:knelson@ifacadets.net), tel: 515-859-3393 who have been designated by the Iowa Falls and Alden School Districts to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the ADA, §504 and Iowa Code 280.3. Any person may also contact the Director of the Region VII office Civil

Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Kansas City, Missouri, regarding the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 or the director of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines, Iowa.

## ***Jurisdictional Statement***

This handbook is an extension of board of education policy and is a reflection of the goals and objectives of the board. The board, administration, and employees expect students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students are expected to treat teachers, other employees, students, visitors, and guests with respect and courtesy. Students may not use abusive language, profanity, or obscene gestures or language.

This handbook and school district policies, rules, and regulations are in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property, or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned and/or school-operated buses or vehicles or chartered buses; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district or involves students or staff. School district policies, rules and regulations are in effect 12 months a year. A violation of a school district policy, rule, or regulation may result in disciplinary action and may affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities whether the violation occurred while school was in session or while school was not in session.

Students are expected to comply with and abide by the school district's policies, rules, and regulations. Students who fail to abide by the school district's policies, rules and regulations may be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to obtain their education or to participate in school activities; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension (both in-school and out-of-school), probation, and expulsion. Discipline can also include prohibition from participating in extracurricular activities, including athletics. The discipline imposed is based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident and the student's record.

The school reserves and retains the right to modify, eliminate or establish school district policies, rules and regulations as circumstances warrant, including those contained in the handbook. ***Students are expected to know the contents of the handbook and comply with it.*** Students or parents with questions or concerns may contact the principal's office for information about the current enforcement of the policies, rules, or regulations of the school district.

## ***Definitions***

In this handbook, the word "parent" also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated. An administrator's title, such as superintendent or principal, also means that individual's designee unless otherwise stated. The term "school grounds" includes the school district facilities, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses. The term "school facilities" includes school district buildings. The term "school activities" means all school activities in which students are involved, whether they are school-sponsored or school-approved, whether they are an event or an activity, or whether they are held on or off school grounds.

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## ***School Fees***

The school district charges fees for certain items, such as textbook rental. Books and Chromebooks must be returned at the conclusion of the class or school year, or students will be charged with a replacement fee. Excess damage to a book or Chromebook is also charged to the student. **If a Chromebook charge is not paid by the beginning of the next school year, the student will not be issued a Chromebook or laptop until the charge is paid.**

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or students who are in foster care are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Students whose families are experiencing a temporary financial difficulty may be eligible for a temporary waiver of student fees. **Parents or students who believe they may qualify for temporary financial hardship should contact Mrs. Laura Thies, School Nurse, for a waiver form. This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.**

## ***Emergency Forms***

At the beginning of each school year, parents must file an emergency form with the office providing the emergency telephone numbers of the parents as well as alternate persons to contact in the event the school is unable to locate the parents. The emergency form also includes a statement that gives the school district permission to release the student to the alternate person in the event the parents cannot be reached. Parents must notify the principal's office if the information on the emergency form changes during the school year.

## ***Open Enrollment***

Iowa's open enrollment law allows students residing in one school district to request transfer to another school district upon the parents' request. Students wishing to open enroll to another school district must apply for open enrollment by January 1st of the school year preceding the school year in which they wish to open enroll, unless there is good cause. Open-enrolled students from low-income families may qualify for transportation assistance. Open enrollment may result in loss of athletic eligibility for students open enrolling. Students interested in open enrolling out of the school district must contact the superintendent's office for information and forms.

## ***Legal Status of Student***

If a student's legal status, such as the student's name or the student's custodial arrangement, should change during the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school district. The school district needs to know when these changes occur to ensure that the school district has a current student record.

## ***Attendance is Important***

### ***Attendance Policy***

The policy of the District is that consistent and punctual attendance is of vital importance and is a prerequisite for completing an education. Attendance is a shared responsibility and requires cooperation and communication among students, parents, and school.

***Students are expected to be in class and to make attendance a top priority.*** Only through attendance and class participation do students achieve the benefits of the education program. Participating in class discussion, developing an appreciation for the views and abilities of other students, and forming the habit of regular attendance are legitimate class objectives. Learning lost due to an absence can never

be replaced. Regular attendance and being well prepared for class helps students in school as well as prepares students for adulthood. Students with chronic absences can be identified as at risk, and they will be referred to the at risk support team.

***Students who know they will be absent must notify the office prior to the absence.*** If advance notification is not possible, parents must notify the office at (641) 648-6430 on the day of the absence prior to 9:00 a.m. If notification is not received, the office will attempt to contact the parent(s) at the emergency number. Before a student is readmitted after an absence, the student must bring a note signed by the student's parents to the office explaining the reason for the absence.

***The school determines whether an absence is excused or unexcused.*** Excused absences include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergency, recognized religious observances, and school activities. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in parties or other celebrations, and employment. ***Students are expected to be in class on time.*** Being tardy for class is considered an unexcused absence unless approved by the principal.

***Students who need to leave school during the school day must receive permission from the office*** and have a note signed by the student's parents, have their parents telephone the office, or have their parents pick them up. Students who return to class or arrive after the school day has begun must present a signed note from their parents to the office for readmission. Students are not released to anyone other than their parents during the school day unless the office has a note signed by the student's parents.

***Students participating in school activities must be in school at least one-half day on the day of the event in order to participate in a school activity.*** The remaining half-day is considered an excused absence. Only in extraordinary circumstances may this rule be waived by the principal.

### ***Consequences for Attendance Policy Violations***

Whenever possible, discipline imposed because of absence problems shall not create further class absences. The following disciplinary measures may be used by school authorities as consequences for attendance violations:

1. Upon acquiring six (6) absences (excused or unexcused), parents or guardians will be contacted by a member of the at-risk team stressing the importance of attendance and the connection to educational success.
2. Upon acquiring eight (8) absences from school, a meeting will be set up with parents by a member of the at-risk team to discuss reducing absences. The county attorney will also be carbon copied with notes from this meeting.
3. Upon acquiring ten (10) absences from school, a meeting will be held between a member of the at-risk team, student, and parent to develop a formal attendance contract. A copy of this contract will be forwarded to the county attorney.

Students who miss three consecutive days of school due to illness may be asked provide a doctor's note or may have contact with the school nurse.

### ***Make-Up Work for Absences***

When a student anticipates an absence, every effort should be made to obtain assignments in advance. **Students will receive full credit for schoolwork missed because of excused absences or out-of-school suspensions if the work is made up within a prescribed number of school days (number of days missed plus one).** For absences longer than three consecutive days, additional time may be given at the discretion of the teacher. Credit for work not completed within the designated time limit shall again be at the discretion of the teacher.

Being absent from school by itself will not be cause for reduction of a student's grade. If a student fails to make up the work missed, he/she will fail that portion of the work not completed and this will be averaged with other grades. A student who is absent on the day(s) prior to the day of a previously announced test or assignment due date will be expected to take the test or have the assignment completed upon his/her return to school. If a student is absent from a blocked class and returns to school the following day, the student is expected to see the teacher of any blocked class missed on the day the student returns to school.

When a student is absent for two or more consecutive school days, the student is required to meet with the teacher(s) for the amount of time necessary to receive the missed instruction. If the student does not take the initiative to set to this meeting, they will be expected to stay after school on the first day that they come back to school. **If a student is gone (vacation, illness, ...) for an extended period of time (four or more school days) assignments *may* be provided in advance, depending on the curriculum and where the class is within the unit. For students who miss four or more consecutive day of school, and afterschool work plan will be provided and arranged by the core teachers. This is intended to provide an intervention for the student so that he or she can "catch up" on the missed instruction and assessments.**

### ***Truancy***

If a student is absent from school or class without parental knowledge or consent, a parent conference may be held and the student will make up one hour after school for every hour absent and experience loss of eligibility until the entire time is made up.

1. **First offense:** Student conference with principal and notification of parent/guardian. Detention until all work is made up satisfactorily and time missed has been served.
2. **Second offense:** Conference with parent/guardian, one (1) day in-school suspension and time lost is made up or hours missed made up after school or on Saturday.
3. **Third offense:** Conference with parent/guardian, two (2) days in-school suspension and time lost is made up or hours missed made up after school or on Saturday.

*\* All truancy violations will be reported to the district truancy officer, Mrs. Deb Kuhfus.*

## ***Student Academic Achievement***

### ***Google Calendar***

Riverbend Middle School students are expected to utilize Google Calendar on their Chromebooks to record daily assignments and due dates. Parents are encouraged to check this calendar on a regular basis.

### ***Homework***

Teachers assign homework, extra class activities, or assignments as necessary. Homework is an opportunity for students to practice skills and activities, to share and discuss ideas, to review materials, to become acquainted with resources, to organize thoughts, to prepare for classroom activities, or to make up incomplete class work. Students are expected to complete homework on time. Failure to complete homework may result in students needing to: report to the teacher during "CADET time," stay after school, come in early before school, grade on assignment being lowered due to not completing work on time, possible ineligibility for activities, and/or a failing grade in the class (see "Academic Requirements / Reports").

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## ***Academic Requirements / Reports***

Students receive progress reports in the form of report cards at the end of each quarter. These will be available electronically through PowerSchool, or parents / guardians can request to have them mailed. Students who have concerns about their grades should talk to their teachers to determine how they can improve their performance.

Teachers will send progress reports at any time they feel it is important to report progress. In some cases the progress report requires the parent/guardian signature that the report has been received and reviewed. Progress reports will also be available through PowerSchool at mid-term of each quarter, or can be requested to be mailed. Parents can always check grades through the district web-site at the following address: <http://www.ifacadets.net>

It is the expectation of Riverbend Middle School that every student will hand in every assignment and pass every class. If students do not follow these expectations, an intervention plan will be utilized that may include the students being invited to attend additional study sessions during and/or outside of the school day, students being required to attend study sessions during and/or outside of the school day, study table before and/or after school, meeting(s) with parents / guardians, and students being required to attend summer school in order to make up missed work. If a student continues to fail a class or classes after interventions have been implemented, alternative education options will be discussed. Students will be evaluated on an individual basis for what best fits his/her needs.

## ***CADET Time***

“CADET Time” is a 30-minute time period during the school day dedicated to academics on Monday through Friday. Students may use this time to complete late or missing work, make up work, receive additional instruction from teachers, continue to work towards growth in academic areas, read, and/or pursue individualized enrichment activities or projects.

## ***Incomplete Grades***

Students who receive an incomplete in a class must complete the class within two weeks after the start of the next quarter. Extensions may be granted by the teacher with the permission of the principal. Failure to finish an incomplete may result in a failing grade and/or loss of credit for missing work.

## ***Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences have been scheduled for both the fall and spring. Parents and students are encouraged to attend and visit with all the student’s teachers. Teachers may schedule conferences at other times of the school year, if needed, and parents/guardians may also contact a teacher or the office to schedule a conference. It is very important that we ask the student to attend the conferences. The student can often share valuable information about his/her progress. E-mail messages may also be sent to teachers in the following form: [jburchfield@ifacadets.net](mailto:jburchfield@ifacadets.net)

## ***Standardized Tests***

Students are given standardized tests annually. These tests are used to determine academic progress for individual students, for groups of students, for the school district, and to comply with state law. The Iowa Assessments (formerly called ITBS) will be administered annually in February. Students will also take Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in the fall and spring of each academic year. Students are tested unless they are excused by the principal.

## ***Human Growth and Development***

The school district provides students with instruction in human growth and development. Parents may review the human growth and development curriculum prior to its use and have their child excused from human growth and development instruction. Parents should contact the principal if they wish to review the curriculum or to excuse their child from human growth and development instruction.

## ***Study Hall***

While in study hall, students are expected to conduct themselves as they would in class. Students must bring enough work to occupy themselves for the entire study period. Once in study hall, students are only allowed to leave with the permission of the study hall teacher and with a hall pass.

## ***Honor Roll and Academic Honors***

The school district honors students who excel academically. To earn honor roll distinction, students must achieve a grade point average between 3.0 and 4.0. There will be an “A” honor roll for those students earning a 3.5 – 4.0, and a “B” honor roll for those students earning a 3.0 – 3.49 grade point average. Quarter honor rolls are listed after the first, second, third, and fourth quarter. Students with incomplete or failing grades are not considered for the honor roll. In addition, eighth-grade students who earn a 3.2 grade-point average in all of their classes through the first seven quarter grading periods of their middle school (grades 7 & 8) career will earn the distinction of earning the President's Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement. Eighth-grade students who earn a 3.5 grade point average or higher through their first seven quarters of their seventh- and eighth-grade years will earn the distinction of receiving the prestigious President's Education Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence.

## ***Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities***

Middle school students are encouraged to participate in as many extracurricular activities as possible. Past research has shown that students who are involved in activities generally achieve academically higher than students who are not involved in these activities.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities and school-sponsored clubs and organizations will be subject to the Riverbend Middle School Academic Eligibility Policy: Student grades will be checked every two weeks. All graded classes are included under this policy. If a student has one “F” at a grading checkpoint, he/she will be ineligible for a minimum of one week. If grades are passing after one week, he/she will regain eligibility. If not, they remain ineligible until grades are passing. While a student is ineligible, they must attend four study tables per week. Study tables will be from 7:45 - 8:15 a.m. and 3:20 - 3:50 p.m. All extracurricular activities and before / after school clubs will be included in this policy. A student who is academically ineligible will be able to practice with his/her athletic team, and even travel with the team for competition, but will not be able to participate in competition while academically ineligible.

## ***Academic Dishonesty***

Plagiarism is taking credit for work that is not yours. Examples may include, but are not limited to, fabrications of sources, having others do your work, using Internet sources without citing them appropriately, and copying others’ work. Other forms of academic dishonesty may include inappropriately using notes / handouts / study guides, developing and / or using a cheat sheet, and inappropriately assisting another student.

Consequences for academic dishonesty may include:

- Re-doing the assignment.
- Receiving less credit for assignment.
- Staying after school to make up assignment or assessment.
- Receiving zero points for the assignment.
- Taking an alternative assessment for less credit.
- Contacting parents / guardians for any instance where cheating has been confirmed.
- Contacting administrators of any incident involving cheating.

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## ***Student Activities***

### ***Assemblies***

Throughout the year the school district sponsors school assemblies. Attendance at these assemblies is a privilege. Students must act in an orderly fashion and remain quiet on their way to an assembly, during an assembly, and on their way back to the classroom after an assembly. Students attend assemblies unless, for disciplinary or academic reasons, the privilege is taken away.

### ***Field Trips***

In certain classes, field trips and excursions are authorized and may be taken as an extension of the classroom to contribute to the achievement of the educational goals of the school district. If a field trip is required for a course, students are expected to attend the field trip. Absences in other classes or school activities due to attendance on field trips or excursions are considered excused absences. While on field trips, students are guests and considered ambassadors and representatives of the school district. Students must treat employees, chaperones, and guides with respect and courtesy.

### ***Activity Bus***

The school district may sponsor an activity bus to transport students to school activities. A fee may be charged to students riding the activity bus. Riding on the activity bus is a privilege that can be taken away. Students who ride an activity bus must ride to and from the event on the bus. Students ride home on the activity bus unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal or the student's parents personally appear and request to transport the student home.

### ***Use of School District Facilities by Student Organizations***

School district facilities are available during non school hours to school-sponsored and non school-sponsored student organizations for the purpose of meetings or activities. Students wishing to use the school district facilities should contact their sponsor or the principal to reserve a room. School district policies, rules, and regulations are in effect during these meetings.

### ***Student Council and Student Lighthouse Team***

The student council and student lighthouse team provides direction for student activities, serves as a training experience for student leaders, gives students a share in the management of the school, develops high ideals of personal conduct, acts as a clearinghouse for student activities, seeks to interest students in school district affairs, and helps solve issues that may arise. The student council is made up of two representatives from each homeroom, and rotates each quarter. A core team of eight will remain on the council for the entire year and serve as the student lighthouse team. The student lighthouse team provides direction for the implementation of *The Leader in Me / 7 Habits* here at Riverbend Middle School. Additional members may earn the opportunity to stay on student council after their term is over. Additional members may also be added to the student lighthouse team during the course of the year. Student council members or lighthouse team members may also be removed from the council for failure to maintain good academic standing or for disciplinary reasons.

### ***Student Funds and Fund Raising***

The Riverbend Middle School Student Council may raise funds for school activities upon advanced approval of the principal. Funds raised remain in the control of the school district and the board. School sponsored student organizations must have the approval of the principal prior to spending the money raised. Students may not solicit funds from teachers, employees, or other students during the school day. Students who violate this rule are asked to stop. Violations of this rule may result in future fund raising activities being denied.

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## ***Student Activity Tickets***

Students may purchase a student activity ticket for admission to certain school district activities. Students not wishing to purchase an activity ticket must pay regular prices to attend school district activities.

## ***School Dances***

Riverbend Middle School students have an opportunity to attend 3-4 celebrations / dances during the school year during the fall, winter, and at the end of the school year. School district policies, rules, and regulations apply to students at school celebrations / dances. Students who leave a celebration / dance are not allowed to reenter the building. Only Riverbend Middle School students are allowed to attend. Riverbend dance expectations also state that appropriate dancing is expected at school dances. Students violating school district policies, rules, regulations, or expectations may have their parents called to come pick them up. Parents/guardians of Riverbend Middle School students are invited and encouraged to attend celebrations / dances as chaperones. Generally speaking, the hours for all celebrations / dances will be from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for seventh grade, and 7:00 to 9:15 for eighth grade. The staggered dismissals lessen traffic congestion at the end of the event.

## ***Athletic Equipment***

Riverbend Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in cross-country, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, cheerleading, track & field, and softball extracurricular athletic activities. Practice and/or game equipment will be issued, and it is the responsibility of the student to keep track of and maintain this equipment. All equipment is to be returned promptly when athletes finish a sport. Lost or damaged equipment will be paid for by the athlete, based on the replacement cost of equipment. School-owned equipment is to be worn only at scheduled practices or contests.

## ***Good Conduct Rule***

Students participating in extracurricular activities, also including honor bands, honor choirs, school plays, school musicals, and student council, agree to abide by Good Conduct Rules. Riverbend Middle School participants may not consume, acquire, deliver, or transport alcohol, controlled drugs, or tobacco. Students must understand that any involvement with any of the aforementioned substances will cost them eligibility in the activities in which they participate. These Good Conduct Rules are in place all year long. The consequences of those in violation of the Good Conduct Rule are at the discretion of the building principal / athletic director, but will result in the loss of a portion of the competitive season and/or performances.

Students who frequently violate school rules may also be declared ineligible by the administration. In addition, students who engage in acts of vandalism, theft, terrorism, or other criminal behavior (either inside or outside of school) may also be found in violation of the Good Conduct Rule and serve an ineligibility period for activities.

## ***Student Health, Well-Being, and Safety***

The students in this school are very special to us; their security and well-being are of utmost importance. All students are to conduct themselves carefully with concern for their own safety as well as the safety of all others in the building. Students are requested to notify a teacher or the principal if they become aware of anything that has potential for the risk of injury or harm to themselves or others. While coming to school or going home, we recommend that these suggestions be observed:

1. *Never accept a ride with a stranger.*
2. *Do not talk with suspicious people whom you see on or about the school grounds. Come in to the office and report it immediately.*
3. *It is always better to walk with others on the way to or from school.*
4. *Keep your parents informed as to your whereabouts after school.*
5. *Walk along the left side of the road / street. Stay on the sidewalk, if one is available.*
6. *Do not push or shove or in any other way interfere with traffic on the street.*
7. *It is expected that you cross the river on the bridges.*

## ***School Day***

Students may be present on school grounds before 8 a.m. or after 4 p.m. only when they are under the supervision of an employee or an extracurricular activity sponsor. If school is dismissed early, students are expected to leave the school grounds within 30 minutes of dismissal.

## ***Immunizations***

Prior to starting school or when transferring into the school district, students must present an approved Iowa Department of Public Health immunization certificate signed by a health care provider stating that the student has received the immunizations required by law. Students without the proper certificate are not allowed to attend school until they receive the immunizations or the student makes arrangements with the principal. Only for specific medical or religious purposes are students exempted from the immunization requirements. Students may also be required to pass a TB test prior to attending school. Parents who have questions should contact the office.

## ***Physical Examinations***

Parents are encouraged to have their children receive periodic physical examinations. Students participating in athletics are required to provide a school district physical examination form signed by the student's doctor stating the student is physically fit to perform in athletics prior to the start of the sport. Physicals are valid for one calendar year. Failure to provide proof of a physical examination makes the student ineligible to practice or compete. Students who cannot afford the cost of the physical examination should contact Mrs. Laura Thies, school nurse.

## ***Homelessness***

If a student's family lives in any of the following situations: in a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground, on the street, in an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find affordable housing, you have certain rights and protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. Contact the school nurse for more information about these options.

## ***Physical Restraint of Students***

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property.

State law also places limits on school employees' abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent.

If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's Website link <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/> and search for "Timeout, Seclusion and Restraint."

## ***Emergency Drills***

Periodically the school holds emergency fire and tornado drills. At the beginning of each semester, teachers notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms.

Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Students who pull the fire alarm or call in false alarms, in addition to being disciplined under the school district's policies, rules and regulations, may be reported to law enforcement officials.

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**Fire Drills** - The signal for a fire alarm is a single continuous sound from the alarm system. When the alarm sounds, all personnel will vacate the building immediately. Windows and doors are to be closed and all lights are turned off when you leave a room if time allows. Do not run, but keep moving as rapidly as possible. Do not talk. The first two persons to an exit will hold the doors.

Directions to specific exits are posted in each room. If the fire alarm sounds when classes are not actually in session, all personnel should leave **IMMEDIATELY** via the nearest exit. The all-clear signal (three short blasts on the alarm system) will be given before returning to the building.

**Storm / Tornado Drills** - A tornado drill is indicated by an intermittent ringing of our bell (think "TOR - NA - DO"). Office staff will ring the tornado warning bell for approximately 60 seconds, followed by any additional information or announcements. Students need to remain in their safe area until they hear the "all clear" announcement. Teachers need to be certain that they have the appropriate key for the safe haven that they are utilizing. Each student should have a 3 ft. by 3 ft. area in his or her designated safe haven. We should try to get all students into a secure area in 2-3 minutes. When going to a secure area, do not pass through gymnasium (high ceilings). In locker rooms, try to avoid having students underneath large ceiling heating units. Kitchen staff and custodial staff go to nearest safe haven, which may be the west-wing restrooms. Keep doors closed in safe areas during drills or warnings, including hallway doors. If an actual weather emergency, students will need to protect their head and neck areas with their hands and arms. Safe position is kneeling on the floor with head to floor. When in a drill situation, staff can discuss these procedures with students. When in an emergency situation, students need to assume this position for protection. Students are not expected to take a book with them for protection purposes. It is more important to get to the safe area quickly without additional materials.

**Safe Havens** in Building (with approximate capacity in parentheses): Boys' Locker Rooms (60 / locker room), Girls' Locker Room (75), REACH Room (50), Office, juvenile court liaison's and counselor's offices, 1st Floor East-Wing Girls' Restroom, 1st Floor West-Wing Restrooms, and Faculty Restrooms.

**Plan A** (when 7th and 8th grade classes are both in session)

**Upstairs Classrooms:** Exit down stairway closest to classroom; walk on right side of hallway to girls' locker room.

**Downstairs Classrooms:** Exit classes; walk on left side of hallway to boys' locker rooms (first classes go into 8th grade locker room until filled with approximately 50-60 students). Final classes will follow the direction of the RMS staff as to what safe have to go to.

**Special Needs** (students on crutches, in wheelchairs, ...): Into safe haven area in office with office staff.

**Plan B – Contingency Plans...**

- Cafeteria, during lunch – dismiss into the locker rooms, by gender.
- PE – dismiss into locker rooms, by gender.
- If there is a weather emergency during the end of P.E. while students are changing / showering, P.E. teacher or administrative designee will direct students to enter the locker rooms according to gender.
- Music class will go to the locker rooms or student lounge.

**During After-School Activities, Practices, or Events**

- If indoors, such as a volleyball game or basketball game, all in attendance will seek shelter in the locker room areas. If additional room is needed, the supervisor will open additional safe areas (student lounge and offices).
- If indoors for a music event, the locker rooms will be utilized. If additional room is needed, the supervisor will open the student lounge and/or offices.

**Emergency Notice Procedures**

- **Thunderstorm Watch** – Office staff will be aware and monitor through our weather radio. No school announcement will be made unless the weather intensifies. Classes will continue as scheduled.
- **Thunderstorm Warning** – Office staff will monitor. Classes will continue without weather announcements unless severe (if 50+ mph winds, we will take cover).
- **Tornado Watch** – An announcement will be made that we are under a tornado watch to have everyone mentally prepare for a possible warning. Classes will continue as scheduled.

- **Tornado Warning** – Intermittent bell for 60 seconds, followed by any additional relevant announcements. Remain in safe area until the “all clear” announcement.

### ***Inclement Weather***

When school is canceled because of inclement weather prior to the start of the school day, students and parents are notified over KIFG (95.3 FM/1510 AM) and WHO (1040 AM) radio stations as well as KCCI (Channel 8) and WOI (Channel 5) television. The missed day may have to be made up at a later date. If school is dismissed because of inclement weather after the school day has begun, parents are notified by the same means. Parents of students who ride the bus are notified how students will be returned home with the notification that school has been dismissed. The superintendent determines whether buses will follow the regular routes. If the buses do not follow the regular routes, they follow emergency routes or the parents are responsible for picking up the students at the student's school. Extracurricular activities or practices scheduled for the day or evening of a day when school is canceled or dismissed early are generally canceled.

Iowa Falls and Alden Schools will continue to participate in a state-sponsored communication program entitled Iowa School Alerts. Iowa Alerts provides another means by which parents, community members, and other interested persons will be notified when our schools have a delayed start, an early release, or are canceled due to adverse weather. Participation in the Iowa Alerts program is **free**. It's easy to receive notices through the Iowa Alerts program. Interested persons can subscribe by going to the designated website (<https://public.govdelivery.com>) and creating an account by clicking on the "Sign Up!" link. Once the account is created, notices can be received via e-mail, cell phones, or e-mail capable PDAs. There is no limit to the number of addresses in the account. *If there is ever a delayed start to school on a Wednesday, there will not be an early dismissal for teacher professional development that same day.*

### ***Administration of Medication***

Students may need to take prescription or nonprescription medication during school hours. Students may carry prescription medication only with the permission of the parents and principal. The school must know the medications a student is taking in the event the student has a reaction or illness. Students must provide written instructions for administration of the medication as well as parental authorization to administer the medication.

Medication is held in a locked cabinet and distributed by the school nurse or her appointee. Medication must be in the original container with the following information either on the container, in the instruction sheet, or in the parental authorization: name of the student; name of the medication; directions for use including dosage, times and duration; name, phone number and address of the pharmacy (if applicable); date of the prescription (if applicable); name of the physician (if applicable); potential side effects; and emergency number for parents. Students are NOT to carry or use prescription or nonprescription drugs without the expressed permission of the parents and the principal.

### ***Student Illness or Injury at School***

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his or her teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the emergency form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student is released to his/her parents or, with parental permission, to another person directed by the parents. While the school district is not responsible for treating medical emergencies, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school contacts emergency medical personnel if necessary and attempts to notify the parents of where the student has been transported for treatment.

### ***Student Insurance***

Student health and accident insurance is available to students at the beginning of the school year. Parents may purchase insurance for their children at their discretion. Parents who would like more information about student health and accident insurance should contact the office. Student athletes are encouraged to have health and accident insurance if participating in extracurricular athletics. Parents can apply for low-or no-cost health insurance for their children through the state's Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (HAWK-I) program. Children birth to 19, who meet certain criteria, are eligible. The coverage includes doctor's visits, hearing services, dental care, prescription, immunizations, physical

therapy, vision care, speech therapy, and hospital services, to name a few. Parents are urged to call 1-800-257-8563 (toll free) or go to the web site at <http://www.hawk-i.org/> for more information.

### ***Communicable and Infectious Diseases***

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, the student shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles and chicken pox.

### ***School Nurse***

Iowa Falls Community School District Nurse: **Mrs. Laura Thies**

Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on school days / office is located at Iowa Falls-Alden High School

High School Office: 641-648-6440 / Riverbend Middle School: 641-648-6430

### ***Health Screening***

Throughout the year, the school district sponsors health screening for vision (grade 8), hearing (8), and scoliosis. Students are automatically screened unless the parent submits a note asking the student be excused from the screening. The grade levels included in the screening are determined annually. Parents are notified prior to the health screening. However, upon a teacher's recommendation and with parental permission, students not scheduled for screening may also be screened.

### ***Sexual Abuse and Harassment of Students by Employees***

The school district does not tolerate employees physically or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, teacher, principal or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Laura Thies, School Nurse, at 641-648-6440, as its Level I investigator. Jeff Burchfield, Principal, may also be contacted directly at 641-648-6430. Robert Calloway (641-497-5280) has been contracted to serve as the Level II investigator.

**Physical abuse** is a non-accidental physical injury that leaves a mark at least 24 hours after the incident. While employees cannot use physical force to discipline a student, there are times when the use of physical force is appropriate. The times when physical force is appropriate include, but are not limited to, times when it is necessary to stop a disturbance, to obtain a weapon or other dangerous object, for purposes of self-defense or to protect the safety of others, to remove a disruptive student, to protect others from harm, for the protection of property, or to protect a student from self-infliction of harm.

**Sexual abuse includes**, but is not limited to, sexual acts involving a student and intentional sexual behavior as well as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term of condition of the student's education or benefits; submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

### ***Asbestos Notification***

Asbestos has been an issue of concern for many years. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA) was designed to determine the extent of asbestos concerns in the schools and to act as a guide in formulating asbestos management policies for the schools.

Asbestos has been used as a building material for many years. It is a naturally occurring mineral that is mined primarily in Canada, South Africa and the U.S.S.R. The properties of asbestos make it an ideal material for insulating, sound absorption, decorative plasters, fire proofing and a variety of

miscellaneous uses. There have been over 3,000 different products manufactured using asbestos. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began action to limit its uses in 1973. Most of the asbestos products used as building materials were banned by 1978.

The school district facilities have been inspected by a certified asbestos inspector as required by AHERA. The inspector located, sampled and determined the condition and hazard potential of all material in the school facilities suspected of containing asbestos. The inspection and laboratory analysis records form the basis of the asbestos management plan.

A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes: notification letters, training for employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials, and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the office.

## ***Student Records***

### ***Educational Records***

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary in the central administration office.

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

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of receipt of the request. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading or in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents or eligible students may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff law enforcement unit personnel and certain volunteers); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, AEA employees, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or student assistance team, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- (4) The right to inform the school district the parent does not want directory

information, as defined below, to be released. Any student over the age of eighteen or parent not wanting this information released to the public must make objection in writing by to the principal. The objection needs to be renewed annually.

- (5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC, 20202-4605 or visit their website at: [www.ed.gov/offices/OII/fpc/o](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/fpc/o) for more information.

### ***Student Photographs***

Student pictures will be taken early in the school year. The photographer will have a variety of photo packages available to purchase, but students are not required to purchase any pictures. However, all students are required to have their photograph taken for the school records and memory book. A notification of "picture day" will be sent home with each student.

### ***Procedures for Students who are Transferring to Another School District***

The school district automatically transfers a student's records to a new school district upon receipt of a written request from the new school district for the student's records. Parents notified that the student's records have been sent are given an opportunity to view the student's records that were sent and a right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student's records that were sent. Parental consent is not necessary to forward a student's records to a student's new school district or for the school district to request them from a student's previous school district. When a new student transfers into the school district, the student's records are requested from the previous school district.

## ***Student Rights and Responsibilities***

### ***Student Searches***

In order to protect the health and safety of students, employees and visitors to the school district and for the protection of the school district facilities, students and their belongings and school-owned lockers and desks may be searched or inspected. A search of a student will be justified when there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or school district policy, rules, or regulations affecting school order.

Reasonable suspicion may be formed by considering factors such as the following:

- \* *eyewitness observations by employees;*
- \* *information received from reliable sources;*
- \* *suspicious behavior by the student; or*
- \* *the student's past history and school record, although this factor alone is not sufficient to provide the basis for reasonable suspicion.*

A search will be permissible in its scope or intrusiveness when the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Reasonableness of scope or intrusiveness may be determined based on factors such as the following:

- \* *the age of the student;*
- \* *the gender of the student;*
- \* *the nature of the infraction; and*
- \* *the emergency requiring the search without delay.*

A student's body and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched when a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe the student is in possession of illegal or contraband items or has violated school district policies, rules, regulations or the law affecting school order. A student's cell phone may also be searched if there is a reasonable suspicion that the cell phone was used to bully or harass another student, contains images or text that are against the law, or may involve illegal activity.

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Personally intrusive searches will require more compelling circumstances to be considered reasonable. If a pat-down search or a search of a student's garments (such as jackets, socks, pockets, etc.) is conducted, it will be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex as the student and with another adult witness of the same sex present, when feasible. A more intrusive search, short of a strip search, of the student's body, handbags, book bags, etc., is permissible in emergency situations when the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors are threatened. Such a search may only be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex as the student, with an adult of the same sex present unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay which may be caused by following these procedures. *Iowa Code 808A.1(5) (Supp. 2003).*

### ***Student Lockers and Desks***

Student lockers and desks are the property of the school district. Students shall use the lockers and desks assigned to them for storing their school materials and personal items necessary for attendance at school. Students must assume all responsibility for their own money and property / valuables. The school does not have insurance for theft of personal valuables, nor will it reimburse students who lose valuables. Valuables should be locked up or in personal possession at all times. Students may leave valuables at the office for safekeeping during the day. It is also the responsibility of each student to keep the student's assigned locker and desk clean and undamaged. The expenses to repair damage done to a student's locker and desk are charged to the student.

Although school lockers, desks and other spaces are temporarily assigned to individual students, they remain the property of the school district at all times. The school district has a reasonable and valid interest in ensuring the lockers, desks, and other spaces are properly maintained. For this reason, lockers, desks and other spaces are subject to unannounced inspections and students have no legitimate expectations of privacy in the locker, desk, or other space. Periodic inspections of all or a random selection of lockers, desks, or other space may be conducted by school officials in the presence of the student or another individual. Any contraband discovered during such searches shall be confiscated by school officials and may be turned over to law enforcement officials.

The contents of a student's locker, desk, or other space (coat, backpack, purse, etc.) may be searched when a school official has a reasonable and articulable suspicion that the contents contain illegal or contraband items or evidence of a violation of law or school policy or rule. Such searches should be conducted in the presence of another adult witness when feasible.

### ***Dangerous Weapons***

The Iowa Falls Community School District will not tolerate weapons in our schools. The possession of dangerous weapons on school premises and at school related activities is a serious violation of the discipline policies of the Iowa Falls Community School District. This can cause disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district. Parents or guardians of students found to possess a dangerous weapon on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons shall be reported to the police.

Any object which could be used to injure another person and which has no school-related purpose for being on school property or at school related activities will be considered a dangerous weapon for the purposes of this policy. Without limiting the examples or definition, the following instruments or objects generally are considered weapons within jurisdiction of this policy: knives of all types, guns, replicas of weapons, squirt guns, ammunition with primer capable of ignition, lead pipes, chains, nun chucks, throwing stars, metal knuckles, blackjacks, fireworks, explosives or dangerous chemicals.

Any student while on school property or at a school related activity found to be in possession or purporting to be in possession of a weapon, displaying a weapon, or utilizing a weapon in a threatening manner including the infliction of harm or injury to another person shall be subject to suspension or expulsion. Each case will be handled individually considering age, the evidence, and circumstances. The District will continue to enforce a safe learning environment for students, parents, visitors and faculty. Weapons under the control of law enforcement employees shall be exempt from this policy. Any display of dangerous weapons for educational purposes must be approved by the principal. (Approved by Iowa Falls Board of Education, 8/8/94, Code No. 502.8.)

## ***Threats of Violence***

All threats of violence, whether oral, written, or symbolic, against students, employees, visitors, or to school facilities are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school.

Students engaging in threatening behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion. The following factors will be considered in determining the extent to which a student will be disciplined for threatening or terroristic behavior: the background of the student, including any history of violence or prior threatening behavior; the student's access to weapons of any kind; the circumstances surrounding the threat; the age of the student; the mental and emotional maturity of the student; cooperation of the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) in the investigation; the existence of the student's juvenile or criminal history; the degree of legitimate alarm or concern in the school community created by the threat; and any other relevant information from any credible source.

## ***Chromebook Loan and Acceptable Use Agreement***

The *Chromebook Loan and Acceptable Use Agreement* is made effective upon receipt of a Chromebook, between the Iowa Falls Community School District, the student receiving a Chromebook, and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian. Once a student is issued a Chromebook, his/her privilege of continued use is predicated on adhering to the terms of use found in the "Agreement." Students found to be in violation shall be subject to the loss of Chromebook privileges, school disciplinary action in accordance with board policy, and/or appropriate legal action. Before a student is issued a Chromebook, the "Chromebook Summary Signature Agreement" form must be fully completed, signed, and turned in to the Principal's Office.

We are also pleased to offer students at Riverbend Middle School a Chromebook with access to Google Apps for Education that are permitted through the school district. Examples of some of these Google Apps include student e-mail, Google Maps, Google Calendar, Google Docs, and Google Presentation. The purpose of assigning students with an e-mail account and access to other applications is to enable them to complete assignments and participate in student work opportunities through the Internet. Student e-mail accounts will be used at school for school-related projects, but may also be used outside of school with parent/guardian permission.

The e-mail name structure will be [jburchfield@students.ifacadets.net](mailto:jburchfield@students.ifacadets.net). Student e-mail accounts will not be listed on our school website. It is expected that students utilize their school e-mail address for school purposes only. Students are expected to use personal e-mail accounts for non-school purposes, not their school e-mail accounts. This e-mail address will remain the student's school e-mail address throughout his/her career in the Iowa Falls and Alden schools. Students and/or parents that wish to send a mass e-mail will need to have administrative approval prior to sending the e-mail.

## ***Dress Code***

There is a strong connection between academic performance, students' appearance and students' conduct. Inappropriate student appearance may cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on school grounds. Students are expected to adhere to reasonable levels of cleanliness and modesty. Students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to their age level and does not disrupt the school or educational environment. Students are prohibited from wearing clothing advertising or promoting items illegal for use by minors including, but not limited to, alcohol or tobacco; from wearing shoes with wheels or cleats except outdoors for athletic practices; and from wearing clothing displaying obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, racial or sexual remarks, making reference to prohibited conduct or similar displays. Under certain circumstances or during certain classes or activities a more strict dress code may be appropriate, and students must comply with the stricter requirement. Footwear is to be worn at all times. Clothes that are too tight, too short or too revealing are not to be worn. Students may NOT wear halter tops or bare midriff styles or any apparel that reveals portions of undergarments (camisoles are considered undergarments). Sunglasses, hats, and other such headdresses may be worn if

there is a medical necessity. Exceptions may be made for special school wide activities to be determined by the principal. The principal also makes the final determination of the appropriateness of the student's appearance. Students inappropriately dressed are required to change their clothing.

### ***Care of School Property***

Students are expected to take care of school property including desks, chairs, books, lockers, and school equipment. Vandalism is not tolerated. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school property may be required to reimburse the school district. In certain circumstances, students may be reported to law enforcement officials.

### ***Driving, Biking, and Skateboarding to School***

Skateboards, bicycles, and mopeds are not to be ridden on the sidewalks or grounds in front of the school building. All bikes will be parked in the bike rack and skateboards are to be kept in the student's locker. For safety reasons, skateboards are not to be ridden in the street. Mopeds are to be parked in the designated area at the west end of the building. Students riding mopeds to and from school are expected to follow safe driving regulations and obey all traffic laws. Students are not to let others borrow mopeds. All students who ride a bicycle or moped to school are encouraged and expected to wear a helmet. Bringing / riding bicycles, skateboards, and mopeds to school is to be considered a privilege. Violations of the privilege will result in losing the privilege to bring or ride them to school.

### ***Illegal Items Found in School or in Students' Possession***

Students are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, manufacturing, possessing, using, and being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or look-a-like substances, and possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products, or look-a-like substances. Weapons are not allowed on school grounds or at school activities with the exception of weapons in the control of law enforcement officials or those being used for educational purposes and approved by the principal. Parents of students found in violation of this policy may be contacted, and the students may be reported to law enforcement officials.

### ***"No Excuses" Detention Plan***

If a student's behavior is significant enough to warrant a detention, the student will be required to serve that detention after school that day or before school the following morning. If the student does not serve the detention either in the afternoon or before school, a parent / guardian and student meeting will take place before the student will be allowed to return to class. This meeting will include the student, a parent / guardian, the teacher, and the principal. Examples of student behavior that would warrant a detention include insubordination, disrespect to staff, a pattern of negative behaviors, ... Parents or guardians will be notified by phone by either the teacher or the student. Detentions for student behavior will be served before students will attend athletic practices or after-school school-sponsored clubs or activities. Detentions will be thirty minutes in length, from 3:15 - 3:45 p.m., or from 7:45 - 8:15 a.m. As part of the detention, students will be expected to complete a behavior reflection.

### ***Dual-Enrollment Students***

Homeschool or homeschool assistance program students enrolled in classes or participating in school activities in the school district are subject to the same policies, rules, and regulations as other students and are disciplined in the same manner as other students. Dual enrollment students interested in participating in school activities or enrolling in classes should contact the superintendent's office.

### ***Interferences in School***

Students may not possess radios, televisions, water guns, toys, or other similar items on school grounds or at school activities, unless special permission has been granted by the teacher / coach / principal.

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### ***Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices***

Cell phones are not to be turned on or used during the school day, including for text messaging, unless advance permission is granted by the principal. Cell phones are not to be used at all during the school day, to include in the hallways, entry way, or restrooms. Personal music devices (iPods, MP3 players, ...) with headphones may be used under the direct supervision of a teacher / associate / bus driver / coach if advance permission is granted. All students are expected to have ear buds for use with their chromebooks, and should carry them in their chromebook bags. Headphones / ear buds are not to be used in the hallways or worn to classes. These items are the student's responsibility. The rule is "SEE," "HEAR," "TAKE..." If cell phones are seen or heard during school, these items may be taken away from the students and returned at a later time or picked up by a parent/guardian. Repeat offenders may have to check-in / check-out their cell phones on a daily basis or not be allowed to bring their cell phones to school.

No device is permitted which allows students to send or receive personal messages that would contribute to cheating, access the Internet, or take pictures. Students are not to use cell phones / electronic devices in class for any reason without permission from the principal, are not to take pictures in the locker room or restroom, are not to take pictures of another for the purpose of ridiculing the other person, are not to use an electronic device to harass another person, and are not to use an electronic device to cheat. Inappropriate use of a device or a prohibited item will be taken away from the student and returned at a later time / date; in some cases this may be at the end of the school day, in others it may be held overnight or longer. Students found in violation of this policy may be subject to confiscation of the electronic device, discipline (to include suspension from class, school, and/or activities), parent notification, and, in cases where a law may be violated, law enforcement may be contacted. Cell phones and electronic devices are subject to search when a school official has a reasonable and articulable suspicion that the device contains illegal, harassing, or contraband items, pictures, messages or evidence of a violation of law or school policy or rule. Students need to remember that whatever they put on a personal electronic device could end up anywhere, so they need to ensure the devices are used appropriately.

### ***Posting of Information***

Students who wish to post or distribute information must receive permission from the principal in advance. This applies whether the information deals with school-sponsored or non school-sponsored activities. The principal can explain or answer questions regarding the school's rules on posting and distributing materials.

### ***Initiations, Hazing, Bullying, or Harassment***

Harassment and bullying shall be construed to mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- 1. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.*
- 2. Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.*
- 3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.*
- 4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school."*

Harassment and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules, and regulations and, in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials.

Students who feel that they have been harassed should communicate to the harasser that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser, the student should ask a teacher, counselor, or principal to help.

If the harassment or bullying does not stop, or the student does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the student should:

- \* *tell a teacher, counselor, or principal; and*
- \* *write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including:*

1. what, when and where it happened;
2. who was involved;
3. exactly what was said or what the harasser or bully did;
4. witnesses to the harassment or bullying;
5. what the student said or did, either at the time or later;
6. how the student felt; and
7. how the harasser or bully responded.

Harassment or bullying on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble persons when it meets one of the four criteria listed above.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- \* *verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse;*
- \* *pressure for sexual activity;*
- \* *repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; and*
- \* *suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.*

Harassment based upon factors other than sex includes, but is not limited to:

- \* *verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse;*
- \* *repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;*
- \* *implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.; and*
- \* *demeaning jokes, stories, or activities.*

Students are encouraged to file an official bullying and harassment report with the school counselor, Mrs. Denelle McWherter, when necessary.

### ***Student Complaints***

Students may file a complaint regarding school district policies, rules and regulations, or other matters by complying with the following steps. This procedure is strictly followed except in extreme cases.

- If an employee is involved, discuss the complaint with the employee within two school days of the incident;
- If unsatisfied with the employee's response or if there is no employee involved, talk to the principal within three school days of the employee's response or the incident;
- If unsatisfied with the principal's response, talk to the superintendent within five school days of the principal's response;
- If unsatisfied with the superintendent's response, students may request to speak to the board within ten school days of the superintendent's response. The board determines whether it will address the complaint.

### ***Student Publications***

Students may produce official school district publications as part of the curriculum under the supervision of a faculty advisor and principal. Official school district publications include, but are not limited to, the school newspaper and yearbook. Expression made by students, including student expression in the school district publications, is not an expression of official school district policy. The school district, the board and the employees are not liable in any civil or criminal action for student expression made or published by students unless the employees or board have interfered with or altered the content of the student speech or expression. Copies of the school district publication code can be obtained from the office.

A faculty advisor supervises student writers to maintain professional standards of English and journalism and to comply with the law including, but not limited to, the restrictions against unlawful speech. No student shall express, publish, or distribute in an official school district publication material which is obscene, libelous, slanderous, or encourages students to commit unlawful acts, violate school district policies, rules, or regulations, cause the material and substantial disruption of

the and efficient operation of the school or school activity, disrupt or interfere with the educational program, interrupt the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere, and/or infringe on the rights of others.

Students who believe they have been unreasonably restricted in their exercise of expression in an official student publication should follow the complaint procedure outlined in this handbook.

## ***Miscellaneous***

### ***School Announcements***

Students are responsible for knowing the content of daily announcements. Students should use Google Calendar to write down any pertinent daily announcements. Students who wish to have an item included in the daily announcements must have permission from the principal.

### ***Telephone Use During the School Day***

Generally, students receiving telephone calls during school hours are not called to the telephone. The office will take a message and forward it to the student. Only in emergency situations are students removed from class or another school activity to receive a telephone call. Students are not to use cell phones during the school day (refer to “Cell Phones and Electronic Devices”).

### ***Visitors / Guests***

Visitors to the school grounds must check in at the middle school office. We allow only parents and school personnel to visit classes. Students are not allowed to bring visiting friends or relatives to school without permission from the principal’s office.

### ***Lunch and Breakfast Program***

The school district operates a lunch program and a breakfast program. Students may either bring their own lunches to school or purchase a lunch, including milk. All lunches, school lunch as well as lunches brought from home, must be eaten in the cafeteria. No food or drink can be eaten in the entryway of the building. Delivery of food from restaurants to students for lunch is not allowed. No coffee, energy drinks, or pop is allowed to be brought in by students and consumed during the school day. All students eating school lunch must enter their lunch code at the beginning of the line. Students who misbehave during lunch will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include having their cafeteria privileges suspended.

There are five required food items for a daily lunch: one meat or meat alternate serving, one serving of grains/breads, two servings of different vegetables or two servings of different fruits, and one serving of milk. Riverbend students have the option of declining two of the five required items. Students participating in our school lunch program are required to take a minimum of three of the five food items.

Vending machines are available for student use before and after school, as well as during lunch. Items purchased from the vending machines are to be consumed in the cafeteria or outside of the building.

### ***Food Safety***

Efforts will be made to assure that all food served at Riverbend Middle School is safe for consumption. Foods brought from home for consumption in the classroom must be purchased ready-to-eat and wrapped in the original packaging.

### ***Buses and Other School District Vehicles***

Buses are primarily used to transport students to and from school. Students who ride the bus and other school district vehicles to and from school, extracurricular activities or any other destination must comply with school district policies, rules and regulations. Students are responsible to the driver while on the bus or in another school vehicle, loading or unloading or leaving the bus. The driver has the ability to discipline a student and may notify the principal and/or parent of a student's inappropriate

bus conduct. A bus referral form may be used for disciplinary purposes. A first referral generally will result in a warning, a second referral a short-term bus suspension, a third referral a longer bus suspension, and any subsequent referrals also a longer bus suspension.

Persons riding in school district vehicles shall adhere to the following rules. The driver, sponsor and chaperones are to follow the school district policies, rules and regulations for student violations.

- Riders must be at the designated loading point before the arrival time.
- Riders must wait until the vehicle comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
- Riders must not extend arms or heads out of the windows at any time.
- Aisles must be kept cleared at all times.
- Riders may be assigned a seat by the driver.
- Riders shall load and unload through the right front door. The emergency door is for emergencies only.
- Riders will depart from the vehicle at the designated point unless written permission to get off at a different location is given to the driver.
- Riders who damage seats or other equipment will reimburse the school district or the cost of the repair or replacement.
- Riders are not permitted to leave their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
- Waste containers are provided on all vehicles for riders' use.
- Permission to open windows must be obtained from the driver.
- Classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the vehicle except for ordinary conversation.
- The driver is in charge of the riders and the vehicle, and the driver is to be obeyed promptly and cheerfully.
- Riders should assist in looking after the safety and comfort of younger riders.
- Riders who must cross the roadway to board or depart from the vehicle must pass in front of the vehicle (no closer than 10 feet), look in both directions and proceed to cross the road or highway only on signal from the driver.
- Riders must not throw objects about the vehicle nor out through the windows.
- Shooting paper wads, squirt guns or other material in the vehicle is not permitted.
- Riders must keep their feet off the seats.
- Roughhousing on the vehicle is prohibited.
- Riders must refrain from crowding or pushing.
- The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or look-a-like substances is prohibited in the vehicle.
- The good conduct rule is in effect.

### ***Media Center***

The school media center is available to students during school hours. The media center is a place for study and research. Students are expected to conduct themselves as if they were in class while in the media center. Student are expected to return media materials when due. Abuse of the check-out policy will result in loss of media center privileges. Library books must be returned at the conclusion of the school year, or students will be charged with a replacement fee. The lost library book fee should be paid by the end of the school year, or the book replaced with another copy in good condition.

### ***Student Assistance / GEI Team***

The Riverbend Middle School Student Assistance / General Education Intervention (GEI) Team consists of school personnel who are trained to evaluate and intervene with students who have been referred to their attention by self referral, staff referral, peer referral parent / family referral, community referral.

The goal of the GEI team is to respond quickly and professionally to our students' problems. Problems could include, but not limited to, academic performance, attendance concerns, classroom conduct, physical appearance, general health, peer and family relations. Any student needing the assistance of the GEI team is asked to speak to the school social worker, the principal, or drop a note off at the office directed to the GEI team. Any information shared with a GEI team member will be held in the highest confidence. Information will not be released to a community agency without permission from the student and/or parent/guardian.

### ***Lost and Found***

A lost and found department is maintained by the office. It is the student's responsibility to check in the office periodically if he/she has lost something. If your child has lost an item, we will do what we can to assist in locating it. Students are urged to make prompt inquiry concerning lost items.

### ***Guidance Program***

The school district guidance program is divided into four separate categories. The categories are counseling services, information services, appraisal services, and placement services. Each of these categories is interdependent and assists students with their personal educational and career development and in becoming well-rounded, productive adults. Confidentiality is maintained by the employees involved in the guidance program. Counselors / support staff available to the students include Mrs. Deb Kuhfus, juvenile court liaison; Mrs. Denelle McWherter, school counselor; Mrs. Holly Meyer, student success coach; and Mrs. Angi Herter, student support and family services coordinator.

### ***Citizenship***

Being a citizen of the United States, of Iowa, and of the school district community entitles students to special privileges and protections as well as requiring the students to assume civic, economic and social responsibilities and to participate in their country, state and school district community in a manner that entitles them to keep these rights and privileges.

As part of the education program, students have an opportunity to learn about their rights, privileges and responsibilities as citizens of this country, state and school district community. As part of this learning opportunity, students are instructed in the elements of good citizenship and the role quality citizens play in their country, state and school district community.

### ***Inspection of Educational Materials***

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by students in the office. Copies may be obtained according to board policy. Tests and assessment materials are only available for inspection with the consent of the superintendent. Persons wishing to view instructional materials or to express concerns about instructional materials should contact the principal. The "RMS Selection of Instructional Materials" policy addresses the specific procedures for selecting materials for instruction, as well as the procedures to follow to object to instructional materials and request reconsideration of selected instructional materials.

### ***Elevator***

An elevator is available for use by students with physical disabilities whose limitations require access to the second floor by means other than the stairs. To obtain permission to use the elevator, students need to contact the middle school office.

### ***Floral / Special Deliveries to Students at School***

The delivery of flowers, balloons, etc., to students during the school day in observance of birthdays, special events, etc., create a disruption to the learning atmosphere for the students. We encourage these deliveries to be made to the student at his/her home.

Please note: flowers, balloons, special deliveries for students *will not* be accepted by the school on the school day prior to Valentine's day, on Valentine's day, or the school day following Valentine's day.

***Have a great 2017-2018 school year  
at Riverbend Middle School!***



# Riverbend Middle School Leads!!!

## *A leader follows the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People."*

1. ***Be Proactive:*** RMS leaders are responsible, independent, take initiative, choose their actions and attitudes, are accountable, and do the right thing even when no one else is looking...
2. ***Begin With the End in Mind:*** RMS leaders have a plan, set goals, contribute in class and in the school as a whole, see the "big picture," and look for opportunities to serve others...
3. ***Put First Things First:*** RMS leaders are involved in activities, but understand that academics come first; set priorities; plan ahead; develop a schedule; and are organized...
4. ***Think Win-Win:*** RMS leaders look for opportunities where all can "win," think positively, build others up, and look for other alternatives to help resolve potential conflicts...
5. ***Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood:*** RMS leaders listen in class to teachers, staff, and other students without interrupting; attempt to view things from others' viewpoints; are confident in voicing their opinions; and look people in the eyes when speaking...
6. ***Synergize:*** RMS leaders value the strengths of others, get along with others, work well together in groups, and seek out other people's ideas to help solve problems...
7. ***Sharpen the Saw:*** RMS leaders look for balance in life, such as being involved in activities and doing their best academically...