

# Parent/Student Handbook

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REV. 8/2019



**The mission of Rockford Christian Schools is**

**to challenge young people to:**

**KNOW Christ as Lord**

**APPLY God's truth to all areas of life**

**LOVE others sacrificially, and**

**ACHIEVE the highest level of knowledge and skill**

**in order to SERVE God and others.**

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## STATEMENT OF FAITH

At Rockford Christian Schools we believe...

1. ...in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as wholly inspired by God and are inerrant in the original writings, and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and life.
2. ... in One God, Creator of all things, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (the Trinity).
3. ...in the deity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth and His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His future personal and bodily return in power and glory.
4. ...that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for the salvation of the lost and sinful person.
5. ...that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and thereby become the children of God.
6. ...in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost; for those that are saved it is a resurrection into everlasting joy with Christ, and for those that are lost it is a resurrection into everlasting suffering.
7. ...that people were created in the image of God; that they sinned, and thereby incurred both physical death and spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and indeed sin in thought word and deed.
8. ...in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Rockford Christian Schools' faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Directors is Rockford Christian Schools' final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

### Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin OF ANY KIND, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably (unchanging) creates each person as either biologically male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.)

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single,

exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.)

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (such as adultery within marriage, consensual sexual intercourse between two persons not married to each other, homosexual behavior, and use of pornography) is sinful and harmful. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10 and 18.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Rockford Christian Schools as a biblical role model to the students of Rockford Christian Schools, their families and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Rockford Christian Schools in any capacity support in word and action this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

## **Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139.)

## **Accreditation**

Rockford Christian Schools is fully accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), the North Central Association (NCA) and is certified by the State of Illinois.

One of the advantages of being an ACSI school is the opportunity to participate in a number of exciting competitive events such as Spelling Bee (grades 1-3, usually in January each year), Speech Meet (grades 1-3, usually in March each year), and Math Olympics (grade 3, usually in April each year).

## **Admission**

### **Policy**

- RCS shall not discriminate in its admission policy either directly or indirectly on the basis of national or ethnic origin, race, sex, creed or religion. Because of the tremendous positive impact Rockford Christian has on students, many parents wish to enroll their children even though they do not fully support our spiritual commitment. This philosophical difference creates a dilemma for some families because the Lordship of Christ and God's Word is woven into every aspect of the educational experience. A decision to apply for admission indicates a desire to be challenged spiritually as well as intellectually.

### **Procedure**

- Completed Application and application/testing fee received.
  - Student successfully completes admission requirements and/or testing/evaluation for placement.
- 1) **Pre-Kindergarten/Junior Kindergarten:** Admission to the Rockford Christian Early Childhood program is based on age [applicant must be at least three years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> to enter the pre-kindergarten program, and at least four years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> to enter the junior

kindergarten program] and social readiness. Applicant must be toilet trained before entering pre-kindergarten.

2) **Kindergarten:** Through participation in a series of age-appropriate activities, each student's academic and developmental readiness is examined. The evaluation takes approximately 30 minutes and is administered by a qualified testing professional. Current RCS junior kindergarten students are given priority, with new applicant screening beginning in March. Applicant must be five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> to enter the Kindergarten program.

3) **Grade 1 through 3:** Applicants for grades 1 – 3 will be given a series of academic tests appropriate for the age and grade level of the student. The results of these tests must be at grade level or above for admission to Rockford Christian Schools. Admission to the school will not be determined until all admission requirements are met.

■ Transcripts/records from prior school received.

1) A release of information form (included on new student application) must be signed by the parent or guardian in order to acquire records from any previous educational institution. In the event that records from the previous school are not available because of an outstanding balance, admission may be denied.

2) If an incoming student has an IEP, a copy must be attached to the application.

3) Teacher recommendation form from prior teacher received (grades 1-3).

■ Director of Admissions or their designee will personally talk with all prospective students and their parent(s). Significant parental involvement and moral support is expected.

■ Birth Certificate and current photograph must accompany each student's application.

■ Current physical from an Illinois physician and immunization records, including emergency medical information must accompany each student's application.

■ As room permits: Priority consideration is given to applicants of current families, alumni of the school, and on a first-come-first-served basis.

■ Mid-year transfer students: Testing must be completed prior to admission. Parent/student must meet with administrative team prior to admittance.

## **Athletics**

The RCS Elementary athletic program provides opportunities for students who desire to compete at an intramural and interscholastic level. In addition, it provides students an opportunity to work together as a team in order to accomplish the goal of performing well in a given game. The coach will determine the amount of time a student plays in each game.

- Rockford Christian Elementary School athletic program includes the following:
  - Flag Football (1-3)
  - Basketball (K-3)
  - Cheerleading (K-3)
- Competition is held within established leagues and with some teams from the public and private schools in the Rockford community. Games are also scheduled with Christian schools from other communities.
- Each student who participates in a sport for its entire duration will receive recognition for participation.
- Junior Lions: The Junior Lion League is an Elementary School (K-3) intramural basketball and cheerleading RCS-only athletic opportunity.

### **Insurance**

- The school cannot assume any responsibility in the event of a student sustaining an injury. Therefore, the student should have adequate insurance coverage.

### **Participation fees**

- A non-refundable participation fee will be assessed to each student for each sport in which they participate. The fee must be paid before participation in the first game of the season is allowed. It should be turned into the office, not given to the coach. These fees do not pay for the entire program but help defray the expenses of the sport.

### **Physical Requirements**

- A student must submit a completed and signed athletic physical exam form from an Illinois physician and their Athletic Emergency Form before participating in practices or games. Physicals are valid for 12 months from the date of the exam. If the physical expires during the season, a new physical must be completed in order to continue participating.

### **Attendance Requirements**

- A student must be in attendance the entire school day in order to participate in a game scheduled for that day. If a student is absent for part or all of the day for extenuating circumstances, the student may be allowed to participate in the game with the permission of the principal. Any unexcused absence from school will cause the student to be unable to participate in the game.

## **Academic Eligibility**

- Each athlete must maintain a "C-" (78%) average in all classes. Any grade falling below a "C-" average will cause a student to be placed on academic probation. The student has one week to get off probation, or they will be declared ineligible until they do so. Grades in all classes will count.
- Grades will be evaluated on a weekly basis. Should a student be placed on probation, the period of probation will begin the Monday after the evaluation was made and last through the next Saturday. Should a student be declared ineligible for two weeks on three occasions during one season, the student will be dropped from the team.
- Ineligible students should be spending their time correcting the situation that made them ineligible. Therefore, ineligible students will not be practicing with the team or playing in any games during the period of ineligibility.

## **Citizenship**

- Each athlete is expected to behave in such a way that is in accordance with principles set forth in God's Word. Therefore, a student's citizenship [school behavior, attitude toward peers and adults, cooperation] will also be evaluated. Should an athlete's citizenship be found to be unsatisfactory by members of the staff & administration team, the athlete will be ineligible and will be subject to the same guidelines of academic ineligibility.
- Each athlete who is disciplined for isolated or repeated acts of misbehavior is subject to immediate ineligibility, the duration of which is to be determined by the assistant principal/AD.

## **Sportsmanship**

- Each student must show good sportsmanship both on and off the playing field.

## **Uniforms**

- RCS will furnish uniforms for soccer and volleyball. Each athlete is responsible for proper care of the uniform as well as the equipment belonging to the school. Uniforms should be kept clean and have a neat appearance for each game. At the end of the season, the uniform should be washed, neatly folded, and returned to the coach in the same condition it was issued. The athlete will be fined for any damage beyond normal wear. If the uniform is lost, the athlete is responsible for the purchase of a new uniform at the current replacement cost. The flag football and basketball teams will provide T-shirts/jerseys that players may keep.

## **Opportunities**

- The athletic program at RCS provides opportunities for students to participate as well as opportunities for parents and grandparents as gatekeepers, scoreboard operators, tickets, concessions and coaching. Persons interested in helping may contact the school office in advance. All coaches must complete the concussion/first aid education training.



## Attendance

The school will comply with the laws of the State of Illinois regarding attendance and absences.

### Absences

#### i. Procedure

- When a student is absent from school, a phone call from the parent/guardian must be made by the parent on the morning of the absence indicating the length of time and the reason for the student's absence.
- Parent or guardian must contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for missed assignments.
- In the case of an unexcused absence, the teacher has no obligation to accept the make-up work.

#### Excused Absences

- Each child enrolled at RCS should make every effort to be in regular school attendance. The Illinois school code only allows sickness and death in the immediate family to be considered as an excused absence. It is in the best interest of the child that he/she attend school each day in order to keep abreast of the work being presented in the classroom.
- Absences for other reasons or absences with no call-in are unexcused absences.

#### Unexcused Absences

- Excessive absenteeism is detrimental to a student's progress in school; unexcused absences will be subject to the discipline code.
- If a student has more than five unexcused absences in one semester, the following actions will occur  
After 6 absences: Administrator may send a letter to parent/guardian outlining attendance policy.  
After 8 absences: Administrator may contact parent/guardian by telephone.  
After 10 absences: Administrator may meet with parent/guardian to review attendance policy.  
After 12 absences: Case may be referred to the Education Committee for consideration of attendance contract and/or consequences.

#### ii. Vacations

- In the event that it is necessary for a student to miss school because of a family trip, written notice should be directed to the office and classroom teacher indicating the dates the student will miss at least one week in advance.
- In the event that a student must miss school due to a family trip, the teacher will use his or her discretion regarding the issuing of homework prior to the trip. Parents must request homework in writing one week prior to vacation. Any homework given prior to the vacation must be completed and turned in the day the student returns; otherwise no credit will be given for assigned work. Further, if it is decided that no homework be given prior, then all work should be completed within one week after

the student returns to school. It must be recognized that a student missing school for any reason is detrimental to his/her progress in school; hence, absences should be minimal.

- In the event that a student must miss school due to a family trip, the administration will use discretion with regards to unexcused absences procedures.

### **Early Dismissal**

- If a student needs to leave early for any reason, such as a doctor's appointment, the parent or guardian must come to the office to have the student paged and to sign the student out in the early dismissal log.
- A student must attend school for a total of 2 ½ hours to be counted present for any portion of the school day.

## **Tardy Policy**

Every effort should be made for students to be on time for school each day and for each class. We recognize that all students are transported to RCS by car. We also recognize that there are punctuality difficulties created by car problems and inclement weather which will cause a student to be late for school in the morning.

### **Problems created by tardiness**

- Interruption to the class
- Creates low self-esteem for student walking in late
- Child has missed the important beginning-of-the-day activities
- Child has missed the directions/instruction given prior to arrival
- Wastes teacher/student time while the tardy student is brought to level with class

### **Procedure to Follow**

In order to have a timely beginning to school each day, the following Board Approved Tardy Policy will be applied:

- RCS students are expected to be in their classroom on time every school day.

### **Consequences**

- Each student will be allowed four (4) tardies per quarter
- After 5 tardies: Administrator may send letter to parent/guardian outlining tardy policy.
- After 8 tardies: Administrator may contact parent/guardian by telephone.
- After 10 tardies: Administrator may meet with parent/guardian to review tardy policy.
- After 12 tardies: Case may be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration of tardy contract and/or consequences.

## Bicycle / Skating Safety

- There is no bike rack at school.
- Rollerblading/skating/skateboarding/shoes with wheels are prohibited on school grounds.

## Birthdays

### Birthday Policy

Birthdays are important and children like to celebrate with their classmates. At Rockford Christian Schools we want to celebrate your child's special day without too much disruption to our important work of learning.

We would like to encourage you to let your child participate in our Birthday Book or Learning Game program. Here is how it works: your child treats his or her class to a new book for the library or activity for the classroom teacher's learning centers. At a designated time, the birthday girl or boy opens the book or game and the class has an opportunity to enjoy it.

A name plate with your child's name will be mounted inside the cover of the book or on a prominent place on the game. This becomes a very special present that will long outlast a sugary treat that is gobbled up in minutes!

Parents wishing to provide a birthday snack may bring in a snack to celebrate their child's special day. Snacks that are provided for the entire class must be individually portioned, peanut-free, and store bought with ingredients clearly listed.

Remember, sending a treat, book or game is strictly optional.

Parents MUST communicate with the classroom teacher in advance of birthday celebrations. This allows for teachers to plan and advise parents of any allergies.

### In School Celebrations

- Please clear the date with your child's teacher by communicating in advance.
- If flowers, balloons\*\* or any other gift is delivered to school for a child's birthday or for any other reason, it will be kept in the school office until after school. No gifts will be delivered to the child's classroom.

**\*\*Special Note: Due to the possibility of severe allergic reactions for some students, no latex balloons are allowed inside the school building.**

### Out of School Celebrations

- If a child has a birthday party and wishes to invite school friends, invitations must be sent in the mail. Invitations cannot be distributed in class, put in backpacks or distributed before or after school on school grounds.

## Board of Directors

RCS is an independent, private school governed by a board of directors. Up to 15 members are on the board at any one time with alternating terms of service. Individual committees are tailored each year according to current needs. Contact the superintendent or current president of the board for information regarding its constitution and bylaws.

## Calendar

A calendar of events and activities is constantly updated throughout the school year and can also be found on our school website.

If RCS must be closed because of weather and/or other reason, the days may be made up at the end of the school year in May/June. Advance notice will be given to each family.

## Clubs

Special after-school clubs (ie...chess, cooking, bowling and Young Rembrandts) selections vary from year to year, depending on student interest level and the availability of parent leadership/sponsorship.

Depending on space availability, RCS allows certain outside organizations to meet on school property, such as Brownies or Cub Scouts. The Education Committee must approve these clubs.

All clubs must meet Monday-Friday between 3:00 and 5:00. Because First Covenant Church shares our gym facility, clubs will not be allowed to use the school facility on evenings or weekends.

## Co – Curricular Activities

RCS (grades K-3) requires co-curricular subjects to provide a balanced and complete education. Subjects include art, technology and science lab, general music, physical education, Latin (2-3), Spanish, library, and all star math.

## Physical Education

- Physical education is provided for each student during the school day. Students will have PE outdoors or indoors, depending upon the weather and the teacher's discretion. Physical education is important for the development of good physical and mental health. A PE curriculum has been developed for each grade level and is implemented by certified teachers. All activities are planned with the children's safety in mind.
- Every student is required to participate during PE. A student may be excused for not more than 2 PE classes per quarter with a note from a parent. This may be done in cases of minor injury and/or sickness from which the student is recovering. No student will be excused more than two days unless there is a note from a physician.
- **STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A PAIR OF GYM SHOES THAT ARE USED SPECIFICALLY FOR GYM CLASS.** They must be kept at school. Any student who does not have

the necessary equipment for PE class will not be allowed to participate, and their non-participation will be reflected in their grade. The PE teacher in charge of the class will determine necessary equipment.

## **Technology**

### **Classrooms**

- Technology is integrated throughout curriculum in all subject matters. Educational software is used for curriculum enrichment.

### **Internet**

- Rockford Christian Schools believes the internet offers valuable, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.
- The school uses an internet filtering system.

### **Acceptable Use**

- The purpose of using the internet in our school is to support research and education by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of the computer must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of Rockford Christian School.
- The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right; inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.

## **Communication**

It is essential that we maintain excellent communication. Written communications are used and recommended for both staff and parents.

### **Weekly Newsletter**

- Every Monday (or as needed) the school will email a newsletter with important upcoming information.
- The weekly newsletter will also be updated on our website, [www.rockfordchristian.org](http://www.rockfordchristian.org), **each** Monday. Please check this for important dates and information that you will need. Make it a habit to check the website weekly for updates.

### **Teacher Newsletters**

Pre-Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten send home monthly newsletters regarding classroom activities and upcoming events. Kindergarten through grade 5 provide weekly newsletters.

## Teacher E-Mail

All RCS staff have e-mail addresses through Rockford Christian. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and staff members through e-mail. [firstname.lastname@rockfordchristian.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@rockfordchristian.org)

## RenWeb

Newsletters, calendar events, lunch menu, homework, grades and test dates will be posted in RenWeb, Instructions for accessing RenWeb are available in the main office.

## Telephone Message/Usage

- Administrative support staff is in the building from 7:30 to 4:00. It will be greatly appreciated if parents will leave messages for teachers during this time.
- Teachers and students will not be called to the telephone during school hours except in case of extreme emergency. Staff members will be notified of your calls and will return such calls at their first opportunity.
- Messages for students will not be delivered during the school day to the classroom except in an emergency. This is necessary in order to avoid undue interruptions to the classrooms. However, students will be notified of messages at the end of the school day.
- If necessary, students may use the phone in the office.
- Cell phones use: Cell phones are not to be used during school or extended care hours without permission.

## Community Outreach

- In keeping with our mission statement, Rockford Christian Schools will provide various ministry opportunities in the community for students and families throughout the year.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate throughout the community in service to local ministries such as area nursing homes and Kids Around the World. All students are strongly encouraged to participate.

## Conferences

### Purpose

- The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss specific progress and/or problems that the student may be having in school.
- It is neither professional nor ethical to discuss the progress and/or problems of another child during the conference, in order to protect the privacy and rights of all students.
- Problems related to another child should be shared with the teacher but will not be discussed in detail.

## Conferences

- Twice a year there will be parent-teacher conferences for the parent of each child enrolled at RCS.
- Administration will determine this schedule. The convenience of the parent will be considered when arranging these times.

## Special Parent/Teacher Conferences

- Any other conference with a student's teacher **MUST BE MADE BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**. This includes picking up assignments, school materials, concern about behavior, academic progress, etc.
- When there is a disagreement on the part of the parent relative to a teacher's treatment of a student, the parent involved should talk with the teacher involved before any discussion takes place with another parent, teacher, administrator and/or board member. [Matthew 18:15-18]
- These special conferences may be requested by the parent or by the teacher.

## Conferences with a Principal

- It is the policy of the principal to act in a manner that is professionally respectful to his/her staff. At the same time, he/she holds them responsible for behaving in a manner that serves the spiritual and academic goals of each child.
- If the parent is concerned about the child's spiritual and/or academic progress, it is suggested that a parent/teacher conference be scheduled.
- In the event that the parents are dissatisfied with the response of the classroom teacher, it may be helpful to ask to meet with the teacher and the principal. If that is the case, your child's regular classroom teacher can arrange for such a conference.
- If there is a need for a conference with the principal, a call should be made to the office in advance to schedule an appointment.

## Directories

A directory of RCS families is available in RenWeb. The directory is not to be used for solicitations or mailings of any kind.

## Discipline

Our discipline system is relationship driven with the goal being alignment with the expectations of personal responsibility. It is the desire of each staff member to make every child responsible for his or her learning and behavior. Students will be expected to **respect others**, **respect property** and **preserve the learning environment** which will ensure a healthy environment for all children that attend our school.

- Discipline always begins with building a positive relationship with each child. Therefore, the child knows he or she is loved and respected as an individual.
- Discipline should be handled at the classroom level whenever possible.

- The teacher should counsel with each student regarding inappropriate conduct.
- If the student does not respond to the efforts of the classroom teacher, the administrator will counsel with the student.
- It may be that the teacher and/or administrator will request a conference with the parent(s) to seek their help in dealing with the student's misbehavior.
- Egregious misbehavior will be handled promptly and appropriately by administration in order to bring the student back into alignment with the RCS discipline standard.

Here are some behaviors that are not in alignment with the RCS discipline standard:

Disrespect to others

Disrupting the classroom environment

Fighting or violent behavior

Bullying (including cyber bullying)

Vandalism

Profanity

**Please note that infractions considered inappropriate are not limited to this list.**

Each teacher has class specific incentives that are used to compliment the discipline system.

### **Cheating**

Cheating occurs whenever a student copies another student's work, allows his/her own work to be copied, does another student's work for him or her, or turns in work knowing it is not their own work. At Rockford Christian Schools, cheating is viewed as a serious offense. In addition to automatic loss of credit on the test or assignment in question, a student caught cheating may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Suspension**

The administration has at all times the authority to suspend a student. The length of suspension will be 1-5 days as determined by the administrator.

### **Probation**

Probation will take place after the staff has reviewed the student's behavior, attitude, and/or academic performance. The student will be placed on probation for the following semester. If at the end of the probationary period there is no significant improvement, as viewed by the staff involved, recommendation for expulsion will be given to the Board of Directors.

### **Expulsion**

A student may be expelled from school for a serious breach of conduct, and/or repeated problems with behavior or academic performance.

### **Harassment and Bullying Policy**

*"Love does no wrong to a neighbor..."* (Romans 13:10)

*"...be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."* (Ephesians 4:32)



In keeping with our mission statement to love others sacrificially, anything contrary or incompatible with that goal will not be permitted. Harassment of any type – verbal, physical, sexual is opposed to the mission of Rockford Christian Schools and will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as a repeated aggressive behavior where a person (or group of people) in a position of power deliberately intimidates, abuses, or coerces any individual with the intention to hurt that person physically or emotionally. This also includes any form of cyber-bullying.

There is a clear line between conflict and bullying. Incidents of bullying include these three characteristics:

*Intentional* - the behavior is an aggressive and deliberate attempt to hurt another person.

*Repeated* - these aggressive actions occur repeatedly over time to the same person or the same group of people.

*Power imbalance* - the person bullying has more power than the child or children being bullied. That power includes but is not limited to physical and social.

A student who feels that he or she has been subjected to harassment should notify a staff member. The matter will be reported to the principal and an investigation will take place. Staff will take seriously all reports of bullying. Investigation and intervention will take place within ten days of the report. In the case of a substantiated incident of harassment or bullying, the appropriate course of restorative and disciplinary action will be dictated by the particular circumstances of the situation up to and including suspension and expulsion. Parents of all parties will be notified.

#### Off Campus Bullying

Illinois anti-bullying laws cover off-campus conduct if the behavior causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school and if a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying has occurred. School staff are not required to monitor non-school-related activity, function, or program.

#### Anti-retaliation and False Allegations

Rockford Christian Schools prohibits retaliation made against anyone who lodges a good faith complaint of bullying or who participates in any related investigation. Making knowingly false or malicious accusations of bullying can have serious consequences for those who are wrongly accused. Rockford Christian Schools prohibits making false or malicious bullying allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or enrollment and even criminal prosecution.

### Social Media and Networking

*“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”* Ephesians 4:29.

Social media is electronic communication used to share information, ideas, personal messages, videos, etc. Examples include texting, messaging, Instagram, Facebook, blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snap Chat and others. Social media is neutral. It can be used for good or for harm.

It is expected that parents and students will use good judgment. What is written is both permanent and public. A good practice is to assume that what is written to friends will be read by students, parents, school workers, etc. Be especially careful that what is written, posted and shared will not hinder your Christian witness or that of RCS.

Students who post or send inappropriate material will face disciplinary actions as outlined in the Student Handbook up to and including probation, suspension, or even expulsion.

Inappropriate material includes but is not limited to the following:

- Alcohol or drug related pictures and/or involvement
- Profane, lewd, obscene, vulgar, rude language
- Lewd or sexually provocative pictures
- Smoking or vaping pictures and/or involvement
- Threatening, harassing and cyber-bullying (see that section of this handbook)
- Disrespectful statements of the school, its workers and parents
- Information that is knowingly false or defamatory.

Parents and students are to immediately report all such incidents of misconduct to a parent, teacher, or administrator. Do not think, "It's just a post."

### **Consent to Access and Monitoring**

By enrolling with RCS, you consent to RCS's access to and monitoring of: (1) school computer and communications systems; and (2) all information produced, received, stored on, or sent from RCS Computer and Communication Systems, including personal email accounts accessed using the organization's equipment and any emails transmitted through personal, web-based accounts that are stored on RCS hard drives or other computer equipment as temporary or other files.

### **RCS-Related Social Media**

RCS supports beneficial communication and sharing of accurate information that respects the privacy of students. RCS supports the use of and monitors social media that uses the school's name, a form of the school's name or otherwise "speaks" for the school or any part of the school. Such sites include but are not limited to online sites for grade levels, athletic teams, clubs, teachers, parent organizations, alumni, etc.

The superintendent or his/her representative must be among those with "administrator" access to the site.

Consult the superintendent or his/her representative before opening a new social media site.

### **Social Networking & Conflict Resolution**

Should conflict arise with students, their parents or school workers, we/I will not take to social media nor encourage others to do so. Instead, we/I will pledge to follow the Matthew 18 principle which is to communicate directly with others and will address conflicts using methods described in this handbook that lead to solutions and reconciliation.

## Dress Code

Rockford Christian Schools' dress and appearance code aims to assist in providing an atmosphere conducive to concentration and learning. We desire clothing and appearance to be neat, clean and modest without extremes. We recognize that scripture does not prescribe proper dress; however, it does give guidelines regarding modesty, appearance and conduct.

Students enrolled at Rockford Christian Schools are expected to wear the correct clothes in good repair to school each day. They are to remain in these clothes throughout the day until departing the school grounds. Students are to be in uniform for school field trips and when representing the school in an official manner [e.g. sports contests, music competition], unless otherwise directed by a school official. Administration makes the final decision regarding issues of clothing and appearance. Please support the school with your cooperation.

### Dress Code and Appearance Expectations

**Pants/Capris:** Pants must be cotton twill khaki or navy with either a flat front or pleats. No denim or cargo pants are permitted. Pants must not be worn oversized or too low, but be of proper fit and at a reasonable waist height. They must not be worn tight fitting or of hip hugger or low rise styles.

**Shorts:** Shorts must be cotton twill khaki or navy with either a flat front or pleats. No denim or cargo shorts are allowed. Shorts must be worn at an appropriate length and be of a proper fit. The minimum length is 3 inches from the top of the knee.

**Skirts/Skort/Jumpers/Dresses:** Khaki, navy blue, and the prescribed plaid are the options for skirts, skorts and jumpers for girls. They must be a minimum of 3 inches from the top of the knee. The approved plaid is available from Land's End. Polo-style knit dresses in navy with a solid collar are the only dresses that are allowed.

**Shirts:** Two or three button polo style shirts with a collar may be worn in either short or long sleeve. Cotton, button-down oxford style shirts in long or short sleeves are permitted, but must be worn tucked in. Rockford Christian's approved shirt colors are navy, white, black, royal blue, or gray.

**Sweaters/Hoodies:** V-neck and crew neck pullovers and vests as well as cardigan sweaters are permitted in the uniform colors of navy or white. The Rockford Christian spirit wear zippered hooded sweatshirts may be worn in cooler weather. Solid navy fleece, vests or zippered cardigans may also be worn in the classroom. Rockford Christian outer wear may be worn in cooler weather.

**Shoes:** Students should wear athletic shoes, dress shoes, or sandals with a strap. Athletic shoes are required for participation in PE class. Closed toe shoes are safest for recess and playground. No flip-flops are allowed.

**Miscellaneous:** Attention drawing hairstyles will not be accepted, such as colored, spiked, tails or mohawks.

Earrings are not permissible for boys.

The administration may announce special dress-down or spirit days. On those days, students must be dressed modestly and clothing should be in good condition.

Shorts, skorts, skirts and dresses worn must follow the uniform length of no more than 3 inches above the knee. Leggings are not to be worn as pants at any time. Leggings may be worn with shorts, skorts, skirts, and dresses that meet the uniform length of no more than 3 inches above the knee. Jeans and shorts must be in good repair and without holes.

## All Students

- Label all clothing, especially sweaters or jackets that may get misplaced.
- Spirit wear dress: Students may wear jeans or shorts with RCS spirit wear shirts, or shirts in blue and gold.
- The administration will announce special dress down/spirit days. Students may have an opportunity to earn “No Uniform” days.
- No uniform days dress: Clothing must be clean, neat and modest. Students can wear jeans or shorts with shirts or t-shirts with non-offensive graphics or slogans. Jeans and shorts must be in good condition with no holes or tears. Shorts must be a minimum of 3 inches from the top of the knee. Students are not allowed to wear clothing that depicts questionable writing or pictures (such as those promoting tobacco, alcohol, rock groups, skull & cross bones, or violence).
- You can view items and order online: Land’s End: [www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school) School code:900094376.

## Electronic Devices

Students are prohibited from using electronic devices such as, but not limited to, radios, CD players, hand held games, cell phones, iPods, tablets, etc. during the school day and during extended care. All such devices are to be turned off and out of sight during the school day and during extended care. Electronic devices are permitted for classroom purposes at the teacher’s discretion. Electronic devices that are on and or in sight outside of this policy will be confiscated and the student’s parent must pick up the device from an administrator.

## Emergencies

### Student Information

The school will do everything possible to insure the safety of your child. We urge you to make the necessary arrangements now to meet these emergencies that may occur later. Be sure that your child is familiar with the arrangements. It is absolutely essential that we have an emergency “card” on file for every student at RCS. It must have the name and phone number of at least one adult other than the parent in case we cannot locate the parent in the event of an emergency. These cards are updated yearly.

Parents are encouraged to view an instructive video on “Hands-Only CPR” at the following website: [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/CPREandECC/HandsOnlyCPR/Hands-Only-CPR\\_UCM\\_440559\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/CPREandECC/HandsOnlyCPR/Hands-Only-CPR_UCM_440559_SubHomePage.jsp)

### School Closing

- In the event of bad weather, please check the local television and radio stations WROK (1440) radio station and WTVO (17), WREX (13), and WIFR (23) television stations beginning at 7:00 a.m. to see if Rockford Christian Schools are closed. You can also check on the school website [www.rockfordchristian.org](http://www.rockfordchristian.org). If Rockford District 205 is closed due to excessive cold, icy conditions or excessive snow, then Rockford Christian Schools are also closed.

- Students driving to RCS from a school district where schools are closed but Rockford District 205 and RCS are open may, with parent permission, remain home. Such an absence will not be counted against the number of allowable absences.
- In the event weather conditions should force the closing of school during the day, the school will call the parent/guardian and/or person designated by the parent/guardian indicating that school will be closing early. Announcements will be made on the radio AND TELEVISION.
- The school will do everything possible to insure the safety of the children. We urge you to make the necessary arrangements now to meet these emergencies that may occur later. Be sure that the student is familiar with the arrangements.
- If Rockford Christian Schools must be closed because of weather and/or other reason, the days may be made up at the end of the school year. Advance notice will be given.

## **Extended Care**

- A program of supervision is provided for students in PK through grade 3 needing before and/or after school care.
- Any student arriving to school between 7:00 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. must report to the extended care room.
- Any student not picked up from school 15 minutes after their dismissal time must go the extended care program. Students must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. [Charges after 6:00 p.m. are doubled].
- Any student not picked up from an after school activity at the designated time will need to report to the extended care program
- Any student waiting for an event or practice that starts after 3:00 p.m. [sports or practice] must report to extended care.
- The cost of this program will be determined by the board each year and announced to the parents in August prior to the start of school. The family will be billed once a month for this program.
- The RCS Extended Care emergency form must be filled out prior to using the program.
- Student behavior expectations are the same as during the school day.

## **Field Trips**

- All field trips are direct extensions of the classroom and must have educational value.
- Field trips will be planned by the teachers and approved by the administration. All teachers should be notified of students attending field trips a week in advance.
- The teacher will determine the number of chaperones/supervisors attending each field trip.

- Siblings [not in applicable grades] will not be permitted to attend the field trip.
- Permission slips must be signed and returned to school before the field trip commences.
- Any student not having monies along with a signed and returned permission slip the day prior will not be permitted to go on the field trip.
- Those students attending the field trip will pay all field trip expenses.
- Unless otherwise stated, uniforms must be worn on all field trips.
- Transportation for any field trip deemed so by RCS administration and teachers may be provided with public transportation. The cost will be evenly divided among those attending.

## Grading System/Report Cards

RenWeb is a web based homework and grading system used by RCS. Its purpose is to help enhance parental knowledge of their child's current homework assignments and grades. Report cards will be sent home with students following each quarter. Progress / deficiency reports will be issued during the middle of each grading period. Grades PK-3 report cards must be signed by the parent and returned.

In order that we may standardize our grading procedure, the following systems will be used:

### Kindergarten and First Grading Scale

3. Consistently achieves the standard
2. Progressing toward achievement of the standard
1. Limited progress toward achievement of the standard

**Blank** Not assessed at this time

#### **Elective/Specials: O, S, N**

O = Exceeds Expectations

S = Meets Expectations

N = Needs Improvement

### Second, Third, Grading Scale

A      100 – 94	C      83 – 79
A-     93	C-     78
B+     92	D+     77
B      91 – 86	D      76-71
B-     85	D-     70
C+     84	F      69-Below

## Health

Rockford Christian School employs registered nurses, on-site from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., who are responsible for maintaining all health records. The school nurse works cooperatively with parents, physicians, and all school personnel to maintain and improve the health of all students.

- **Appropriate Vision and Hearing screenings are performed annually as mandated by the State of Illinois. Vision screening** is provided for all students in **Pre-K, Kindergarten**, (who have not submitted an eye exam), **2<sup>nd</sup> grade, new students, and all students with an ISP**. **Hearing Screening** is provided for all students in **Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade, as well as new students and students with an ISP**. According to the State of Illinois School Code (section 27-8.1): **“Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision screening by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months. Vision screening is NOT an option. If a vision examination report is not on file at the school for your child, your child in the mandated age/grade/group will be screened.**
- **Students enrolling in school for the first time must present proof of an eye examination by a licensed optometrist or physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches and does eye examinations as defined by the law within the previous year before October 15<sup>th</sup> of the school year.**
- **Illness:** when a child is ill, or has been ill during the night, they must remain at home. Students who have had symptoms of a fever of 100° or more and/or had diarrhea or vomiting, ***must remain at home until they are symptom free for 24 hours***. This will allow the child to feel well and therefore be productive in the classroom. This procedure also protects other students from being exposed to illness.
- If a student becomes ill at school, the nurse will call a parent to determine what will be done. ***When the child has a fever and/or vomits at school, the school nurse will contact a parent to arrange for their child to be picked up.***
- When a student is suspected to have a communicable health problem, such as pink eye, strep throat, chicken pox, etc. the nurse will notify the parents to have their child checked by a physician prior to returning to school. The results of the doctor’s diagnosis must be reported to the school nurse.
- **Injuries:** in the event that a student is injured at school we will do the following: administer first aide to the best of our ability and phone a parent regarding the condition of their child and alert them as to what further medical attention needs to be done.
- **Medications:** Per the State of Illinois, parents are required to work out their child's medication around the school schedule to the best of their ability. The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. Medications should be limited to those required during school hours which are necessary to maintain the student in school and those needed in the event of an emergency.

Medications will be dispensed at school under the following guidelines:

All medication(s) that are to be taken by a student at RCS must be dispensed through the nurse’s office.

No student is to carry his /her medication (including over-the-counter medication).

No student may dispense medication to another student.

Any student requiring medication should bring the medication and the form with the attending physician and parent signature indicating the amount and time that the student is to receive the medicine. This includes over-the-counter medications. Forms are available in the nurse's office.

Students not following the above procedures may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students with asthma are permitted to carry and self-administer their rescue inhaler.

Parents must provide the health office with the prescription labeled bottle, detailing the name and dosage of the medication and circumstances under which the medication is to be administered. Parents or guardians must sign a statement acknowledging that Rockford Christian School and its employees and agents are to incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication or use of an epinephrine auto-injector.

- **Health Exam:** All students, upon initial enrollment in ANY grade, who have not been previously enrolled in an Illinois school, must have a current physical that meets the requirements of the State of Illinois. For ALL students entering grades PreKindergarten and Kindergarten, a new physical is required. A physical examination must be on record before beginning the school year.
- **Immunizations:** Students must show proof of basic immunizations and required boosters for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (required for pre-school only), Varicella (required for pre-school through 12<sup>th</sup> grades), Hepatitis B (required for pre-school and 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades), and Pneumococcal Vaccine schedule for children aged 24-59 months of age. All immunizations must be updated and recorded on the Illinois State school physical form. A physician or other healthcare professional must sign these forms.
- **STUDENTS OF ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS MUST BE IN COMPLIANCE BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.** Students who have not submitted a complete school physical and/or all required immunizations by October 15<sup>th</sup> will be excluded from school until the state requirements have been met.
- **Parents of students with religious objections must submit a new, signed letter of objection (each year a school physical is required) that meets all state requirements by October 15<sup>th</sup> and sign the exclusion letter explaining that unimmunized students will be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak as directed by the Winnebago County Health Department.**
- **The Annual Immunization Data Report submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education for Rockford Christian Schools is available upon request.**
- **Allergy safety:** No latex balloons are allowed on campus. No peanut or peanut butter treats are allowed in nut free classrooms. No pets are allowed on school premises.
- **Rockford Christian Schools is a smoke-free environment.**
- **Any parent who wishes their child to receive cough drops, from the nurse or the teacher, will provide the school with written consent.**
- **Students with asthma are permitted to carry and self-administer their rescue inhaler. Parents must provide the health office with the prescription label, detailing the name and dosage of the medication and circumstances under which the medication is to be administered. Parents or guardians must sign a statement acknowledging that Rockford Christian School and its employees and agents are to incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from the**



self-administration of medication or use of an epinephrine auto-injector by the pupil regardless of whether authorization was given by the pupil's parents/ guardians or by the pupil's physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse.

- **Dental Examination Requirement:** All children in kindergarten, second and sixth grades shall have a dental examination performed by a licensed dentist (Section 27-8.1 (1.5) of the School Code). Parents must present proof of the examination prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. The dental exam must have been completed within the 18 months prior to the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- Rockford Christian School has instituted a standing protocol for the use of undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors. Any RCS student exhibiting signs/symptoms of anaphylaxis may be administered epinephrine by the school nurse or trained personnel.
- Rockford Christian School has instituted a standing protocol for the use of an undesignated Albuterol Rescue Inhaler. Any student exhibiting signs of respiratory distress may be administered Albuterol by the school nurse or trained personnel.
- Parents of students with asthma need to provide the school nurse with an Asthma Action Plan completed by the child's physician.

## Homework

Homework refers to an assignment to be completed during a period of supervised student activity in class, outside of class, guided studies, or at home.

- Clearly communicated homework is an integral part of the instructional process. Challenging homework assignments help students learn. Homework reinforces, enriches, and enhances instruction. It also causes students to work independently and to become more responsible for their own achievements.
- Homework assignments will review, reinforce, or extend classroom learning by providing practice and application of knowledge gained; teach students responsibility and organizational skills; promote wise and orderly use of time; and provide opportunities for enrichment activities.
- Teachers and principals will develop strategies of instruction to include homework appropriate for the students and their educational needs. The strategies will consider assignments of other instruction to include homework appropriate for the students and their educational needs. The strategies will consider assignments of other teachers, individual differences in students and other factors that may affect the home as an extension of the classroom.

## Lost and Found

- Lunch boxes and all clothing articles should be labeled with your child's name. Many items are placed in the lost and found bins each week. The lost and found bins are located by the kitchen exit doors. If items are labeled, every effort will be made to return them to the owner.

## Lunch Program

- Rockford Christian School strives to provide a healthy and nutritious lunch option. A hot or cold lunch is available for each full day. Menus are sent home each month so that students may decide whether

to purchase a lunch or bring a lunch from home. The board will set the price of a lunch each year and notify families in July/August. The school will not allow negative balances on lunch accounts.

- Students will communicate their lunch choice (hot/cold/double hot/gluten free/lunch from home) to their teacher each morning.
- Milk/bottled water **is not** included with the cost of lunch. Milk/bottled water is optional. Because hundreds of children purchase a drink each day, students who wish to take milk or bottled water may purchase a milk card. You may NOT purchase milk on a day-to-day basis; RCS only offers the pre-paid option listed above for drinks.
- When students have finished eating, they will be dismissed for recess. Students should refrain from taking food and drink outside the cafeteria.
- Parent volunteers are used daily in serving and cleanup for all three lunch periods. (See Volunteer form.)

## **The F.O.R.C.E. (Friends of Rockford Christian Elementary)**

Mission Statement: To work in cooperation with the administrative team of the Pre-K/Elementary School and act as a liaison for the families represented in these schools for the advancement of parent involvement, improved facilities, advanced programming, and other educational opportunities for the students and staff of Rockford Christian Elementary Schools.

- All parents of Rockford Christian with students in grades Pre-K-5 are eligible to become members of the parent/teacher organization.
- Regularly scheduled meetings will be held throughout the year and will be posted in the newsletter.
- The FORCE sponsored events: Fall Festival, Mother/Son Event, Father/Daughter Dance, room parents, teacher appreciation week

## **Recess**

- Every student is required to go outside for recess. Therefore, it is important that each student dress appropriately for the weather. In the winter this means warm coats that are fully buttoned or zipped, hats and gloves or mittens! Boots must be worn in order to walk in the snow; snow pants must be worn in order to play in the snow. Students may be instructed by administration to stay indoors if not dressed appropriately for the weather.
- In the case of rain, heavy snow, or a wind chill of **fewer than 10 degrees**, the students will have indoor recess.

- A student may be excused from outdoor recess for not more than three consecutive days at a time with a note from a parent. This may be done in case of minor injury or sickness. No student will be excused more than three consecutive days unless there is a note from a physician.

## Records

### Per the US Department of Education and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Parents of students currently in attendance or eligible students have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education records. Please call the principal's office to make arrangements.
- Seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. This request must be submitted in writing to the principal's office.
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and section 99.31 authorize disclosure without consent.
- File with the Department a complaint under section 99.63 and 99.64 concerning alleged failures by the educational agency or institution to comply with the requirements of the Act.

The school maintains a cumulative academic, attendance, and health record for each student enrolled in accordance with the Federal Family Rights and Education Privacy Act. Information on the student's permanent record will be given out to the following:

- To the parents/guardians and adult students by written request.
- To colleges, universities, and military services upon the student's written request.
- To the court system by parental/guardian permission or by warrant (parent/guardian will be notified).
- Records are not released if accounts are not current.

## Rockford Christian Education Association

The Rockford Christian Education Association is chartered by the State of Illinois to establish and maintain a Christian Day School offering the regular course of study according to state standards, but with instructions from the absolute standard of the Word of God.

## Room Parents

Each year at least two room parents are selected for each class from the volunteer sign-up sheet. Under the direction of the head room parent – who works directly with the school principal, the room parents assist in various ways throughout the year. These may include:

- Organizing workers for their class's booth at the annual Fall Festival.
- Assisting with duties in preparation for the annual auction.
- Assisting with classroom parties (Christmas / Valentine's Day).
- Helping with various activities during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- Cleaning the classroom (sanitizing) in fall, during flu season or as requested by the principal.

## **Safety Drills & Security**

Emergency fire drills, tornado drills, bus evacuation drills, and playground evacuation drills are held in accordance with the recommendations of the Rockford Fire Department. Directions for leaving individual rooms are posted. Students are to follow instructions in moving to designated areas when the alarm sounds.

During school and extended care hours (8:15 a.m.-6:00 p.m.), all doors will remain locked and secure. Entry to the school must be made through the main school door. All visitors must report to the office to receive a visitor's badge.

For security purposes, parents will not be allowed to wait for their students outside of their classroom door.

## **School Activities**

### **Alcoholic Beverages & Smoking at School Activities**

To set a good example for students and our community, it is the position of Rockford Christian Schools that any and all student-centered activities, on or off RCS property, will be drug, tobacco and alcohol free. Drinking and/or smoking by adults at RCS athletic events, team banquets, school trips or other extra-curricular activities is prohibited. Service of alcoholic beverages at adult-centered activities is allowed but discouraged and is subject to the approval of the superintendent.

## **School Day**

### **Hours**

#### **Pre-K (half day program)**

8:05 - 11:40 a.m.

#### **JK (half day program)**

8:05 – 11:50 a.m.

#### **Kindergarten (half day program)**

8:05 (8:15 tardy) – 12:00 p.m.

#### **Pre-K/JK/K (all day program)**

8:05 – 2:45 p.m.

#### **Grades 1-2**

7:55 (8:05 tardy) – 2:50 p.m.

#### **Grade 3**

8:05 (8:15 tardy) – 3:00 p.m.

## **Early Dismissal**

Whenever a school calendar indicates a half-day, the actual dismissal time is 11:00. If an unforeseen early dismissal is necessary, we will contact parents as soon as possible with details. THERE WILL BE NO AFTERNOON EXTENDED CARE on these days.

## **Early Arrival**

No students are to be standing outside, unsupervised at the Hemlock campus or the First Covenant campus before 7:45 in the morning. However, if a student must come earlier, the student must go to extended care.

## **Lunch Period**

Each year the lunch schedule is determined by the school administration. The lunch/recess period will normally be 40 minutes in length, allowing time to eat and time to go outside for recess.

## **Dismissal**

- The halls must be cleared of unsupervised students by 3:15 p.m.
- All students should be picked up at their dismissal time (2:45 to 3:00). If a student is not picked up 15 minutes after their dismissal, he or she must report to extended care.

## **School Property Usage**

- It is the intent of Rockford Christian School that each student maintains proper respect and usage of all school property. Any abuse of school property will result in assessment of fines, and payment will be expected for the damages.
- At the beginning of the year, the teacher makes a record of the condition of the students' desks, tables, lockers and books. At the end of the year, fines are assessed according to a prescribed scale. Fines must be paid before release of students' report cards.

## **School Supplies**

When a student receives their summer packet, a specific supply list will be enclosed. It will also be posted online. It is essential that each student have the necessary supplies each day. Please periodically check with your child to see if he or she has paper, pencils, etc.

## **Snack Policy**

While snacks may have an appropriate place in a child's day to bridge periods of time between meals, some students may develop unhealthy habits, ingest unhealthy foods, and may not be prepared to take advantage of a full meal during lunch.

Additionally, we work hard to keep our classrooms safe for those students with peanut allergies. Please do not send any snacks that contain peanuts or peanut products and/or indicate that they have been made in a factory that processes peanuts.

If your child's teacher has a designated snack time, please choose a healthy snack. Some options are listed below:

Fresh fruit of vegetables  
Animal crackers  
Raisins  
Popcorn  
Rice cakes  
Granola bars  
Fig Newtons

Goldfish crackers  
Baked chips  
Cheese and crackers  
Graham crackers  
Cheerios  
Vegetable sticks with dip  
Yogurt

Chex mix  
Pretzels  
Dried fruit  
Baked tortilla chips and salsa  
Fruit or oatmeal bites

\*please note that the only beverage allowed in the classroom is water.

## **Spiritual Life**

### **Spiritual Expectations**

As a private Christian School, which integrates classroom academics and Christian commitment, the student's growth in faith is of the utmost importance at Rockford Christian Elementary. The student body worships together in our weekly chapels, where attendance is required. Students are expected to worship regularly with their parents in a local church of their choice. Rockford Christian Schools is in partnership with parents in the spiritual training of their children. Therefore, the school cannot accept sole responsibility for the Christian education of students, but rather shares that responsibility with the home and the local church. Because the study of God's Word is so vital to the Christian life, Bible is a required subject each year for students enrolled at Rockford Christian Elementary School.

As a private Christian academic institution, Rockford Christian places a high value on learning experiences for students. It is our desire to develop the God-given talents and abilities within each student to his/her highest potential, spiritually, academically, physically and socially. With this in mind, students are expected to appreciate the opportunity to be part of our school by behaving well and responsibly in the classroom setting and on the school campus.

### **Chapel**

All RCS students are required to attend all chapels scheduled for their class. Chapel is an integral part of the curriculum. Attentive, courteous conduct that is honoring to the Lord should be displayed at all chapel services. Throughout the year different ministries and community individuals are invited to share at chapel. Parents are welcome to attend the weekly chapel service. Check the Monday newsletters for days and times.

### **Biblical Integration**

At RCS we believe the Bible is the infallible Word of God and therefore, the standard by which all values, as reflected in school programs, policies and traditions are measured. Bible classes are an integral part of our curriculum. In addition, biblical concepts are integrated into every other curricular area within the school. The Bible is the foundation and the strength of Rockford Christian School, which sets us apart from public and many private schools.

The content and instruction presented in our Bible classes encourages students to develop strong Christian character, offers them a vision for a life of service to Jesus Christ no matter what occupational pursuits they follow, and educates them in sound doctrine and a defined faith so they can give an answer to the hope that is within them.

In addition to Bible as a core subject, students will have learning experiences appropriate to their age levels. These experiences emphasize the concept of a loving heavenly Father, the creation of human beings in the image of God, the fall of humanity and the redemptive work of God's Son, Jesus, and the absolute trustworthiness of God's written Word, the Bible.

## **Standards of Student Conduct**

Understanding the purpose and mission of Rockford Christian School, we believe the Word of God provides insights for behavior and daily living. We believe that our lives will be enriched by the application of these truths in a consistent manner.

For health and safety reasons, the use or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, knives, guns or items that could cause a fire are prohibited.

For social, moral and spiritual development, the following code of conduct will be followed.

- Respect authority – Honor God, obey and respect the laws of our country, the standards of one's parents and the expectations of the school and communities. (1 Peter 2:17)
- Courtesy will be extended in all relationships – student to student, student to staff, and staff to student. (Philippians 2:3-4)
- When an offense is committed, reconciliation will be sought in a biblical manner. (Matthew 5:23-24, 18:15-18)
- Profanity, vulgar or offensive speech is an insult to God and others and will not be tolerated. (Exodus 20:7,16)
- Demonstrate self-control – Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. When you sin seek forgiveness and make amends. (James 1:9)
- Be honest and above reproach. Always speak the truth and avoid even the appearance of dishonesty. Refrain from stealing, lying, cheating and gambling. (Proverbs 8:7)
- Students will be selective in the areas of entertainment, music and reading material. (Philippians 4:8)

## **Standardized Testing**

- Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT) are administered in the spring for all children 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, as well as the Otis-Lennon Student Ability Test for students in Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade.
- Third graders will take the ACT ASPIRE test during the same testing week.
- Perfect attendance during the week of testing is highly encouraged. There is not always time for make-up tests. Dates of the tests are published well in advance so that scheduled time away does not conflict with the testing.
- Achievement tests will be made up in case of illness only. Make up tests will be provided as follows:
  - One day: Make-up tests will be administered

- o Two – Three days: Only reading and math will be administered
- o Four Days: Make-up testing will not be administered

## **Support**

### **Academic**

#### **Resource**

We have state certified teaching staff to meet the educational needs of students with learning disabilities. We also are serviced by the Private and Parochial Division of Illinois District #205 for speech therapy and other specific needs that directly affect the learning process.

#### **Enrichment**

Rockford Christian School offers a rigorous academic program. Classroom teachers provide additional challenges and remediation for students who require them. Occasionally a student may need additional opportunities for growing academically. In these situations, we look to a pull out program for grades 1, 2, and 3. Three factors are considered in determining eligibility for the advanced explore as well as the grades two and three pull out program. They are standardized test scores, classroom performance, and teacher recommendation. These three components make up a matrix for identification.

#### **Student Counseling**

When students feel stress due to various social/emotional circumstances, it sometimes helps to talk with someone completely removed from his or her situation, rather than with parents or teachers. We have an onsite counselor and may recommend outside counseling if the need arises.

## **Teacher Request Policy**

RCS teachers understand the abilities, personalities, and needs of each student in his or her classroom, as well as the teaching style of the teachers at the next level. The following criteria is used as each class list is assembled: learning style of the student, teaching style of the teacher, classroom chemistry, gender ratio, ability levels, student personalities, and special needs. When a request from a parent is thrown into the mix, the proper balance of the above criteria can be hindered.

The final decision of student placement rests with the administration and any parental concerns about placement should be made to the principal in writing by early Spring.

## **Transportation**

We do not provide bus service, and we are not included with the Rockford Public School Bus Service.



## Visitors

### Parents

Unscheduled interruptions can be very disruptive to the classroom. Any deliveries for your child such as lunch, homework, medication, or messages should be made in the office and delivered by school staff at an appropriate time. If parents desire to visit their child's classroom, the following should be observed:

- Arrange with the teacher a time to visit the classroom. This should be a mutually agreed upon by the teacher and parent ahead of time.
- Parents must stop by the office to sign in and get a visitors badge.
- Plan to spend approximately one-half hour on a given visitation. This will allow one to more adequately observe the program and the child's response to his/her school experience.

## Volunteers

The relationship between staff and parents at RCS is very special. Every time there is a need for extra help, a parent will usually step in and help. We encourage parents to donate at least three hours of their time during the year in a volunteer capacity. Volunteer parents make such a difference in the life of a school, and serve as a wonderful example to their children. A volunteer sign-up sheet is mailed to all school families in the summer, listing various activities and/or areas where volunteer assistance is appreciated. It is helpful to school staff to have these on file as early as possible in the school year for reference when needed.

## Wait List

- An application with paid registration fee must be on file in order for a student to be officially placed in a waiting list for any class that is already at capacity.
- It is the parent's responsibility to periodically check with the school for openings.

## Withdrawal

- Written notification must be submitted to the Director of Admissions when a child is withdrawn from RCS. Otherwise finance fees will continue to be added to the account for tuition payments in arrears.
- School records will be forwarded directly to the new school at the request of the new school when all tuition and fees have been paid in full.
- It is advisable for the parent to sign a release of information to ensure the records are being sent to the correct school.