



Linking communities through learning

Burrillville
Central Falls
Cumberland
Foster-Glocester
Glocester
Johnston
Lincoln
No. Providence
No. Smithfield
Pawtucket
Smithfield
Woonsocket

NRIC Regional Alternative Program

Student/Parent Handbook

2008-2009

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION/OVERVIEW

The Northern Rhode Island Collaborative (NRIC) is an extension of eleven (11) public school districts in northern Rhode Island. The Regional Alternative Program (RAP) serves students ages five (5) through twenty-one (21). These students have been diagnosed as having a behavioral and / or serious emotional disability. The NRIC public school districts provide this educational opportunity when a student's needs can no longer be met within his / her public school. Currently there are ten (10) classrooms operating in the RAP program, providing services to approximately 90 students. The day school sites are St. James School in Lincoln for elementary and middle school students and St. Lawrence School in North Providence for high school students. Additionally, there are two (2) classrooms in a school where the NRIC rents space: St. Teresa's School in Pawtucket for elementary students. These classrooms provide a less restrictive placement and provide students with opportunities for mainstreaming when they are able to do so.

The RAP program is designed to provide an educational and therapeutic environment that helps students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in lesser restrictive school, work and community settings. The unique needs of the students are addressed through individualized programming in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment. A team approach is utilized to develop a plan designed to promote a student's academic and behavioral growth. The NRIC team includes the classroom teacher and instructional assistant with the support services of an Assistant Special Ed Director / program coordinator, social worker, vocational counselors, and a consulting clinical team. In addition to the staff, the student's family and appropriate community agencies are vital contributing team members.

The purpose and function of the Regional Alternative Program is to provide a full range of educational and related services that are designed to prepare the student for the successful return to local programs or graduation / transition and assumption of the role of a responsible citizen and life long learner.

ACADEMIC AND PREVOCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

The Northern Rhode Island Collaborative offers elementary students a number of academic and prevocational options. Students can follow their school district's curriculum and courses of study. Those students needing modification to their academic program can receive varied instructional teaching methodologies, reinforcement activities and / or assessment materials as prescribed in their IEP. The NRIC curriculum is unique in that it is flexible and open to on-going change and development providing students with experiences that will help them better understand themselves and their environment. Technology and hands on learning activities are an integral part of the program.

ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR MIDDLE/SECONDARY STUDENTS

Middle / Secondary students in the Regional Alternative Program are provided academic and vocational opportunities that are individually tailored to meet their unique needs. Traditional academic subjects may be coupled with Community Service Learning to provide experiences for students to better understand themselves and their communities. Vocational options may include on-site courses in areas such as culinary arts or technology preparation. Students may participate in community work based learning programs, part-time placements in area vocational / technical high schools, or in work study programs that address both academic and work standards. Vocational programs are always individually designed to take into consideration the students' cognitive, emotional and behavioral status as they prepare to transition to post-secondary education / training or the world of work.

All Northern Rhode Island Collaborative RAP secondary programs follow the R. I. High School Diploma System, focusing on the Proficiency-Based Graduation (PBGR).

High school credits earned and evidence of proficiency in both core content knowledge and applied-learning skills acquired at the NRIC Regional Alternative Program will be transferred back to the public high schools. Students who successfully complete high school graduation requirements will receive a diploma from their school district.

CLASSROOM STRUCTURE

The Regional Alternative Program provides a structured and supportive environment in which students can learn to develop skills to monitor and modify their behavior while maintaining academic progress. Students are given opportunities to learn to make appropriate behavioral choices and to take responsibility for those choices. An individualized behavioral plan is developed for each student that is proactive and designed to guide the student from negative to pro-social behaviors. The use of the functional behavioral analysis process looks at the students' behavior on an individual basis and helps to build effective individual behavior plans. Positive behavioral supports are utilized and incorporated into the classroom structure. Practical strategies are developed to teach students more effective and efficient behaviors. These practices will help students become autonomous, connected, and competent members of their school community.

I. Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to follow class routines, complete class assignments, follow instructions, and participate in the learning process. Additionally, students will develop and demonstrate skills in the following areas:

1. **Self-Control**
Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively manage behaviors, solve problems, and develop realistic expectations for self and others.
2. **Communication**
Students will demonstrate the ability to appropriately and effectively communicate ideas and feelings.

3. **Personal Behaviors**
Students will demonstrate the ability to understand self and the relationship between feelings and behaviors
4. **Interpersonal Skills**
Students will demonstrate the ability to maintain positive relationships with others and participate in appropriate group activities. Students will be able to assert own needs while respecting the rights of others.

II. Planning Room/Time Out

Time out is an area designed to assist students in regaining control of themselves. It can be a designated area of the classroom, partitioned from the total class, yet within the full view of the staff, whereas the planning room is a space outside of the classroom. A student may realize the need to access either space or may be encouraged by staff to utilize the space in order to achieve self-control. During this time the staff and student have an opportunity to process his / her behavior.

III. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention is a safe, non-harmful behavior management system designed to aid staff and students by maintaining the best possible care and welfare for agitated or out of control individuals even during their most violent moments. The program has two components:

A. Preventative Techniques

Preventative Techniques are non-verbal and verbal interventions which help prevent physical acting out behavior and de-escalate verbal acting out.

B. Therapeutic Physical Intervention

Therapeutic Physical Intervention is the use of safe non-harmful control and restraint techniques to safely control an individual until he or she can regain control of his or her behavior. Staff employ therapeutic physical intervention only after less restrictive means of prevention have failed and in such a way as to allow the student the greatest possible comfort, and to avoid physical injury and mental distress. The Therapeutic Physical Intervention process includes the following:

1. Precipitating Incidents

Emergency situations justifying the use of Non-Violent Physical Crisis Intervention are limited to substantial risk or actual occurrence of serious self-destructive behavior and / or aggression toward others. In either case, substantial risk shall be interpreted to include only the serious imminent threat of bodily harm, given the real ability to enact such harm.

2. Post Therapeutic Physical Intervention Counseling

Although the Therapeutic Physical Intervention allows the student to regain control, it does not address the problem which led to the Non-violent Physical Crisis Intervention. It is essential that the staff who are involved in the Therapeutic Physical Intervention remain with the student in a reassuring, supportive posture, in order to bring the problem to a temporary resolution. It is often necessary to rebuild the student's self-image, address his / her wounded dignity and remove the negative feelings toward the staff members which may have developed during the Therapeutic Physical Intervention. This process may require more time than the actual physical intervention as it is the most significant part of the experience, in that it allows the student an opportunity to learn positive alternative behaviors.

3. Therapeutic Physical Intervention Documentation

The RAP program shall maintain appropriate documentation of all physical interventions, including the lesser restrictive means attempted. This documentation shall include:

- a. The nature of the therapeutic physical intervention.
- b. The reason for the therapeutic physical intervention.
- c. The types of less restrictive alternatives which were tried.
- d. The time and place the therapeutic physical intervention was administered.
- e. The duration of the therapeutic physical intervention.
- f. The name of the staff member who initiated the intervention and the names of any other staff members who participated.
- g. The nature and extent of any injuries to the student or staff involved in the Therapeutic Physical Intervention.

The Program Coordinator, Director of Educational Services, and Assistant Special Ed Director shall be informed of each Therapeutic Physical Intervention. If a student requires the repeated or prolonged use of Therapeutic Physical Intervention, the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator will initiate a review process including all relevant team members, staff, parents / guardians, LEA Special Education Director, etc., to review the program's ability to meet the needs of the student.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES

In order for students to benefit from the Regional Alternative Program, it is expected that they will attend school on a daily basis and actively participate in the educational activities. The following sections outline student responsibilities and program procedures.

I. Attendance

- A. Students are required to be present in school at the designated starting time daily.
- B. An absence or tardiness needs to be reported by a parent / guardian to school staff as soon as possible.
- C. The staff reserves the right to request a physician's note for absences of three (3) or more days.
- D. Per Rhode Island Regulations, absences may only be excused by a physician's note, religious holiday, or for a legal obligation.
- E. A student suspended from the bus, who does not attend school, is considered unexcused.
- F. An unexcused absence or tardiness will result in:
 - 1. The need to make up missed work
 - 2. A review of the individual behavior plan
- G. Students are responsible to make up all work missed due to absences by the end of each quarter. Exceptions to this guideline are allowable by an individualized program.
- H. School districts will receive monthly attendance reports on each of their students.
- I. A truancy petition will be filed by the public school district for continued unexcused absences as per their district policy.

II. Detention

Occasionally it may become necessary for students to serve detention and remain after school hours. Students may receive detention for the following types of behaviors:

- A. Refusal to complete assignments during class time, as homework, and / or during breaks

- B. Leaving the assigned area
- C. Smoking and
- D. Consistent, unexcused tardiness, etc.

It will be the responsibility of the parent / guardian to transport the student. A twenty-four (24) hour notice will be given for transportation arrangements to be made, except in emergency situations. Continued infractions to any of the stated rules may result in convening a functional behavior meeting to review the student's individual behavior plan.

III. Student Interrogations

Any and all student interrogations taking place in any location that a school activity or function is taking place will strictly adhere to NRIC Board and Administrative policies regarding Student Interrogations and R. I. General Law 16-21-5 which addresses this topic.

General Law 16-21-5 on Student Interrogations was enacted to increase the level of participation of parents when their minor children are being questioned by law enforcement in school or at a school-sponsored activity

IV. Driving a Motor Vehicle to School

Driving a motor vehicle to school is a privilege. The following terms/conditions must be followed for a student to maintain this privilege.

A. Driving Privilege Terms

1. Students must be properly licensed.
2. Student must have maintained building privileges for a pre-determined amount of time.
3. Vehicle is properly registered and a copy of the registration is on file.
4. Student has written authorization from a parent / guardian to use vehicle.
5. Student arrives on time and does not leave until dismissed.
6. Student does not drive any other student to school or from school except without prior written permission from his / her parents / guardians, the parents / guardians of the other student and the RAP staff.
7. Student does not arrive to school under the influence of any drug or alcohol.
8. Student will lock the vehicle upon arrival.
9. Student will not use the vehicle during the school day except when specifically requested by parent / guardian. Parent / guardian must call or provide written permission to the RAP staff.
10. Students parking on school grounds agree that their vehicle may be subject to search under grounds of reasonable suspicion of drugs, alcohol, weapons, or other illegal items.
11. A specific driving contract must be agreed upon and signed by all parties prior to the student being afforded the privilege to drive to school.

Rubric: Driving Privileges

Student must meet all accepted standards or Student may have one approaching in attendance, participation and academics	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Significantly Below Standard
Attendance	Absent, tardy or early dismissal for less than 5% of the current number of school days	Absent, tardy or early dismissal for 5% to 7% of the current number of school days	Absent, tardy or early dismissal for 7% to 9% of the current number of school days (student possibly at risk for truancy – team meeting should be considered)	Absent, tardy or early dismissal for 10% or more of the current number of school days (criteria for truancy)
Participation	90% - 100% of the time student takes an active role in learning. Shares relevant ideas and asks appropriate questions. Contributes to class discussions. Listens to classmates and respects others' opinions. Needs no reminders to stay on task and complete work. Turns completed work in on time.	90% of the time student takes an active role in learning. Shares relevant ideas and asks appropriate questions. Contributes to class discussions. Listens to classmates and respects others' opinions. May need occasional reminders to stay on task and complete work. Turns completed work in on time.	70% - 90% of the time student takes an active role in their own learning. Infrequently asks questions. Hesitant to share ideas or take risks. Only participates when called on. Needs regular reminders to stay on task. Assignments that are turned in are often incomplete.	Less than 70% of the time, student takes an active role in their own learning. Student does not participate and rarely shares ideas or asks questions. Displays poor listening skills. Often unprepared and disengaged from class.
Academics	Student has a grade 85 or greater in all subjects. (Honors)	Student has a passing grade (70% or greater) in each individual subject	Student has a passing grade (70% or greater) in all but one or two subjects, but is close to passing or easily able to make work up.	Student failing majority of subjects (below 70%).
		Does not, or very rarely, exhibits the following: - Student attempts to or actually does,	1-4 of the following in a 20 day period: - Student attempts to, or actually	5% of the following in a 20 day period: - Student attempts to, or actually

<p>Behavior</p>	<p>Student exhibits exemplary behavior at all times and all situations.</p>	<p>leave the classroom (hanging in doorways or in the hall).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student is out of assigned area and responds negatively when redirected. - Makes verbal threat. - Student engages in threatening behavior - Vandalism, destruction of property or stealing - Comments or gestures to hurt self, run away or other similar risky behavior. 	<p>does, leave the classroom (hanging in doorways or in the hall).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student is out of assigned area and responds negatively when redirected. - Makes verbal threat. - Student engages in threatening behavior. - Vandalism, destruction of property or stealing. - Comments or gestures to hurt self, run away or other similar risky behavior. 	<p>does, leave the classroom (hanging in doorways or in the hall).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student is out of assigned area and responds negatively when redirected. - Makes verbal threat. - Student engages in threatening behavior. - Vandalism, destruction of property or stealing.
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V. Behavioral Expectations

One means of assisting students to improve and / or change their behavior is for the RAP program to provide clear expectations for acceptable school behavior.

A. Remaining in Assigned Area

Students are expected to request and receive permission to leave their assigned area.

Consequences:

Leaving the assigned area will result in the student not earning privileges, and the student may be required to make up that time after school and / or other consequences based on the student's individual behavior plan.

B. Respecting School Property

Students may not deface or destroy materials, furniture or the building in any way.

Consequences:

Payment and/or repair for damages or other consequences based on the student's individual behavioral plan.

C. Smoking

The Regional Alternative Program has set a no smoking policy for all students. This smoking ban applies for both inside the school and on the school grounds. No student shall use any tobacco product, including smokeless tobacco products, while on school grounds, nor shall any student furnish, deliver, or otherwise provide any tobacco product to another student while on school grounds. This prohibition also includes school buses.

Consequences:

Smoking on school grounds will result in the student not earning privileges and / or other consequences based on the student's individual behavior plan.

D. Pulling Fire Alarm - False Alarms

Pulling a false fire alarm is an offense against the law and will be reported to the local police. The local fire department may charge a fine of \$250 for each false alarm. This will be charged to the student and / or his / her parents / guardians.

Consequences:

This offense will result in the student not earning privileges and possible detention. Repeated offenses of this policy will result in a convening of the RAP clinical team and / or the IEP team.

E. Releasing Fire Extinguishers

A student who releases a fire extinguisher will be required to pay to refill it.

Consequences:

This offense will result in the student not earning privileges and / or possible detention. Repeated offenses of this policy will result in a convening of the RAP clinical team and / or the IEP team.

F. Bringing Items from Home to School

Any student who brings items to school, which are not a necessity for class, such as walkmans, iPods, radios, laptop computers, video game systems, cell phones, etc., is responsible for those items. Should the goods be damaged, lost or destroyed, the liability will not be that of the school or other student(s). It is the teacher's discretion as to what items will be allowed in school. In the event that students are requested to bring these or other items to school, a written note or a phone call from the teacher to the parent / guardian would occur. Use of any such items in school is at the teacher's discretion. Misuse of these items shall be subject to disciplinary measures.

G. Cell Phone Usage – Students

Personal cell phone usage on school property is not permitted (classrooms, hallways, corridors, gym, bathrooms, etc.) In cases of emergency, parents are required to contact students through the site office. This allows us to maintain the safety and security of students, limit disruptions to the school day, as well as assist the students in processing an emergency phone call, if needed.

Students using cell phones during the school day will be required to relinquish the cell phone to the teacher or site office for safe keeping until the end of the day, at which time they will be returned to the student prior to dismissal to the bus.

Refusal on the part of students to comply with staff directives to relinquish their cell phone will be addressed as are other issues of non-compliance under the discipline code. Subsequent infractions of this policy will result in parents being required to come to the school to take possession of the cell phone, as well as other behavioral interventions as appropriate.

H. Dress Code

NRIC recognizes that, within certain limits, each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. However, any manner of dress which presents a health or safety hazard to a student or others, is potentially damaging to school property, or is distracting to the educational process is prohibited.

The following guidelines may be useful in helping parents to determine school attire that may be improper or distracting to the educational process. Students who wear any of the following may be found in violation of this dress code:

1. Outdoor clothing, including backpacks, shaded eyewear, and all headwear, during the usual course of the school day, except when coming in or going out of the building.
2. Clothing, including backpacks, which advertises or alludes to any drugs, alcohol or tobacco products.

3. Clothing, including backpacks, depicting any words or symbols that could in any way be construed as sensual, sexual, or obscene.
4. Clothing which is worn improperly so that it might be too revealing, or any clothing which might be too revealing (for example, tank tops which expose ones' midriff, backless shirts or tops, low cut shirts or tops, sleeveless shirts, including tank tops and shirts with cut-off sleeves, very brief shorts or skirts, or pants worn so low that they are too revealing).
5. Clothing or other attire which may be perceived as a gang related symbol (for example hats, bandanas, beads).
6. Any accessories, devices or objects which may cause or inflict bodily harm. (Example: jewelry which could be used as a weapon such as chains, or piercing of body parts may pose a safety hazard).
7. Apparel or other modes of appearance (such as tattoos) which promote hatred regarding another person's race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.
8. Foot wear which poses a hazard to the student or school (e.g., but not limited to: "spikes", "steel toed boots", "healys", "slippers").

Consequences:

Student will be directed to take corrective action, which may include being provided attire from school staff that is appropriate school attire. Non-compliance may result in loss of privileges, parent / teacher conference, or further disciplinary action. Inappropriate attire may be held by staff and returned to parent / guardian.

ZERO TOLERANCE PROCEDURES

I. VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL

It is the goal of the Regional Alternative Program to provide a safe, structured and secure learning environment. It is, therefore, our policy that any kind of violent act or dangerous weapon be prohibited in or on school grounds.

A. Verbal Threats [also covered under BULLYING/TEASING/HARRASMENT POLICY, Page 17]

“VERBAL ASSAULT” is defined as a threat of an intentional and violent act inflicting physical harm or injury to any employee, student, or guest of NRIC.

When a student engages in voicing any serious verbal or written threats which involve the mention of assaultive and / or homicidal ideation, immediate action must be taken.

1. The student will not be left alone.
2. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator will be contacted immediately. If the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator is not available, the Director of Educational Services or the Executive Director will be contacted.
3. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator, Social Worker, and Classroom Teacher will complete a building level assessment which shall include weighting the student's capability of following through with the threat based on:

- a. The student's present state of mind
- b. The student's plan to engage in assault or homicide
- c. The mention of possession and / or availability of a weapon(s)
- d. Behavioral history

This will be documented on the Functional Behavior Assessment forms.

1. If it is determined that the student:
 - ⇒ is purposeful or
 - ⇒ has a plan to commit assault or homicide or
 - ⇒ has possession of or availability to access weapon(s) the local police department must be notified for the purpose of providing intervention and/or removing the student from the school premises and a conference consisting of student, parent/guardian and RAP staff will be held to determine further action.
2. If it is determined that the student:
 - ⇒ is not purposeful and
 - ⇒ is without a plan and
 - ⇒ is not mentioning possession of or availability to access a weapon(s), and is able to contract for safety, the student may remain in school; however, the parent/guardian, police department, and any outside service providers must be informed.
3. If it is determined that the student behavior is a part of the defensive verbal escalation continuum, as presented in CPI:
 - ⇒ limits will be set according to NRIC RAP Behavior Management System, and
 - ⇒ tension reduction/therapeutic rapport strategies will be utilized.
4. Contact the NRIC Director of Educational Services.
4. In all cases involving threats of violence which are deemed beyond the content of CPI, the school district special education director, parent/guardian, local police department and any outside service providers must be informed.

B. Physical Assault

“PHYSICAL ASSAULT” is defined as an intentional and violent act inflicting physical harm or injury to any employee, student, or guest of the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative (NRIC). When considering whether the definition shall be applied to any given incident, the factors to be weighed shall include: the age of the student(s) involved, the educational circumstances of each, the seriousness of the harm or injury, the state of mind of the student(s) involved, the effectiveness of non-violent crisis intervention, and any other factors relevant to the incident in question.

1. Enforcement of Zero Tolerance for Violence

When a student engages in physically assaultive behavior toward staff or students, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention will be implemented immediately and the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator notified. If the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator is not available, the Director of Educational Services, or the Executive Director must be notified.

a. If the student terminates his / her assaultive behavior

1. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention procedures shall be completed by the staff involved.
2. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator or his / her designee will immediately convene a NRIC team meeting to review the incident. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator will determine the team composition.
3. The NRIC team will determine what, if any, action is necessary to ensure the safety of

all students and staff.

4. The student's parent / guardian will be notified of the incident.
 5. The student will lose his / her privileges as determined by the NRIC team.
 6. The following may occur as deemed necessary by the NRIC team:
 - a. a home time out for the remainder of the day under adult supervision.
 - b. notifying the school district special education director.
 - c. reconvening the IEP team to review the student's emotional/psychological status and the need to revise goals, objectives and / or placement / services.
 - d. implementation of counseling services specific to the incident.
 - e. filing of assault charges.
 - f. implementation of individualized plan.
- b. If the student continues to engage in the assaultive behavior and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention has failed in the opinion of NRIC team, the police shall be called.

Should a student choose to initiate any physical contact with, or make a verbal threat towards a staff member while the staff is engaged in CPI (physical intervention) with another student, their actions will be considered an assault and charges may be filed with the local police.

II. DANGEROUS WEAPONS:

It is the policy of the Regional Alternative Program and the Rhode Island Department of Education that weapons are prohibited on school property. If a student is in possession or reasonably suspected of being in possession of a weapon, immediate action will be taken.

A. Possession of a weapon or reasonable suspicion of possession

The term "weapon" shall include, but not limited to, by way of illustration, the following enumerated items:

- ⇒ any loaded or unloaded firearm (e.g., pistol, blank pistol, signal pistol, starter pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, etc.);
- ⇒ any knife (Bowie, Derek, lockblade, hunting pen, pocket, switchblade, utility, etc.);
- ⇒ any razor (e.g., straight, regular, retractable, etc.);
- ⇒ any defensive weapon (e.g., gas repellent, mace, stun gun, etc.);
- ⇒ any martial arts device (e.g., Chinese stars, nunchaku, etc.);
- ⇒ any tool or instrument which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude as being capable of inflicting bodily harm (e.g., blackjack, chain, club, knuckles, night stick, pipe, studded bracelet, etc.), or which by virtue of its shape or design, gives the appearance of any aforementioned (e.g. air pistol, air rifle, BB gun, etc.).

1. Enforcement of Zero Tolerance for Weapons

Any weapon found in a NRIC building, on the grounds, or on a student will be confiscated immediately.

- a. Any student found to be in possession of, or having brought a weapon to any NRIC program will be subject to the following action:
 1. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator or his / her designee will immediately convene a NRIC review meeting. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator will determine the team composition.
 2. The NRIC team will determine what, if any, action is necessary to ensure the safety of all students and staff.
 3. The Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator or his/her designee will contact the parent/guardian and the local police.
 4. The student will lose his / her privileges as determined by the NRIC team.
 5. The following may occur as deemed necessary by the NRIC team:
 - a. home time out for the remainder of the day under adult supervision

- b. notifying the school district special education director
- c. reconvening the IEP team to review the student's emotional/psychological status and the need to revise goals, objectives and/or placement / services.
- d. implementation of counseling services specific to the incident.

2. Police Involvement

- a. In all cases involving weapons local police shall be called and all confiscated weapons shall be turned over to the local police department.
- b. Charges shall be filed as determined by the local police.
- c. A log of all confiscated weapons shall be kept by the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator and/or designated administrator.

3. Search and Seizure Procedures

The NRIC reserves the right to search students, their belongings, and/or property if the NRIC has a reasonable suspicion of a violation of school rules, state or federal law.

- a. The NRIC team will meet to determine the necessity of a search.
- b. The NRIC will make all reasonable attempts to contact parents/guardians.
- c. A search procedure may include, but is not limited to, asking a student to empty pockets, take off shoes, hat, or coat to look for hidden objects.
- d. An electronic metal detector may also be utilized.
- e. There is no expectation of privacy with regards to personal possessions, including, but not limited to book bags, back packs, purses, and vehicles and therefore these possessions may be searched at any time at the discretion of the NRIC team, in order to maintain the safety and security of the school environment.
- f. If the NRIC team determines that reasonable suspicion exists and the student refuses to submit to the search, then police will be notified.

B. Bomb Scares or Threats

To assist in providing a safe, structured and secure learning environment, all school staff will be observant as to various items being brought onto the school property and will follow the bomb scare or threat guidelines when informed of suspicions by students, receive a call or note.

Upon receipt of a bomb scare or threat made be a phone call, the recipient of the call shall utilize the Rhode Island State Bomb Squad-Bomb Threat Checklist.

Upon receipt of a verbal or written bomb scare or threat:

1. Inform the Assistant Special Ed Director / Program Coordinator or your classroom teacher immediately.
2. The local fire department will be notified and informed that the fire alarm will be pulled to evacuate the building due to a bomb threat.
3. The fire alarm will be pulled.
4. The local police department will be notified to assist in determining the severity of the threat:
 - ⇒ serious - the caller or notes gives exact date, time, area, etc.
 - ⇒ less serious - the caller or note simply states that a bomb is in the building and gives very little details.
5. If it is determined that the threat is serious:
 - ⇒ Assistance will be requested from the bomb squad
 - ⇒ The Executive Director will be contacted.
6. If it is determined that the threat is less serious:
 - ⇒ The Executive Director will be contacted.
 - ⇒ A group of staff may conduct a search of the building.

(In the event that a suspicious object is located, it should not be handled, touched, or in any way disturbed. Call 911 for assistance from the bomb squad.)

PROCEDURES REGARDING STUDENT ILLNESS

One of the most difficult issues we face is caring for a child who becomes ill at school. If your child should become ill while at school, we **must** ask that you pick him / her up immediately even though we recognize that it is difficult for parents to miss work or to make alternative arrangements. The following criteria is used to determine if a child needs to be sent home:

- **Temperature** - If a child has a temperature exceeding 100 degrees F he / she will be sent home. Children who are sent home with a temperature may not return to school the following day. Children need to be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. This criteria may be different for students whose temperature is non-illness related.
- **Vomiting** - A child who is vomiting will be sent home, unless related to a documented feeding problem. The child **must** stay home until the vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours and the child is able to ingest a normal diet. Stomach viruses are very contagious and can spread through the school very easily.
- **Diarrhea** - A child who has more than one watery bowel movement (unless a typically chronic problem) will be sent home. Children may return to school once the diarrhea is under control for at least 24 hours and activity level and appetite are back to normal.

The criteria for exclusion when a child is infected with a contagious illness will vary according to each illness. The most commonly occurring illnesses for which we must exclude children are listed below. It is important that you alert the school if your child should become ill with any contagious illness or infection. It will help us to keep the school a healthy environment for everyone.

- **Conjunctivitis** - Conjunctivitis is an infection of the eye characterized by a yellow discharge, redness and tearing. Often eyes will be crusted over in the morning when the child wakes up. A child may not attend school with eye drainage. A pediatrician needs to be consulted and if an antibiotic is prescribed, the child must be treated for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Impetigo** - Impetigo is a bacterial skin infection characterized by crusted sores which usually appear first in the area of the face or at any opening in the skin. Children who develop impetigo need to be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school and have a physician's note.
- **Chickenpox** - Once a child has been exposed to chickenpox, the incubation period is anywhere from 10 days to 21 days. Once a child has broken out with the rash associated with the chickenpox, he / she may not attend school until all of the pox have scabbed over-at least five to seven days.
- **Ear Infections** - Ear infections are extremely common for some children. Although ear infections in and of themselves are not contagious, they are often accompanied by colds that are. Children who are being treated for ear infections may return to school as soon as they are able to participate fully in the school's activities.
- **Strep Throat** - Strep throat is often indicated by a sore throat and sometimes accompanied with an elevated temperature. This condition requires antibiotics. Children **must** be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Lice** - If a child is found to be infected, he / she will be sent home and require treatment with medicated shampoo. Instructions will be given by the school nurse to assist you with this process. After being treated, the child may return to school with a parent / guardian and will be checked by the school nurse. If the child is nit free, he / she may return to class. If you discover your child

has had lice, please contact the school. The school nurse will then check his / her class. We cannot eliminate the lice, but with everyone's cooperation, we hope to control it.

- **Antibiotics** - Any child started on antibiotic therapy for any type of contagious infection must be on the antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Rash** - If a child develops any rash of unknown origin, the child must be checked by the nurse. If the nurse deems it necessary that the child be seen by a doctor, then the child must have a note from the doctor stating that he / she may return to school.
- **Ring Worm** - Ring worm is a fungal skin infection which is typically characterized by a circular, red, raised, itchy rash. The child must be seen by a physician for treatment, and a doctor's note is required to return to school.

DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY

It is the policy of the Regional Alternative Program that drugs, alcohol and / or paraphernalia are prohibited on school property. The use of drugs and / or alcohol will not be tolerated in school. If a student is involved in, or reasonably suspected of being involved in, a drug related activity, immediate action will be taken.

A. Action taken for the first offense: (as related to substance abuse)

1. Student is asked to empty pockets.
2. If drugs and/or drug related items are found, police will be notified.
3. Parent / Guardian and school district special education director contacted.
4. Student receives a home time out for the remainder of the day with parent/guardian or responsible adult.
5. Re-admittance to school on the following day with a loss of privileges.

B. Actions taken for repeated offenses:

1. Student is asked to empty pockets; drug related items confiscated; police notified.
2. Parent / Guardian and school district special education director contacted.
3. Student receives a home time out for the remainder of the day with parent/guardian or responsible adult.
4. An IEP meeting will be convened to review the student's status and the ability of the NRIC program to meet the student's needs.
5. Continuation in the NRIC program may include a mandatory drug/alcohol awareness program which could be provided by either program staff or an outside agency.

Paraphernalia offenses will follow the Dangerous Weapons discipline procedure. **

BULLYING / TEASING / HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the Regional Alternative Program that each student enrolled in its program be free from bullying, teasing, and harassment.

Bullying occurs when a student, while at school, intentionally assaults, batters, threatens, harasses, stalks, menaces, intimidates, extorts, humiliates, or taunts another student. Bullying also occurs when a student or a group of students organize a campaign of shunning against another student or when a student or a group of students maliciously spread rumors about another student. In most circumstances, bullying shows evidence of a pattern of abuse over time in either singular or multiple incidences. Bullying usually does not include a mutual fight between two students of roughly equal strength who are angry with each other. Such fights are subject to discipline as a violation of school rules prohibiting fighting.

In the context of these regulations, the phrase at school includes the following places and situations:

- In a classroom
- Elsewhere in the school
- On school property
- Immediately adjacent to school property
- On a school bus or other school vehicle
- At school bus stops
- While students are walking to or from school
- At any school-sponsored activity or event, whether or not held on school premises.
- Cyberbullying and electronic bullying, including but not limited to telephone calls, text messages, e-mails, online communication, etc.

Action taken for first and/or repeated offense(s) may include:

1. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities
2. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities
3. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises
4. Loss of school bus transportation
5. Assignment of community service
6. Short term school suspension (10 or fewer days of suspension) or long term school suspension (suspension for more than 10 days) *
7. Admonitions, warnings, and counseling.

* **Note:** Must be done in concert with the sending school district.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

The responsibility of transporting students to and from each school every school day requires the cooperation of the parents / guardians of the students being transported. A complete understanding of the student's vested interest in school transportation is very helpful in aiding the school administrator to maintain a successful transportation program.

I. RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS

Students serviced by the school transportation system should be informed of their responsibilities.

II. RULES GOVERNING STUDENTS BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL BUSES

- A. Students being transported are under the authority of the driver and bus monitor.
- B. A time schedule shall be posted and it shall be followed.
- C. Students shall be on time both in the morning and evening.
- D. Students shall keep their hands, arms or heads within the vehicle.
- E. Students shall sit in available seats.
- F. Students shall remain seated during the entire bus run.
- G. Students must use the seat belts at all times.
- H. Students shall converse in normal tones; loud or vulgar language is prohibited.
- I. Students shall not open or close the vehicle windows without the permission of the driver.
- J. Students shall be courteous to the driver, to fellow students and passers by.
- K. Students shall refrain from damaging the vehicle and shall keep it clean.
- L. Students who refuse to promptly obey the directions of the driver or refuse to obey rules and regulations shall be subject to disciplinary action.
- M. Smoking on any vehicle is prohibited at all times.
- N. Students shall enter and exit vehicles at their designated stops.

III. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

In order for us to provide the student with a productive and safe educational experience, we look to work in cooperation with parents/guardians in the following:

- A. Cooperate with the school authorities and bus drivers in promoting efficient services.
 - 1. The purpose of school transportation is to provide safe, comfortable and economical transportation for those attending the Collaborative programs.
 - 2. Students shall be picked up and returned to their designated bus stops only.
 - 3. In cases where parents/guardians wish to take students home from undesignated stop for the purpose of removing the child.
- B. Make suggestions, in writing, to the transportation company and school for the improvement of school transportation.
- C. Use their influence in getting roads improved.
- D. Insure the cooperation of children with the authorities responsible for transportation. Parents/guardians should understand that students riding on school transportation vehicles must obey all regulations governing school transportation or shall be subject to disciplinary action.
- E. Bus complaints regarding routine, discipline and other matters, should be referred to the appropriate director of special education.

F. To listen to appropriate radio stations to determine when school is canceled.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR VIOLATION OF TRANSPORTATION RULES

- A. Bus warnings will be reviewed by classroom teacher and program coordinator to determine what, if any, consequences will be imposed.
- B. Continued infractions of bus rules may result in convening an IEP review with parent / guardian, school district representatives, transportation providers and NRIC staff. Goals, objectives, placement and related service needs will be reviewed and / or modified.
- C. Uncontrollable acts of aggression that pose safety issues for the bus driver may result in police intervention.

PROCEDURES REGARDING USE OF INTERNET

Acceptable Use Policy

The NRIC fully endorses the use of the Internet as an educational tool. Access to information, research sources, people, and computers throughout the world are available to students. The NRIC is committed to restricting access to questionable material and to limiting inappropriate use; however, control of all online activities is impossible. Therefore, all users who access the Internet through the NRIC are required to adhere to strict ethical and legal guidelines. If NRIC users violate any of these provisions, their access via the school may be terminated, and future access may be denied. In addition, an employee guilty of such violations will be subject to disciplinary action.

Student Compliance

I understand that access to the Internet from the NRIC must be in support of education and research, and I agree to the following:

I will refrain from accessing any news groups, links, listservs, or other areas of cyberspace that would be offensive to any students, teachers, or parents because of pornographic content; racial ethnic, or minority disparagement; advocacy of violence; or illicit/illegal content.

Accordingly, I am responsible for monitoring and appropriately rejecting materials, links, dialogue, and information accessed / received by me.

I accept responsibility for keeping copyrighted software from entering the work place via the Internet. Therefore, I must not download games, music, graphics, videos, or text materials that are copyrighted.

Plagiarism is unacceptable. Therefore, I accept responsibility for using downloaded text in an appropriate manner. Violation of copyright laws will not be tolerated. I will not post, distribute, or use without permission material that was created by someone else. Students are reminded that plagiarism is a reason for disciplinary action in the NRIC.

I will be courteous and use appropriate language, refraining from swearing, or using any forms of obscene, harassing, or abusive language. If I am a victim of such harassment, I will report the abuse immediately to an assistant, a teacher, or the coordinator. If another user asks that I no longer send him / her e-mail or in any way contact him / her, I will stop all contact immediately.

I will not reveal personal information including addresses and telephone numbers of myself or others.

I will not lend my account or password to others.

I will report all electronic mail messages relating to or in support of illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

I will never agree to meet face-to-face with someone that I have met online.

I understand that system operators will have access to all users' accounts, including e-mail.

If I am not sure how to do something on the computer, I will ask a teacher.

If I suspect a security problem related to my school's accounts or on the Internet, I will notify a teacher or coordinator. I will not demonstrate the problem to others.

I understand that any user legitimately identified as a security risk or with a history of problems with other computers systems may be denied access to the Internet through the NRIC.

I understand that any user attempting to maliciously harm or damage data of another user or an area of the Internet, including the introduction of computer viruses and the unauthorized use of debit or credit cards, will be denied access to the Internet through the NRIC.

Conclusion

I understand that the use of the Internet is a privilege and that inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges or disciplinary action. I further understand that teachers, coordinators, administration will deem what is inappropriate use and that their decisions are final. The teacher, coordinator, or administration may close the access of any user at any time as required by the administration.

The expectation of administration is that students at the NRIC will adhere to the above policies. We look forward to the expanding use of the Internet for learning.

The NRIC makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The NRIC will not be responsible for any damages a user may suffer, including loss of data. The Department will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this Internet connection.

Northern Rhode Island Collaborative (NRIC)

**Student Signature and Parental Consent Form
Student RINET Account**

*Note: If a student is too young to read the Acceptable use Policy, please provide assistance.
The purpose of the Acceptable Use Policy is to provide information, not to exclude anyone.*

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

School Name: _____ Teacher Name: _____

Date student completed Internet Test: _____

I have read the Acceptable Use Policy. I have completed the Student Internet Test. I understand if I follow the rules I may be allowed access to the Internet. If I do not follow the rules in the Acceptable Use Policy, my access privileges will be revoked.

Student endorsement: _____ Date: _____

PARENT CONSENT

I have read the RINET / Internet Acceptable Use Policy and the RINET Student Internet Test. I understand that the Internet is a world-wide group of hundreds of thousands of computer networks. I know that the NRIC does not control the content of these Internet networks. When using the Internet, I realize that students might read material that may be considered controversial or offensive.

Further, I understand that the NRIC makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The NRIC will not be responsible for any damages a user may suffer, including loss of data. The NRIC will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this Internet connection.

I hereby grant the NRIC permission to allow my child access to the Internet. I understand that my child may maintain this privilege as long as the procedures described in the Acceptable Use Policy are followed.

Parent or Guardian endorsement: _____

Date: _____

We hope this handbook provides some clear, concise guidelines as you begin your partnership with the staff at the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative.

We look forward to all of us working together and anticipate that this will be a significant and productive experience; WELCOME TO THE NORTHERN RHODE ISLAND COLLABORATIVE.

The Northern Rhode Island Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, or disability, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Adopted by Northern R. I. Collaborative 7/31/08

SIGNATURE SHEET

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Regional Alternative Program Handbook and that I have read the material within it. I am aware of and fully understand the program's rules and procedures and will do my best to respect them.

SIGNED:

Student

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date