

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Rochester Beacon Academy
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I. MISSION, VISION & SCHOOL HISTORY

The **Mission** of Rochester Beacon Academy, with the cooperation of parents, is to provide a safe learning community in a secondary (6-12) setting; respecting the individual and differentiated needs of learners, empowering them to reach their full potential and join their community with success.

RBA's **vision**, as the premiere educator in southeast Minnesota for all students, utilizes highly structured techniques to assist students who have difficulties with organization, socialization and sensory differences while supporting students to make a successful transition into young adulthood, to live independently and maintain engagement in the community.

Rochester Beacon Academy (RBA) was **founded** by a group of parents and educators who wanted another option for children in the Rochester area; one that honored different ways of learning and diverse minds. They also wanted the school to be one where their children could feel welcomed and safe. They were awarded Charter School status in January of 2014, and opened their doors to students in August of 2015.

II. SCHOOL REGULATIONS, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

504 NOTICE: Section 504 is an Act, which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program with Federal finance assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone whom: (1) Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more life activities including activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working; (2) Has the record of such an impairment; or (3) Is regarded as having such impairment. (34 Code of Federal Regulation Part 104.3). In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504, Rochester Beacon Academy recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and learners. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system. The school has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, provide access to appropriate educational services. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff at the school, he/she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also specifies rights related to education records. The Act gives the parent or guardian the right to: (1) Inspect and review his/her child's educational records; (2) Make copies of these records; (3) Receive a list of all individuals having access to those records; (4) Ask for an explanation of any item in the records; (5) Ask

for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate,

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misleading, or violates the child's rights and; (6) A hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

ACADEMIC CHEATING: It is important that each student does their own assignments and tests to maximize learning and to get true evaluations of their potential. If this does not occur, the school and teachers must address the situation. Teachers will award no credit for assignments and/or tests where cheating is indicated, however they will be given the opportunity to make it up. Repeated cheating offenses will be referred to the Executive Director or designee. Parents will be contacted when this occurs.

ADMISSIONS: RBA is a Minnesota Public Charter School whose authorizer is The Minnesota Guild. Any student who lives in the state of Minnesota may enroll. The Minnesota Statute 124E.06 Charter Schools, Subdivision 3 reads: A charter school shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, pupils must be accepted by lottery (policy #500). A charter school may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability. For more information on RBA's "Equal Education Opportunity Policy", please see policy #101 on our website. RBA provides a free public education, compliant with all Federal and State Education Standards.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND DISCRIMINATION: Rochester Beacon Academy is in compliance with state and federal laws prohibiting actions by employees or other persons acting in the name of or behalf of this district which exclude from participation in, deny benefits from, or discriminate in any educational program or activity because of the sex of the student. The school district will not discriminate against or harass any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO: RBA is a safe and drug free school zone. No RBA student shall knowingly possess, handle, use, transport, or be under the influence of any controlled substance on or off school property, including at school functions and events. This includes having a controlled substance in their vehicle. RBA is a tobacco free environment. No person shall at any time smoke, chew, or otherwise ingest tobacco or a tobacco product on RBA property, while on a field trip, or at a school sponsored activity away from the school. E-cigarettes are also prohibited. NOTE: RBA reserves the right to search persons, lockers, cars, backpacks, etc. on school property if there is probable cause. Searches will be conducted by administration.

ARRIVAL OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOL: The school day is from 7:20am-2:20pm Monday through Friday, unless otherwise noted on our school calendar. Students may arrive at school no earlier than 7:15am and must be picked up by 2:30pm. RBA does provide transportation, via Kids on the Go and Rochester Public Schools, to families who live within the Rochester Public School boundary.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: RBA expects and requires full-time attendance from its students. Any child under age 12 is considered truant if they miss one or more class periods over 7 days unexcused. If a child is between 12-16, they are considered truant if they miss three or more partial or full days unexcused. Anyone under 18 years of age who is habitually truant will be referred to the County Department of Social Services or other appropriate agency, after parent notification.

CALENDAR: The Board of Directors and Staff of RBA shall develop an annual school and board calendar. The calendars shall conform to the statutes and regulations of the State of Minnesota and any other agencies affecting public schools and their programs. The RBA School Board approves each calendar before being submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The school and board calendars can be found on our website.

DATA PRIVACY: The administration shall be responsible for maintaining and securing private and confidential student records. Student records may be reviewed only by written permission of the parent or the student (if the student is 18 years of age or older) except under the following circumstances: (1) When school officials have a legitimate educational interest in the student's records. (2) When student records are forwarded to other schools or post-secondary institutions to which the student transfers, applies for admission, or enrolls. (3) When the student's records are in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received. (4) When it is for educational research, with the permission of the administrator, researchers may review records and report information, which does not identify individual students. (5) To federal, state, and local authorities when such information is specifically required by law.

The school district may release, on an individual basis, what is termed student "Directory Information" which includes the following student information: student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, sex, major field of study, participation in officially organized activities and sports, weight and height, dates of attendance, grade levels completed, awards received and previous educational institutions attended.

If any parent, guardian or student (18 years of age or older) does not want this information to be released without prior written consent, they must notify

the administrator in writing. The following information must be included: (1) Name of student (2) Home address (3) School presently attended by student (4) Parent's legal relationship to student (5) Specific categories of directory information that will not be made public without the parent's prior written consent.

Student Behavior: The Behavior Expectation Policy (#508) is intended to promote consistent and fair treatment of all students. Students are expected to use appropriate language at school and at all school functions. Students are expected to refrain from drug and alcohol use including tobacco. Students are not to intentionally cause physical injury to any person. This includes, but is not limited to: intimidation, extortion, threatened assault, assault, fighting, harassment of any kind, bomb threats, false fire alarms, possession of a weapon (or look-a-likes) or hazing taking place on or off school property or at any school sponsored activity or event.

Corporal Punishment: Corporal punishment is prohibited by all employees upon a student to reform or penalize for unacceptable conduct. Corporal punishment is defined in Minnesota Statute 121A.58, Subdivision 1, as conduct involving hitting or spanking a person with or without an object, or unreasonable physical force that causes bodily harm or substantial emotional harm.

RBA is a CPI trained school that encourages a hands-off approach to student behavior. An employee who employs or observes corporal punishment or physical restraint upon a student must report the incident immediately to the Executive Director or designee.

Removal from Class: Students may be removed from class for willful conduct, which disrupts the rights of others to an education or a teacher's right to teach. Students can also be removed from class for willful conduct, which endangers school personnel, the student, other students, or the property of the school. A student may only be removed for the remainder of the day by the Executive Director or designee. If a student has been removed for the remainder of the day, this counts as a suspension. In order to help with a successful re-entry, arrangements may be made for a restorative circle on the day the student returns to class/school. The team will discuss restorative measures and/or further discipline.

Any student suspended for "the remainder of the day" must remain at school unless released to parent/guardian, or parent/guardian gives permission to release, the student is 18 years old, or the student has been emancipated and the school has documentation on file. The student shall remain in a designated area, with the designated administrator, until released. If a student should leave the building after being suspended for the remainder of

the day and has not been released, the parent/guardian should be notified immediately and procedures taken to ensure the student's safety.

During rare circumstances, for safety reasons, an area may have to be cleared for a student who is dysregulated. This decision requires that the Executive Director or designee be made aware and appropriate documentation occurs there after (Evacuation Form).

Trespassing: RBA only leases the following areas within the Church. Any student who goes into areas not described herein will be considered trespassing and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Office/Classroom #1, Classroom #2, Classroom #3, Classroom #4, Classroom #5, Staff/Lounge, Classroom #12, Classroom #13, Classroom #14, Classroom #15, Classroom #17, Classroom #18, Classroom #19, Storage Closet East Hall, Storage Closet West Hall, Lower Level East Hallway, Main Entrance/Foyer, Commercial Kitchen, Women/Girls Bathroom, Men/Boys Bathroom, Lower-level ADA Bathroom, Elevator, West Hall Stairway, Upper-level ADA Bathroom, Upper-level West Hallway.

If students leave school grounds without permission, staff may follow students for safety purposes. In addition, RBA may call the Non-Emergency Police number to provide assistance. Parents may be called when this occurs. Consequences could occur as a result of leaving school property.

Dress Code

Our school is dedicated to creating an environment that respects and includes all students. This dress code is crafted to encourage comfort, safety, and personal expression, and it avoids discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, or personal beliefs.

Inclusivity and Equality: The dress code applies to all students equally and is expressed in gender-neutral terms. It is designed to embrace our diverse student body and their varied identities and expressions.

Personal Expression: We encourage students to express their individuality and cultural heritage through their choice of attire, as long as it aligns with our focus on maintaining a respectful and education-centered environment.

Educational Focus: Our dress code is intended to support a respectful learning atmosphere. We aim to steer clear of regulating body image or personal appearance in a way that is intrusive or judgmental.

Clear Guidelines: Students can wear a variety of clothing, including t-shirts,

jeans, trousers, skirts, dresses, shorts, leggings, and shirts. Clothing should not feature messages or images that are violent (including weapons or guns), offensive, or discriminatory.

Accommodations: We recognize and accommodate cultural, and disability-related attire needs, among other special circumstances.

Safety and Comfort: The dress code places a priority on students' safety and comfort.

Consistent and Fair Enforcement: The dress code will be enforced in a manner that is consistent, respectful, and non-discriminatory. Any disciplinary actions for violations will focus on education and constructive dialogue.

Regular Review: We commit to regularly reviewing this policy, considering feedback from students, parents, and staff. Amendments will reflect the changing needs and values of our school community.

This policy is rooted in the belief that a non-restrictive, inclusive dress code is vital for the well-being and equality of our student body. We strive to balance individual expression with a harmonious and productive educational environment.

In order to respect the learning environment of those students with sensitivities to their surroundings, our building shall remain free of scented products. These products include, but are not limited to: perfume, cologne, aftershave, body spray, scented lotion, fragranced hair spray, room deodorizers, and air fresheners. For more information on RBA's "Fragrance Free Statement", please see policy #710 on our website.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS: RBA welcomes all students in grades 6 through age 21. RBA specializes in students with Executive Functioning Challenges, particularly Autism, and is well equipped to handle most student's needs. RBA will look closely at each student's needs if they wish to attend our charter school. Tours will be available at RBA and interested families should contact the office manager to schedule a tour.

Enrollment Lottery: When RBA has reached its capacity, a lottery will take place. The Lottery Policy #500 can be found on our website.

EMERGENCY DRILLS: Rochester Beacon Academy, in compliance with local and state regulations, maintains an emergency drill calendar. The school will conduct drills as required by law, which includes five lockdowns, five fires, and one tornado drill per academic year. In accordance with MDE RBA expects everyone to assume their share of responsibility for the safety of others. Specific directions on how to evacuate and lockdown

procedures are posted in each room and all staff members have copies of them in the RBA Crisis Plan.

FOOD: Hot lunch is provided by Byron Public Schools. Students who wish to bring their own lunch can do so. Microwaves are available for students to heat up their lunch. Both school breakfast and lunch are free to students. Breakfast is served from 7:15-7:45am daily. Money for extra food items should be given to the Receptionist at the beginning of each day.

All families must fill out an Application for Educational Benefits form.

Students are allowed to bring snacks to school. While we hope each student elects healthy snacks, this is not always the case. Please encourage students to make good food choices. Each teacher can designate when snacks are allowed in their classroom. If there are questions about this, please see the individual teacher. Water bottles are always permitted at RBA.

RBA is a closed campus for lunch. Students are not allowed to leave for lunch. No student may use a food delivery system at any point in the day (i.e. Doordash, Uber Eats, etc.). If a student has food delivered a staff member will put it in a refrigerator to be taken home at the end of the day. Parents can pick their child up and take them out to lunch if they so choose as long as they are gone during the designated lunch period. Failure to return to class on-time will result in tardiness.

GRADING: RBA uses a standardized grading scale. All grades are calculated based on student progress towards meeting the standards and/or understanding the content being taught in their courses. It is the goal of RBA that students maintain “satisfactory progress” in all subject areas. We understand that “satisfactory progress” is and should be an individualized benchmark for each student. If performance should drop below this standard, the student will be informed by the classroom teacher and strategies, along with possible modifications when applicable, will be discussed to promote success. If “satisfactory progress” does not result from implementation of these, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss other interventions and/or options.

If a student has an IEP with grading requirements, RBA is obligated to implement that system. It is the responsibility of the IEP case manager to inform the general education staff of the modified grading system. A student on an IEP is eligible to receive a pass/fail accommodation if it is written in the IEP. If a student is absent for a period of time due to their disability, the case manager is responsible for contacting the parent and the student with their missing work to ensure that they meet the academic requirements while absent. Any assignment not turned in after three weeks past the due date will automatically turn to a zero in the grade book.

Below is RBA's grading scale and cutoffs:

| | | |
|----------|--------------|----------|
| 0 | 1 2 3 | 4 |
|----------|--------------|----------|

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| 0-59% | 60-69% 70-79% 80-89% | 90+% |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| F | D C B | A |
| <p>No attempt made by the student--in this case staff must attempt to gather the necessary information in an alternative format.</p> | <p>Doesn't meet/ understand content or standard</p> <p>Can meet or show understanding of content/ standard with support</p> <p>Meets content or standard independently</p> | <p>Meets content or standard independently and can apply the content</p> |

HANDBOOK PURPOSE: This handbook is intended to promote consistent and fair treatment of all students in an atmosphere of open communication, self-discipline, and clearly understood rules and regulations. To the best of our knowledge, it complies with the Minnesota Department of Education.

HARASSMENT INCLUDING BULLYING:

Policy #506: Rochester Beacon Academy (RBA) ISD #4238 is committed to protecting its students and employees from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination, as defined herein is prohibited. RBA believes that all students and employees are entitled to a safe, equitable and harassment free school experience. Bullying, harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. This policy shall be interpreted and applied consistently with all applicable state and federal laws.

Awareness: This policy is included in both the Family Handbook and Employee Handbook. At the beginning of each school year, this policy will be

reviewed with all students and staff of Rochester Beacon Academy.

Definition: “Bullying” shall be defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as: unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture by an adult or student that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage; causing discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfering with the individual’s school performance or participation, and is carried out repeatedly. Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

- Cyberbullying
- Cyberstalking
- Destruction of school or personal property
- Intimidation
- Physical violence
- Public humiliation
- Rumors or spreading of falsehoods
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Social exclusion
- Stalking
- Theft
- Threats
- Unwanted teasing

Expectations: Rochester Beacon Academy expects students and employees to conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and staff. The investigation of a reported act of bullying begins with the report of such an act.

Any **student** who believes he/she is a victim of bullying (or any individual who has knowledge of any incident involving bullying) is strongly encouraged to report the incident verbally or in writing to any member of the staff who in turn must notify the Executive Director or designee. Any person witnessing an act of bullying must report said incident to the Executive Director or designee in a timely manner. The Executive Director or designee must document all complaints in writing and investigate as deemed appropriate.

Any **employee** who believes he/she is a victim of bullying (or any individual who has knowledge of any incident involving bullying) is strongly encouraged to report the incident verbally or in writing to the Human Rights Officer - Cat Clendenning. Any person witnessing an act of bullying towards staff must report said incident to the Human Rights Officer in a timely manner. The Human Rights Officer must document all complaints in writing. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, a report should be made to the

School Board Chair who shall address the complaint.

Resolution: If the alleged victim requests or agrees to an informal resolution of the matter, a restorative circle will be convened to address the issue. If, through this method, the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the alleged victim, they may request a formal resolution. If the alleged victim requests a formal resolution of the matter, a teaming will take place involving the Executive Director or designee, the accused, the accused parent/guardian and members of the accused student support team. All evidence related to the incident will be presented and reviewed with the team and a determination made. Determinations made may include, but are not limited to:

- Counseling and support to address the needs of the alleged victim
- Counseling interventions to address the behavior of the accused ●
- Intervention which includes assistance and support to parents ●
- Evaluation of school culture and accompanying interventions ●
- Suspension or expulsion of accused

All details of the team meeting, as well as the determination, will be documented and signed by all parties.

The school board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be determined by the Executive Director or designee after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

Definition: Harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with an individual's performance, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment. The basis for harassment may be any protected class, including age, creed, color, disability, national origin, race, marital status, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

One particular category of harassment – sexual harassment – consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with an individual's employment or education, or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working or learning environment. It also includes situations where submission to such behavior affects decisions about the individual's employment or education. Sexual harassment may be directed to members of the same or opposite sex. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- teasing or joking of a sexual nature, sexual name calling, making references to past or present sexual activity, spreading sexual rumors, or making derogatory or dehumanizing sexual remarks
- subtle pressure for sexual activity

- intentional brushing against a person's body
- display of offensive pictures, posters, or other graphics
- leering, inappropriate patting or pinching, and other forms of unwelcome touching
- otherwise creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment

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Procedure: Any member of the RBA school community who experiences or witnesses sexual or protected class harassment is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely but firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly or if a request to stop is not respected, he or she should report the incident to the Executive Director or designee. In the case of a complaint against the Executive Director, the incident should be reported to the School Board Chair.

1. The Executive Director or designee will assume responsibility for investigation of all complaints, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or protected class harassment. Based on the investigation, appropriate action, including, but not limited to counseling, disciplinary warnings, or other disciplinary recommendations will be completed.
2. The complainant, the alleged harasser, and their parents/guardians (if either is a minor) will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, preferably in writing. In cases involving minors, a report to the Child Protection Agency or to the police will be filed if required by state law. (See Child Abuse Policy)
3. The alleged harasser will be warned, preferably in writing, that retaliation or intimidation directed towards anyone who makes a complaint or assists in the investigatory process will not be tolerated. The complainant should be invited to report recurrences or retaliation, and the situation monitored as the Executive Director or designee deems appropriate.

HEALTH OFFICE: RBA employs a Licensed School Nurse and health paraprofessional. Students are encouraged to benefit from the health office's services. If at any time you wish to reach the school nurse, please call 507-258-5351 ext: 106. RBA's health office is responsible for the maintenance of health records, including immunizations, health screenings, health related counseling and referrals, health education resources, classroom presentations, medication distribution, as well as community referrals for medical and dental care.

Minnesota state law requires all students entering RBA must have proof of **immunizations** or file a legal exemption with the school. Students are not allowed to attend school without proof of immunizations. A parent/guardian

may file a medical exemption signed by a health care provider or conscientious objection signed by a parent/guardian and notarized. Immunizations required are two MMRs (measles, mumps, and rubella), three Hepatitis B shots, three doses of Polio, at least three DTaP/DT/Td (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis), and one Td/DT required after age 7. New and transfer students have 30 days to provide proof of immunizations according to state

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law. Any questions, please contact RBA's health office. Families will also be asked if they have received the COVID-19 vaccinations and to provide documentation.

Administration of Student Medication is overseen by a licensed school nurse (from the Minnesota Visiting Nurses Association) pursuant to State Law. Staff assigned to the health office have been properly trained to administer medication with this oversight. A Physician Order for Medication **and** Parent/Guardian Authorization form needs to be completed for any and all medications to be dispensed at school. All medication (prescription or over-the-counter) must be kept in the health office. The only exception, with approval from the Health Office Staff and parents, is for students who have an inhaler or epipen.

Emergency care plans must be in place for all students with serious illnesses, such as diabetes, asthma, allergies to food or latex, seizures, bee stings, or any life-threatening health condition.

Some students require administration of medications or medical procedures to be performed during the regular school day. In those situations, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Physician Order for Medication **and** Parent/Guardian Authorization form completed and on-file with the school before any medications will be dispensed by RBA staff.
2. Prescription medications must be provided in the original pharmacy container with a current label. Prescription medications brought to school in any other container will not be administered. Questions regarding dosage and administration of the medications will be directed to the prescribing physician or the parent/guardian, at the discretion of RBA staff.
3. Over-the-counter preparations must be provided in the original labeled container. Over-the-counter prescriptions, ex: Aspirin, Ibuprofen or Tylenol, will only be administered to a student according to the label directions, unless contrary written directions from a physician are provided.
4. When use of a medication has ceased, or is no longer needed by the student, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to collect unused

medications from the school. Any unused medications will be disposed of by the school upon the written request of the parent/guardian or at the end of the school year.

Students may not share medications with anyone. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken if necessary, upon a determination by the Executive Director, after an investigation that a violation of this policy has taken place.

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Occasionally **students become ill** while at school. If your child needs to go home, the Health Office Staff will contact a parent/guardian. If staff are unable to reach parents and determine that the student must go home, the emergency contacts will then be called. It is important for parents to have the emergency contact list updated and that person is available during the day. Your child will not be allowed to leave school without contacting an adult first.

When a student is sick, parents often wonder whether or not to keep a child at home from school. If a child stays home and has the care he/she needs when first sick, he/she will often get better faster. Staying home and resting will help the body fight the sickness. Staying at home is also one of the best ways to keep others from becoming ill.

Reasons why children should stay at home:

1. Severe colds, coughs, or sore throats
2. Eye infections, especially if discharge is present
3. New skin rashes, especially if draining—unless medical opinion states rash is not contagious
4. Temperature of 100° or more **with or without symptoms of an illness**
5. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain
6. Any other signs of acute illness
7. Until results of laboratory tests (i.e., throat culture, nasal swab) are known.

Children may return to school when they are:

1. Well enough to participate in normal school activities
2. **Free of all symptoms for 24 hours** (i.e. has not vomited, had diarrhea, abdominal pain in 24 hours)
3. Temperature remains normal for a 24-hour period **without the use of fever reducing medications.**
4. On an antibiotic for at least 24 hours
5. Your health care provider states your child can return to school.

It is often very difficult to decide whether it is really necessary to keep your child home. There are no sure rules to follow as we are dealing with variables. Hopefully, the above guidelines will be helpful to you in making this decision.

COVID-19 Guidelines:

As a school, we are following the CDC's guidelines, which are ever changing. Please call the health office for the latest information.

Please see Appendix A for our procedure on Pediculosis (Head Lice)

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: The following rights will apply to all students and staff at Rochester Beacon Academy and are in effect the entire school day,

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including travel to and from school. (1) The right to develop one's personality (so long as it does not interfere with the rights of others) without disrespectful criticism or pressure from cliques. (2) The right to be free from physical abuse and from mental abuse such as name calling, intimidation, or harassment. The right to be treated with respect is of utmost importance. (3) The right to be free from mockery or discrimination because of race, sex, religion, physical strength, size, features, friendship groups, age, culture, handicap, financial status, clothing, classroom performance, etc. (4) The right to an education – which means that teachers should be free to teach and students free to learn – without being interrupted by inconsiderate or unruly students. (5) The right to have personal and school property respected. Our school community should be a safe place for people and property.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS: In order to create a consistent learning environment for all RBA students, appointment times are encouraged outside of school hours. If a student needs to leave RBA for any reason during school hours, notice must be given to the school office at: 507-258-5351 Ext: 106 or office@rochesterbeaconacademy.org. Students must be signed out by a parent or guardian.

If students leave school grounds without permission, staff may follow students for safety purposes. In addition, RBA may call the Non-Emergency Police number to provide assistance. Parents may be called when this occurs. Discipline could occur as a result of leaving school property.

RESTORATIVE APPROACH: RBA is a Restorative School Community. The Restorative approach is not punitive in nature and is used to repair harm done by someone within our school community. Participation is required if staff deem a circle to be necessary. Circles may be used frequently in our school.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS: The decision to close school is never taken lightly. Every attempt will be made to close school prior to 5:30 am. In the event that school must be delayed or closed because of inclement weather, families will receive an email. An announcement will also be posted on our website and Facebook. In addition, we will post on the following TV stations: KTTC & KAAL. At the time of notification, staff and families will

know if it is an online learning day or a flex day.

RBA serves students from multiple school districts. If the student's district of residence is delayed or closed, the student should consider themselves delayed or closed as well. In these cases, the student will be excused for attendance purposes.

SEARCH OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS: RBA may search students, their possessions and their lockers for items that may be harmful to themselves, to others or items that are prohibited from being on school grounds. Consent of

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the student is not required prior to the search. All searches will be based upon reasonable suspicion that items that may be harmful to the student or others or that items that are prohibited from being on school grounds may be found. Student searches must be authorized and conducted by the Executive Director and/or their designees. One additional staff member must be present during a search of a student, their possessions or their locker. Depending on what is found during a given search, discipline may occur.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: Special Education is a continuum of services available to eligible students with disabilities. Guided by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Minnesota regulations, RBA ensures all special education students receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). This is guided by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) development process, which results in a comprehensive, legal plan addressing needs specific to the individual student. Each student with an IEP has a case manager who will oversee their plan and subsequent due process rights. These people serve as the point of contact for students with special education needs. Per law, RBA employs a Special Education Director.

STUDENT DRIVERS: Students who have a valid driver's license and vehicle insurance are allowed to drive to and from school. However, driving to and from school is a privilege. Student drivers are expected to follow the laws and regulations for safe driving, including driving slowly in our parking lot. Students who fail to follow the rules may have their drive-to-school privileges taken away.

STUDENT RECORDS: Parents and students have the right to examine their school records. The request should be made to the Executive Director or designee. If a student is 18 years of age or older, he/she can request, in writing, that the parent/guardian receive no communication from RBA. RBA will communicate (report cards, mailings, emails, phone calls, etc.) with the parent/guardian for all enrolled students, unless otherwise instructed by the appropriate form being filled out by the student and on file. For more information regarding privacy of student records, please see policy #502 on our website.

TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONICS USAGE: The use of personal electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, or other communication devices is at the discretion of each classroom teacher and should only be used for educational and non-gaming purposes. All electronic equipment should be used for educational purposes only. All students shall use the Internet in a responsible and safe manner. Misuse of the Internet, Chromebooks, digital cameras, personal electronics, etc. may result in loss of use of the electronic device for the remainder of the day or more, depending on the seriousness of the offense. The device being returned may be given to either the student or their parent/guardian. Students in grades 6-12 may

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use their personal devices before school and at lunch. Students may not take selfies, post on snapchat, take videos, and they must be willing to show any staff their phone when asked. Repeated misuse will result in a parent meeting and a possible ban on specific students bringing personal devices to school.

TESTING: Each year, the State of Minnesota requires all public schools to take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs). Dates will be posted on our website before the first day of the school year. Families do have the right to Opt Out their child should they so choose. Please discuss this option with your child's case manager or the Executive Director or designee.

TRANSPORTATION: RBA is contracting with Rochester Public Schools to provide transportation through Kids on the Go Transportation. More information will be forthcoming about routes and times during the 1:1 Back to School Meetings.

VISITORS: Volunteers are welcomed in our school. All visitors must sign in at the front office upon arriving. If interested in helping out at RBA, please speak to the office manager to sign-up for hours, as well as completing volunteer paperwork.

Students are not to have visitors during the school day, including students from other schools. In addition, due to the vulnerable population we serve, shadowing your own child is prohibited. Parents are welcome to come to lunch with their child during their designated lunch period.

VIOLENT STUDENT NOTIFICATION: According to Policy #529, staff who have a legitimate educational interest, are notified in writing of students who have a history of violent behavior. Per that same Policy, we must inform parents annually of this requirement.

III. SIGNATURES

PARENT PERMISSION: Please check the boxes you agree with. Sign and return this page to RBA by your child's first day of school.

FIELD TRIP: I give permission for my child to attend scheduled classroom field trips.

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HANDBOOK: I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the material contained in the Rochester Beacon Academy Family Handbook.
PHOTO RELEASE: I authorize Rochester Beacon Academy to use photographs of my child for educational and marketing purposes. This includes video photography.

Signature & Date Family Signature & Date _____ Student

Appendix A:

PEDICULOSIS (Head Lice) GUIDELINES

When a student has been identified as having head lice, the following steps will be used:

1. The parent/guardian will be notified their child has head lice and needs to be treated at home.
2. A head lice fact sheet with effective treatment plan options will be sent home with the parent/guardian. These instructions include using over the counter lice killing treatments, proper daily nit/lice removal, thorough house cleaning, and laundering of clothes and bedding. They also include the recommended time frame for a second treatment.
3. Students may return to school the next day after treatment and with no live lice remaining.
4. The health office will respond to parent questions and requests and examine children individually or by classroom as deemed necessary.
5. The health office may send notification to teachers or parents who have children in a class where a student was treated for head lice.
6. Teachers and parents will receive recommended preventative guidelines to follow through school newsletters and resources from the health office website.

Appendix B:

ROCHESTER BEACON ACADEMY- RBA POLICY No. 710 FRAGRANCE FREE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

Fragranced products can cause some people with chronic illnesses to suffer additional symptoms and medical expenses. Symptoms include asthma, allergies, sinus problems, rhinitis, and migraine headaches. Given that chemically sensitive individuals may react to different fragranced products with widely varying degrees of severity, it is very difficult to ensure a consistently comfortable and accommodating learning and work environment. However, it is the intent of the Rochester Beacon Academy (RBA) to minimize the difficulties experienced in the school building by employees, students, parents, and community members subject to chemical and fragrance sensitivities.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The RBA building shall remain free of scented products. These products include but are not limited to: perfume, cologne, aftershave, body spray, scented lotion, fragranced hair spray, room deodorizers, and air fresheners.

III. NOTIFICATION OF POLICY VIOLATION

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Notification of violation of this policy shall be submitted to the RBA Director.

IV. NOTICE

This policy shall appear in the student handbook, and notice will be posted in all classrooms, common rooms, and on the front door of the RBA building.

APPENDIX C: Policy References

For further information on the items mentioned above, please visit our website at: rochesterbeaconacademy.org for expanded policy details.

Admissions Policy #500

Anti-Hazing Policy #507

Attendance Policy #501

Background Check Policy #402

Data Privacy Policy #403 and #502

Discipline Policy #508

Discrimination Policy #408

Title IX Coordinator is Karissa Wilson

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Dress Code Policy #509

Fragrance Free Policy #710

Harassment/Bullying Policy #506

Internet Usage Policy #521

Health Policy #414

Prohibition Against Unfair Discrimination Practices in Education and Grievances #505

Search Belongings Policy #518

Section 504 Policy #515

Student Records Policy #502 and #503

Technology Policy #421 and #422

Transportation Policy #803

Violent Student Behavior Policy #529