

2005-2006 LAE Handbook

Ridgeview Academy Charter School

A Service of Adelphoi USA



*Our mission is to provide students
with an education that creates
opportunities for academic
success and empowers them with
the ability to create meaning in
their lives.*

Latrobe Alternative Education Program

- LOCATION:** Ridgeview Academy Charter School—Annex
1120 Village Way
Latrobe, PA 15650
Phone: 724.537.9110
FAX: 724.537.9114
- WEB ADDRESS:** www.ridgeviewacademy.org
- ENROLLMENT:** Tara Achtziger, Education Supervisor
Sherri Holler, Chief Executive Officer
Beth Butala, Guidance Counselor
Nicole Myers, Special Education Supervisor
- TRANSPORTATION:** Provided by the home school district if within a 10 mile radius of Ridgeview Academy.

PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the Latrobe Alternative Education Program is to spark the interest and positive attitudes in students who have had negative experiences in education. Our alternative approach to dealing with these students provides an environment in which the students are able to experience success. This, in turn, builds the students self-confidence which will stimulate personal effort

TREATMENT

Verbal praise/Phone calls home
Time-outs
Token Economy System
Role-plays
Contingency Contracting
Individual Counseling
Family Sessions/ Counseling
Problem solving
Conflict Resolution Sessions
Weekly Evaluation
Weekly Goals
Drug and Alcohol Awareness
Career Development
Personal Effectiveness Course
Resources for Success Course

CONSEQUENCES

Redirection
Hold accountable
Not earning privileges
Removal from situation
Disciplinary Referral
Phone calls home
In-school suspension
Out-of-school suspension
Bus Privileges suspended
Police Involvement
Charges filed

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Students are frequently praised for appropriate behavior. For inappropriate behavior, the students use problem-solving techniques to devise and learn alternative responses to situations. It is the student's responsibility to then carry out the plan. During evaluations each student is encouraged to take ownership for the behaviors teachers and /or peers held them accountable. By not accepting responsibility, the student may not earn privileges until ownership is taken,

All positive, appropriate choices, including the choice to be responsible for mistakes, are rewarded by the opportunity to earn privileges and the continued involvement in the program.

Certain behaviors warrant a standard disciplinary action.

- * 1 day of detention for swearing, negative, or racial comments
- * 2 days of detention for horseplay actions
- * Minimum of 1 day out of school suspension for threatening physical violence
- * Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension for fighting on school property

All disciplinary actions will be decided at the discretion of the faculty member present. It is the responsibility of the faculty and administration to determine if police involvement is necessary

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Each student will have an opportunity to receive individual instruction with additional assistance made available when it is required. This structure, in turn, establishes the groundwork needed to achieve two objectives:

1. To promote learning and academic success.
2. To establish a sense of community that promotes taking responsibility for oneself and develops appropriate problem solving and interaction skills.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT RIGHTS

Human rights and equal opportunity are intended for every citizen according to the United States Constitution. Laws are designed to protect individual and group rights. They work well if everyone (1) knows the law and (2) respects and obeys the laws. Students and staff are encouraged to become familiar with the items outlined below.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the primary goals is to assist students in becoming responsible citizens and to heighten the growth of each individual person as well as the total school community. To achieve this end, students must:

- A. Assume responsibility for regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration and faculty the responsibility to develop the school's climate that is conducive to effective learning and living.
- B. Not interfere with the education of fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the right of teachers, staff, students, administrators and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- C. Express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.
- D. Assume, but not necessarily limit their responsibility to the following:
 1. an awareness of compliance with the state and local laws.
 2. assisting the school staff in operating a safe school for all students.
 3. an awareness of all rules and regulations for students.
 4. understanding that a rule is in full effect until it is waived, altered or repealed.
 5. attending school daily and be on time to all classes and school functions.
 6. pursuing satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by state and local authorities.
 7. dressing and grooming themselves so as to meet fair standards of safety and health so as not to cause substantial disruption to the educational process.
 8. arranging for make up work missed during an excused absence from school.
 9. providing information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
 10. exercising proper care in the use of public facilities and equipment.
 11. refraining from written and verbal use of indecent or abusive language.
 12. avoiding any inaccuracies in student publications.

DRESS CODE

1. Shorts will be properly fitting around the waist, without holes, and hemmed.
2. T-shirts must be intact without cuts and holes. Pictures and words must be positive. T-shirts will cover the stomach. No tank tops, halter-tops, tube tops, see through mesh clothing or any item of clothing that exposes the shoulder or midriff.
3. Jeans/slacks must be properly fitting around the waist. Clothing that is of the spandex type or form fitting is prohibited.
4. Hats/bandannas (on any part of the body) are not permitted. Students are not permitted to wear hats, hoods, sweatbands or any head covering in the building.
5. Jewelry worn as a result of body piercing is prohibited. (i.e. nose piercing, etc.)
6. Outer clothes (coats, hats, etc.) need to be removed at the beginning of the school day. Clothing designed for outside weather will not be worn in the building (including nylon jackets) under ordinary circumstances.
7. Skirts and shorts must be at least fingertip length when standing.
8. Chains of any nature and spiked jewelry or jewelry creating hazards are prohibited.
9. Articles of clothing which hinder or impede the educational process are prohibited.
10. Any article (clothing, patches, buttons, pins, accessories) cannot advertise alcohol, drugs or have inappropriate suggestive writing.
11. Sleeveless shirts/dresses are permitted to be worn. The straps must be at least 2 inches and form fitting under the arms (articles with cut off sleeves as well as tank tops are not permitted).

If there is any question as to the appropriateness of dress, the faculty member present will make the final determination. Students not conforming to the dress code will be subject to the discipline policy.

MEDICATION POLICY

1. Prescribed medication: Students who must take prescribed medication during school hours will comply with the following school regulations:
 - * Written orders from a physician must include the name of the medication, date, dosage, and the time the medication is to be taken. A physician's written order must accompany any change from the original prescription.
 - * Written permission must be provided by the parent/guardian requesting that Ridgeview Academy comply with the physician's orders.

Medication must be brought to school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Request a labeled container from your pharmacist for school use, which should contain only the number of pills to be dispensed at school. All prescription medication sent to the school must be accompanied by a note indicating the number of pills in the bottle. If there is a discrepancy in the count, the parent will be notified by a faculty member.

2. All prescribed medication will be double-locked with a staff member responsible for logging all information. The faculty member will be responsible for monitoring the self-administration of all medications. The student is responsible for self-administering the medication.

If any of the above expectations are not followed, medication will not be dispensed.

TOBACCO POLICY

For purpose of this policy, “smoking” shall mean all use of tobacco products, including cigars, cigarettes, pipes, chewing tobacco, and snuff.

In order to protect students and staff from the safety hazards of smoking and from an environment noxious to nonsmokers, Ridgeview Academy Charter School prohibits smoking by students in school buildings, on the bus or their loading areas, at school sponsored activity, or on any school property at any time.

Possession of smoking materials and /or smoking paraphernalia by students, is not permitted in school buildings, on the bus or their loading areas, at any school-sponsored activity, or on the school property at any time.

Any violation of this policy shall subject the student to discipline in accordance with statutes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; all violations of this policy will be referred to the local magistrate for prosecution and shall be punishable by a civil fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00). Additional consequences may be administered as deemed appropriate by school personnel.

BUS REGULATIONS

Violations occurring on school buses are subject to the same policies as if they happened on school grounds.

Safe school bus transportation means a team of people working together using the same rules. The most important member of the team is the student. To do his/her job, he/she needs self-discipline, independence and training.

1. Whenever possible, stand on the berm at least ten feet from the roadway or at the bus waiting station when waiting for the bus.
2. Wait in an orderly manner and avoid horseplay at the bus stop.
3. Be on time, but avoid arriving at the bus stop too early before the bus is due. Students are expected to be at the bus stop five minutes before and after the scheduled arrival time of the bus.
4. Enter and leave the bus with minimum of disturbance to others.
5. Remain seated until the bus stops before departing.
6. Permission to open bus windows must first be obtained from the driver.
7. Keep all objects, as well as your head and arms, inside the bus at all times.
8. Avoid excessively loud talking and shouting. Keep your conversations to your immediate seating area.
9. Profane language will not be tolerated.
10. Fighting may be a cause for immediate withdrawal of bus riding privileges.
11. Smoking or possession of any tobacco product is not permitted on the bus.
12. Violation of any of the above rules and regulations will be reported to school officials for disciplinary action.
13. Bus drivers may apply their own rules to food, drink, radios/CD and cassette headphone apparatus.
14. Students are not permitted to ride other buses.

PROHIBITED BUS CONDUCT

1. Failure to obey the driver.
2. Failure to remain seated.
3. Throwing objects in or out of the bus.
4. Fighting.
5. Placing any part of the body outside of the bus window.
6. Possession or use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol.
7. Possession of a weapon.
8. Unauthorized use of emergency doors or windows.
9. Vandalism of bus.
10. Use of matches, lighters, or any other combustible item.
11. Use of vulgar language or obscene gestures.
12. Any conduct with unreasonably annoys or disrupts other students or the driver or which affects the safe and orderly transportation to and from school.

DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE

The bus driver should ordinarily handle the initial disciplinary response for student misconduct. The driver may utilize disciplinary measures to correct the problem including conferring with the student, changing the student's seat, or other measures approved by the building administrator.

Where the bus driver's actions have failed to correct the student misconduct or where the misconduct is so serious as to warrant immediate intervention, the bus driver will complete a School Bus Incident Report and submit the report to the building administrator for further action.

1. First School Bus Incident Report Submission: Student's bus privileges suspended for 3 days.
2. Second School Bus Incident Report Submission: Student's bus privileges suspended for 5 days.
3. Third School Bus Incident Report Submission: Student's bus privileges suspended for the remainder of the year.

Parents / guardians will be notified prior to suspension of bus transportation privileges. Students serving bus transportation suspensions are not excused from attending school. Parents / guardians will provide the transportation.

RIDING IN AUTOMOBILES

Students may have the privilege of riding to school in automobiles if they receive parental permission. All automobiles on school property must follow safe driving habits or will no longer be permitted on the property regardless of parental permission. Riding in automobiles is a privilege that can be revoked if problems occur. **STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO DRIVE TO RIDGEVIEW ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL.**

ATTENDANCE

Each student is required to attend school on a regular basis. A student may be excused from classes because of student illness, a death in the immediate family, order of the student's physician, or impassable roads. For all absences the parent or guardian must furnish Ridgeview Academy Charter School with a written excuse stating the date and reason for absence. **The excuse must be received within three (3) days of a student's return to school. Failure to submit an excuse will result in the absence, no matter how legitimate, being classified as unlawful or unexcused.** Make-up work will **not** be permitted for an unexcused/unlawful absence.

Please note:

- Poor attendance will result in lack of permission to participate in activities, field trips, or educational trips.
- After a student accumulates 20 absences, excused or unexcused, Ridgeview Academy Charter School will only accept a doctor's excuse as a legal or excused absence.

REPORTING STUDENT ABSENCE

Parents/ guardians are reminded to notify Ridgeview Academy if their child will be absent. They can notify the school before school opens by leaving a message on the answering machine. Please speak clearly, giving the student's full name. ALL calls must be made prior to 9:00 a.m. This phone call does not take the place of the written excuse. Frequently, the school will contact the homes of students who are absent and for whom no notification was received. The intent of this procedure is to insure an efficient and effective means for knowing who is absent from school as early as possible. Please call 724-537-9110 to report absences.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND LAW

PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND STUDENTS ARE URGED TO READ THE ATTENDANCE POLICY CAREFULLY. THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID NEGLIGENCE, WHICH MAY RESULT IN VIOLATIONS. SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES CAN OCCUR FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY.

Public School Code of 1949

Pupils and Attendance

Section 1333 (24 PS 13-1333) Penalties for Violation of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Act 29 of Special Session #1 of 1995 extensively revises provisions for truancy. The law raises the fine placed on parents for truancy to \$300 and requires parents to pay court costs or be sentenced to complete a parenting education program. Under the act, both the truant child and the parents would have to appear at a hearing by the district justice. If the parents show that they took reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the child, they will not be convicted of a summary offense. If the parents are not convicted and the child continues to be truant, the child will be fined up to \$300 or be assigned to an adjudication alternative program.

Other provisions allow a district justice to suspend a sentence given to a parent or child if the child is no longer habitually truant. A district justice may order the parents to perform community service for up to six months. The law grants to state, municipal, port authority, transit authority, housing authority, or school police powers as attendance officers and home and school visitors.

In addition, Act 29 removes from truant juveniles their vehicle operating privileges for 90 day (first offense) and six months (second offense), commencing upon their 16th birthday. Finally, students and parents involved with home education programs are exempt from the provisions of the act.

Attendance involves a sequential continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experience, and study in order that students attain the planned educational objective. Student interaction with one another and participation in planned learning activities under the supervision of school personnel are vital to the learning process.

PENALTY FOR UNLAWFUL ABSENCE

1. First Notice—When a student has accumulated three (3) days of unlawful absence as verified by school personnel, the parent / guardian is served with the First Offense Notice. The First Offense Notice is a warning.
2. Second Notice—After the First Offense letter is served, the next unlawful student absence during the term becomes a second offense. Ridgeview Academy will file the case with the district magistrate who may arrest the parent / guardian for a violation of the compulsory school attendance law. If found guilty a fine may be imposed.
3. Third Notice—Subsequent unlawful absences will result in a complaint being filed with the Westmoreland County Juvenile Services.

EARLY DISMISSALS

If a student needs to be dismissed early from school for an appointment, the student is required to bring a written excuse from a parent / guardian and have the parent / guardian call the school between 7:30 a.m and 8:30 a.m. the DAY OF THE EARLY DISMISSAL. A message may be left on the machine the day before. The excuse must indicate the following:

1. Student's name
2. Reason for early dismissal
3. Time of discharge from school and return time
4. Transportation arrangements
5. Phone number where parent / guardian may be contacted

PLEASE NOTE: No student will be permitted to leave the building for an early dismissal if a parent / guardian has not been contacted. Parents must enter the building and sign the register before your child may leave the building.

TARDINESS

Students must arrive and be present in their homerooms by 8:15 a.m. Students arriving after this time will be considered tardy. Reasons acceptable for tardiness follow the same guidelines used for excused absences. All tardy days require a note from a parent / guardian. If a student has accumulated five (5) unexcused tardy days, he/she will earn one detention. Further disciplinary action will be taken with continued occurrences.

REPORT PERIODS AND GRADES

A system of grading has been established in which each student receives computerized report cards indicating percentage grades for that period. Ridgeview Academy issues report cards every nine weeks on specified dates.

All subjects will be assigned a percentage grade. Percentage grades and the corresponding letter values are indicated below.

A collaborative effort between school and parent / guardian is essential for the student to experience success. Students are evaluated on a mid term and quarterly basis. The mid term report documents student progress half-way through the quarter. The quarterly progress report is the student's report card.

Coding Information

Percentage Grade	Letter Grade
93-100%	A
85-92%	B
75-84%	C
62-74%	D
Under 61%	F

Final grades will be determined by percentage averages.

Any student who receives a 62% or better as a final grade has successfully passed the class.

Students in grades 6, 7, 8 will be promoted or retained based on their academic performance. In order to be promoted a student may not fail more than 2 core content classes.

Students in grades 9—12 will be promoted based on credit accumulation. In order to be seated in the following grades at Ridgeview Academy, students must accumulate the following credits:

- 5 credits to be seated in 10th grade (sophomore)
- 10 credits to be seated in 11th grade (junior)
- 16 credits to be seated in 12th grade (senior)

Each school district has its own guidelines for credit accumulation.

All financial and disciplinary obligations must be satisfied before the final report card is given to the students.

INCOMPLETE WORK

If course work is incomplete in any subject, a grade of "I" is issued. If the course work is not completed by the end of the course, a final grade of "I" will be issued indicating loss of credit in the course, regardless of any other grades during previous quarters. To avoid receiving an "I", a student must complete all course requirements and assignments satisfactorily; however, assignments submitted beyond the due date will be evaluated according to each individual teacher's class policy. If incomplete work is the result of illness or extreme emergency near the end of the school year, arrangements should be made with the teacher before the school term is over to make up the necessary work.

CHEATING

Cheating may result in a failing grade being assigned for a test, quiz, project, research paper, etc., and/or the possibility of failing for the quarter in the class where the cheating occurred.

MAKE-UP WORK AFTER ILLNESS/FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITY

Any student returning to school following an excused absence should contact each teacher as soon as possible to arrange for the completion of all work missed. The student must contact his/her teacher within three days of the absence to schedule make-up work. If contact is not made within three(3) days all work missed will be considered a "0" for grading. However, to avoid an "incomplete", the work must still be completed satisfactorily.

Make-up work is not permitted in cases of illegal or unexcused absence.

Students who participate in one day, school sponsored field trips are responsible for making up work missed immediately upon returning to the class. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain assignments from all teachers whose classes will be missed.

Teachers should be contacted PRIOR to the day of the field trip.

Each day that a student is absent on a scheduled gym day, he/she will have an automatic gym report or alternative assignment due. Guidelines for this assignment are available through the physical education teacher.

LOCKERS

This is the area that is designated for students to keep their hats, coats, book bags and other articles which are considered inappropriate for the classroom environment. A student is only permitted in this area if given permission to be there. Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action. Ridgeview Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. It is recommended that items of personal value be left at home.

REGULATIONS

VANDALISM

Students involved in acts of vandalism may be referred to the policy for criminal prosecution. Students will be required to pay for repairs or replacement of objects or facilities. Vandalism may include misuse of technology. All financial obligations must be fulfilled before final report cards are distributed.

SERIOUS/REPEATED VIOLATIONS

In an effort to create a safe atmosphere conducive to learning, the administration will not tolerate serious offenses or repeated violations of the discipline code.

Any student who is found to be:

- in possession of or under the influence of drugs (including look-alike drugs) or alcohol;
- in possession of a weapon;
- responsible for committing acts of vandalism or theft;
- repeatedly violating the discipline code;

will be subject to serious consequences for those violations in addition to the normal suspension or detention or other consequences assigned. Those additional consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- exclusion from extra-curricular events for the remainder of the school year.
- revocation of the right to attend school functions or activities.
- revocation of the right to attend the graduation ceremony.

PAGERS AND CELLULAR PHONES

Act No. 103 of 1989 PA School Code prohibits student possession of “beepers” and “cell phones” on school grounds, at school-supervised activities, or on the buses.

TELEPHONING

When possible, all instructions should be given to a student before he/she leaves for school. Student use of office telephones is restricted to emergencies only. Forgotten items and arranging after school plans do not constitute an emergency.

FOR YOUR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE...

To maintain the health, safety and welfare of all students at Ridgeview Academy, the following items constitute violations of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and/or Latrobe Alternative Education Program and may be punishable through the local law enforcement agencies.

FIGHTING AND DISORDERLY CONDUCT

The PA State Police will be contacted when incidents of fighting or disorderly conduct occur. Legal action will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians of the students involved.

POSSESSIONS OF WEAPONS OR DANGEROUS ITEMS

The term "Weapon" shall include, but not limited to, any knife, cutting tool, needle, nunchaku (nunchuck stick), firearm, shotgun, rifle, explosive weapon or device, smoke bomb, "look alike weapon and other tool, instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

"Weapon" shall also include anything readily capable of lethal use and possessed under circumstances not manifestly appropriate for lawful uses that it may have. The term includes a firearm, which is not loaded or lacks a clip or other component to render it immediately operable and components which can readily be assembled into a weapon.

"Look alike weapon" shall also include toys or models or any item having the appearance of any of the weapons in the above definition.

Students in possession may be referred to the police for criminal prosecution and may be expelled from school. Public Law 103-282 in effect requires a one-year mandatory expulsion for students who bring weapons to school.

If a person inadvertently takes a weapon into a school building, onto school property, or onto a school bus or conveyance, and upon discovery of the weapon, immediately surrenders it to the bus driver, a teacher, or any employee of the school, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. The school employee to whom the weapon was surrendered will promptly report the incident to the appropriate school administrator.
2. The school administrator shall conduct an investigation as promptly as convenient. If the administrator is satisfied that the possession of the weapon was innocent or inadvertent, the matter will end. In that event, the administrator will request a parent / guardian of the person surrendering the weapon to come to the school to retrieve it.
3. If the administrator's investigation finds that the possession of the weapon was not innocent or inadvertent, the case will be handled as other weapon cases under this policy.

The administrator is authorized to proceed with the following actions:

1. Immediate Action: The staff member or administrator will confiscate the weapon, and the student will be escorted to the office. The staff member will write an anecdotal report of the incident and submit it to the administrator by the end of the school day.
2. Investigation: The administrator or designee will request that the student voluntarily relinquish all weapons. Where reasonable cause exists, the student's personal property may be searched in the presence of adult witnesses.
3. Notification of Parents: The parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible, and the description of the weapon will be given. The parent will be informed that school authorities are required to report the infraction to the police.
4. Notification of Police: The police will be notified.
5. Confidentiality: Information will be limited to those staff members who are procedurally involved.
6. Disposition of Weapon: The weapon will be turned over to the police if the police are involved in the case. If the police are not involved, the Chief Executive Officer may retain the weapon.
7. If the fact make a prima facie showing that this weapons policy has been violated, the following steps will be taken:
 - A. The administrator or the administrator's designee will immediately schedule an informal hearing with the student and the student's parents/guardians.
 - B. Based on the factual situation concerning the violation of the weapons policy, the CEO or the CEO's designee may request a formal School Board hearing to determine if the student will be expelled from school.
 - C. The student may also be subject to criminal prosecution as determined by any law enforcement agency, which would have jurisdiction in the matter.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The Board prohibits the use, possession, or distribution of alcohol or other drugs during those hours when Ridgeview Academy administrators and employees have the right to exercise in locus parentis powers over the student in accordance with the Public School Code of 1949, including but not limited to, school hours, at any school sponsored event and during the time required in going from their homes to school and from school to their homes. The Board further prohibits the use, possession, or distribution of alcohol or other drugs on school property at any time. The Board further prohibits students from being present at school or school sponsored events during the times described in this paragraph where they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Any student who violates this code will be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

1. For the first violation of this policy, Ridgeview Academy shall institute criminal charges before the District Magistrate. A student may also receive a three (3) day suspension.
2. For the second or subsequent violation of this policy, Ridgeview Academy shall institute criminal charges before the District Magistrate. A student may also receive a suspension up to ten (10) days.

Students who are involved in incidents of fighting (including threats of harm), possession of weapons or dangerous items, and incidents of drug and alcohol possession /use may face charges as well as disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

It shall be a violation of this policy on Sexual Harassment for any student to harass another student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined below:

“Sexual harassment” is defined as an action that is sexually directed, unwanted, and subjects the student to adverse learning conditions. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical acts of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; suggesting or demanding sexual involvement whether or not accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades or job; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual’s dress or body; physical assaults or other physical conduct of a sexual nature including unwanted touching; unwanted sexual advances and propositions; or other sexual comments.

BULLYING

It shall be a violation of this policy on Bullying for any student to bully another student through conduct or communication of a bullying nature.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

All lockers are the property of Ridgeview Academy Charter School. School authorities may search a student’s locker and seize any unauthorized or illegal materials provided that there is reasonable grounds to suspect the search will reveal such material. Materials seized may be used as evidence against a student in disciplinary proceedings. In all instances, an attempt shall be made to notify students and allow them to be present.

Ridgeview Academy may search students provided that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search should be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction. All searches should be conducted by the administrator or his/her designees and in the presence of another staff member. Any search of a student’s person involving a pat-down should be done by a school official of the same sex unless an emergency situation exists.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION-HEARING PROCESS

Definitions:

Suspension: exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) school days

Expulsion: exclusion from school by the RACS Board of Trustees for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing in accordance with the mandates of this section.

SUSPENSION

The administrator in charge may suspend any student for disobedience or misconduct for a period of one to ten consecutive school days, and shall report the suspension to the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible thereafter.

No student shall be suspended until the student is informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.

The parents of the student and the CEO shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.

When the suspension from school exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parent shall be given an opportunity for an informal hearing. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardians which future offenses can be avoided.

The following due-process requirements are to be observed in regard to the informal hearing:

1. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents/guardians and to the student.
2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
3. The student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
4. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
5. Ridgeview Academy shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five (5) days of the suspension.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

No student may receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective. The parents/guardians of the student shall be informed of the suspension action taken by the administrators.

When an in-school suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the administrator shall be offered to the student and the student's parents/guardians prior to the eleventh day of the in-school suspension. The informal hearing shall follow the guidelines set forth in this section.

EXPULSION

The RACS Board of Trustees may expel a student for a period exceeding ten (10) school days or may permanently expel from the rolls of RACS any student whose misconduct and disobedience is such as to warrant this sanction. A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the Board of Trustees or a duly authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by RACS Board of Trustees. Where a hearing is conducted by a committee of RACS Board of Trustees or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire school board is required to expel a student.

Students who are less than seventeen (17) years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law, even though expelled. The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents/guardians, through placement in another school, through tutorial or correspondence study or through an educational program approved by the RACS Board of Trustees. If the parents/guardians are unable to provide for the required education, they must, within 30 days, submit to RACS written evidence so stating. RACS then has the responsibility to make some provisions for the student's education. If 30 days pass without RACS receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it must recontact the parent/guardian and, pending the parent's/guardian's provisions of such education, RACS must make some provision for the student's education or take appropriate actions under Juvenile Act, or both.

FORMAL HEARINGS

The following due-process requirements shall be observed with regard to any formal hearing pertaining to student discipline:

1. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians by certified mail.
2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given.
3. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
4. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
5. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
6. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
7. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
8. A record must be kept of the hearing either by a stenographer or by tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
9. The proceeding must be held with all reasonable speed.

During the period of time prior to a formal hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his/her normal class unless it is determined after an informal hearing that the student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others. If it is determined after an informal hearing that such presence would constitute such a threat, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than ten days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with an alternative education which may include home study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All hearings, whether informal or formal, shall be conducted as private hearings unless the student and parents/guardians request the hearing to be held as a public hearing. The name of the student under eighteen (18) years of age who has been subject to disciplinary proceedings under this section shall not become part of the agenda or minutes of a public meeting. Nor shall the name of such a student become part of any public record maintained by the RACS Board.

STUDENT SERVICES

STUDENT PROTECTION

Problem Solving: During the course of the school year, problems may arise which may affect students and the school. Students are urged to solve a problem as soon as it develops by contacting the staff members most directly involved with the problem. Often, a problem is caused by a lack of communications among the staff, student, and school.

CHILD ABUSE

Under the Child Protective Service Act of 1975, all school district personnel are MANDATED by law to report suspected child abuse. Reports of suspected abuse will be made to the Children's Bureau immediately by telephone. A written report will be submitted within 48 hours.

Concerned citizens may also make a report of suspected child abuse with reasonable cause by calling toll-free Childline at 1-800-932-0313 and/or the Children's Bureau at 724-834-2191. All reports made are strictly confidential, and you may remain anonymous. Parents may use the Childline directly without notifying the school.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Parents/guardians should immediately notify Ridgeview Academy in writing of any address change.

ROUTINE PROCEDURES

FIRE DRILL

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are important as safety precautions. It is imperative that when the fire alarm is sounded everybody exits the building quickly and quietly as per fire drill procedure. Fire drill procedures should be posted in all rooms for your safety and general welfare. Your classroom teacher will provide whatever student instruction is necessary.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Emergency closing of Ridgeview Academy may occur due to inclement weather, floods, fire, hazardous material accidents or the like. If and when this should occur and it also affects Greater Latrobe School District, you may tune into one of the following radio or TV stations. Look for "Greater Latrobe School District". Ridgeview Academy follows GLSD delays and closings. If the incident only affects Ridgeview Academy, you will receive a phone call by a school employee.

Station	Base	Station Channel
KDKA	Pittsburgh	10.20 AM / Channel 2
WHJB	Greensburg	6.20 AM / 107.1 FM
WCNS	Latrobe	14.80 AM
WJAC/TV	Johnstown	Channel 6
WQTW	Latrobe	15.70 AM
WTAE	Pittsburgh	Channel 4
WPXI	Pittsburgh	Channel 11

VISITORS

Parents and those interested in Ridgeview Academy from a professional point of view may visit the classrooms and consult with teachers or administrators. Arrangements should be made prior to visiting. All visitors must report to the office upon entering the building to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Arrangements must be completed prior to the day of the visit.

WORKING PAPERS

Employment certificates must be obtained at the high school in your district of residence. The student must present a copy of his/her birth certificate as proof of age. The application form must then be filled out by the employer and your physician and returned to the Principal's Office in your district before the employment certificate is issued.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT—TITLE IX

It is the policy of Ridgeview Academy Charter School not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, or national origin in the educational programs or activities which it operates as required by Title IX. Ridgeview Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion or national origin in the educational programs and activities extending to employment in an admission to such programs and activities.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance/Fire/Police	911
Latrobe Mental Health	724-537-1650
Lifeway Pregnancy Care	724-539-2002
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
Youth Crisis	1-800-448-4663
Adelphoi Village On-Call	724-520-1111 (after 5:00 and weekends)

*Wishing you a successful 2005-2006
school year at Ridgeview Academy
Charter School!*

Teachers

Mrs. Clawson—Computers and Career Pathways

Mrs. Siko—English & Personal Effectiveness

*Mr. Ungvarsky—Social Studies, Physical
Education & Resources for Success*

*Ms. Orczeck—Science, Healthy Living & Senior
Projects*

Ms. Mosticchio—Mathematics

Ms. McGill—Special Education