

Rio del Valle Middle School
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026



ELIZABETH BOTELLO, PRINCIPAL
3100 N. ROSE AVENUE
OXNARD, CA 93036
TELEPHONE: (805) 485-3119

Governing Board

Kristine Anderson, President
Felix Eisenhauer, D.M.A., Clerk
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WELCOME

Welcome Knights!

We are excited to be starting this new school year with you and your family. In this handbook you will find information regarding a number of school policies. During the first weeks of school we will review with you and your family the expectations. We will work hard to support you in managing your time, technology, and not falling behind academically. You will be expected to attend classes, and attendance will be reported to the State, you will be expected to learn, and to do the work that is assigned to you. We will have resources available to support you.

This handbook is intended to be used by students, parents and staff as a guide to the rules, regulations, and general information about our school. Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information contained within it. Parents are encouraged to use this handbook as a resource and to assist their child in following the rules contained in it.

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing and may not address every situation and circumstance that may occur during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a “contract.” The administration reserves the right to make decisions and rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable School District policies, State and Federal statutes and regulations, and the Parents Rights and Responsibilities Annual Notice.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Rio School District believes that a child’s ability to learn is affected by social, health and economic factors outside the classroom. To ensure student success, the District makes it a priority to develop programs that address the whole child.

Reaching beyond the students to parents and the community, the District is committed to developing and maintaining strong partnerships with local organizations and finding ways to provide resources to the citizens in our service area.

The District’s leadership believes that all its decisions must reflect the concept that all students can learn and succeed. Every student in the district has a right to a high-quality education that challenges the student to achieve his/her full potential.

The Rio School District believes that all students should be provided a foundation where every student feels valued and valuable, safe and respected, and socially and emotionally happy and healthy. RSD accomplishes this in the adoption of the “40 Developmental Assets” which acts as the framework for a positive school environment that the entire community can participate in. A discipline philosophy is also included to encourage consistent and clear expectations of students. Positive Behavior Support is a philosophy for classroom management and school discipline. It is a citizen approach that teaches students about their rights and responsibilities for living and learning in a democratic society. School sites, teachers and staff are encouraged to utilize Positive Behavior Support approach strategies when working with students in a variety of situations. This approach helps to encourage adults working with students to find alternative solutions to student issues; all of which is practiced through character education curriculums that teach RSD students tolerance and problem solving skills.

COMMUNICATION

Creating Connections: Office of Student and Family Services

The Office of Student and Family Services (OSFS) coordinates and develops human services/intervention and prevention programs, and creates and supports community partnerships and development.

Services include:

- * Providing basic needs and youth development planning for all students
- * Assisting with health and wellness needs

- * Providing necessary referrals for community services; counseling, basic needs, county resources
- * Improving school-to-home communications and providing parent education and outreach

Community Support Services:

- * Identifying needs of staff, students and families through outreach to school sites and the community
- * Acting as a point of contact for community and county organizations to coordinate and deliver services to school sites
- * Providing and aligning communication assistance between school sites and the district office for community partners.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

All parents are encouraged to attend the annual Back-to-School Night and various other Parent Information Nights offered throughout the school year. Staff will provide valuable information regarding academic expectations of their instructional programs.

CALENDARS AND NEWSLETTERS

Monthly calendars and cafeteria menus are sent home at the beginning of each month.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent teacher conferences may be scheduled upon request. Our goal is to work together with you to provide the best education possible for your child. Please call the school office to schedule an appointment.

PARENT / TEACHER / STUDENT INVOLVEMENT through PTA, SSC, ELAC, PTA, and CEI

We would like to welcome all new and returning parents and students for the new school year. We hope you will join us as we work together with our teachers and staff to support the growth and development of students here on campus. We encourage you to participate in the Parent Teacher Association (PTSA), School Site Council (SSC), English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC), Community Engagement Initiative (CEI), and other site committees and projects. Please contact the school office for additional information. Meeting dates will be posted on the monthly newsletter/calendar. All parents are welcome to attend. By working together, we can help provide our students with a quality education and a positive and safe environment.

Q and Parent Square

Q Parent Connection is the district's web-based access to our student information system. With this web-based portal, parents can check their student's attendance, health and discipline records, standardized testing results, classroom assignments (for teachers who elect to use the system), cafeteria information, and more. Middle School parents can view students' report cards (this feature is not yet available for elementary schools' Standards-Based Report Cards).

This system is only available to students' parents or legal guardians. A PIN and password is required to access the system. Parents can obtain their PIN and password by contacting any school at which one of their children attend (the same PIN and password will access information for all students parents have in the district). Parents/Guardians will be required to provide ID prior to receiving the PIN.

TRACKING YOUR STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR

Close communication with parents is essential to ensure an effective learning environment. Students will carry an agenda with them at all times as one method to monitor student progress and discipline. **Students are expected to obtain a parent/guardian signature on a consistent basis in order to ensure consistent parent to teacher contact.** In addition, parents may visit the parent portal and/or request parent/teacher conference(s).

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE

Please call the office **on the day of** your child's absence. An absence does not excuse a student from classroom assignments. It is the student's responsibility to make up for any missed work. Students may **not participate** in after school activities if they are absent from school on the day of the activity.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Students may be on campus twenty minutes before school begins unless the hours are extended by teacher request or the student is participating in a supervised activity. Students must leave campus immediately after school unless they are involved in a school activity. After arriving at school, students are not permitted to leave campus without being signed out in the office.

INDEPENDENT STUDY (BP 6158 and AR 6158)

Planning family vacations during the school year is discouraged. If a student is to be absent for **more than five days** for reasons other than illness or emergencies, arrangements should be made with the office for an Independent Study Contract **five days prior to the scheduled leave**. Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study, should contact the principal or designee prior to the scheduled leave to verify eligibility. **Upon return to school, student work should be turned in immediately** to receive credit. It is the student's responsibility to check-in with teachers upon return to school for any additional work missed.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Regular attendance plays a key role in the success a student achieves in school. The first step to success in school is getting there. It is an obligation of student, parent and school authorities to insist upon good attendance. Excused absences include:

- a -Illness (When out for more than 3 days, a Dr. note is required within 3 days of the absence)
- b -Doctor/Dental appointments (Dr. note required within 3 school days of the absence, or absence will be recorded as unexcused)
- c - Death in the immediate family – 1 day (mother, father, siblings, grandparents)
- d – Quarantine

A written note from the parent on the day the child returns is necessary, unless a phone call to the school is made by the parent explaining the reason for absence. *Excessive absences may result in referral to the School Attendance Review Board.*

TARDINESS

If a child arrives late to school, he/she must stop by the office for a pass to class. More than 3 tardies per year are considered excessive. Excessive tardiness may result in the referral to the School Attendance Review Board. A student who is tardy for more than any 30-minute period during the school-day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, is considered truant and shall be reported to the attendance clerk or administrator. **If a student should arrive late to school, they will be given a detention warning. If a student is tardy to the same period 3 times, the student will be assigned detention, which they must serve during lunch or after school.** Reminders of our tardy policy will go out in our newsletter.

WITHDRAW FROM ATTENDANCE

The school should be notified by the parent in advance of a student withdrawing from attendance. Parents need to indicate where the parents are moving and the address of the new school, if possible. Your child's records and report card will be sent to the new school

upon request from the new school's office. Please return all books and school materials prior to moving.

MINGA

A digital hall pass system that increases student accountability. Rio del Valle is utilizing this system to make sure students arrive to class on time and to increase student safety on campus.

CAMPUS SAFETY AND HEALTH

EMERGENCY CARDS

Please notify the attendance clerk of any changes of address or phone numbers. If the student resides in more than one home, it is highly recommended that we have emergency contact information for all those who have custodial and educational rights for the child.

CLOSED CAMPUS POLICY

Our school is a closed campus. Students are expected to remain on campus from the time they arrive in the morning until they are dismissed in the afternoon. Students who need to leave campus for any reason must be signed out through the office by a parent/guardian, or emergency contact person (18 years of age or older). Students returning to school must check back into the office to get a pass allowing them to return to class.

School Visitors

The Rio School District encourages visits to the schools and programs operated by the Rio School District by parents/guardians, members of the community, and other interested persons in order to view the educational program and facilities and to offer constructive comments.

Classroom visits by members of the community and other interested persons should be arranged in advance with the teacher, principal, or principal designee in charge. Approval or denial is based upon whether there is a reasonable basis to conclude that the visit will interfere with school activities. Visitors may be accompanied by the principal or principal designee at all times while the visitor is on campus when students are present. In all cases, responsible adult behavior shall be required of all visitors. Visitors who pose a threat to the health and safety of students, teachers, or other personnel or who otherwise disrupt the normal operations of the school shall be removed.

Possession of unauthorized dangerous instruments, weapons, or devices is prohibited on school premises or any other place where a teacher or student are required to be in connection with assigned school activities. No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in the classroom or on the school campus without the teacher and principal's permissions. All Rio School District schools and property are tobacco free zones. Therefore, the use of tobacco including chewing tobacco, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, hookahs and any other vapor emitting devices is prohibited on school grounds, including use in personal vehicles parked on school property.

No one, other than those designated on the emergency card, will be permitted to take a child from school. All visitors are required to check in at the school office as soon as they arrive. Parents must report to the office before going to a classroom or coming on campus. Parents who have a complaint are to request an appointment with the staff member and/or principal. No disruptions of school activities or verbal/physical assaults will be tolerated by visitors on campus. (*E.C. 44810 and 44811*)

Administration has the authority to direct non-students to leave campus. No outsider shall enter or remain on school grounds during school hours without having registered with the principal or designee, except to proceed expeditiously to the office of the principal or designee for the purpose of registering.

MEDICATION

It is desirable for medication to be administered at home. Should a child need to take medication at school, the parent/guardian must notify the school immediately and follow the guidelines stated below. It is recognized that some students are able to attend school regularly because of the effective use of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illness. It is also recognized that in many short-term illnesses, medication may need to be continued after a student returns to school. To accommodate this we need:

1. The original container must accompany all medicine or drugs.
 2. A written physician's order and parental consent form: **"Authorization for Any Medication Taken during School Hours" District Form**, which includes the medication name, reason for medication, dosage, schedule, anticipated number of days to be administered, and side effects of the medication.
 3. Students may not carry any medication with them on campus including over-the-counter medication or asthma pumps.
- * Parents/Guardians must notify the school immediately if your child's medication or dosage has been changed.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER INJURY OR SERIOUS ILLNESS

When a child is injured on or off campus and returns to school with **a cast, crutches, splints, etc., he/she needs a doctor's clearance.** This clearance should include any physical limitations or special instructions (e.g.: No PE for a week, the use of specialized equipment etc...). Without a written medical clearance, the child will be excluded from school. This is done for the protection of your child as well as for the safety of others.

When your child is ill, with a fever of over 100°, the evening before or the day of school, please keep your child home. Children who run a fever, vomit, experience diarrhea, coughing, sore throat or other cold/flu related symptoms are not ready for a rigorous day of school. They need at least 24 hours of rest before returning to school. If you would like to pick up your child's homework, please notify the school office in the morning.

STUDENT SERVICES

COUNSELING SERVICES

Our middle school has counselors on site to assist in guiding the students through the middle school years. Services include individual and group guidance to help with personal, social and academic issues. The counselor works closely with staff and parents for a successful middle school transition.

ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY

Associated Student Body (ASB) is composed of ASB officers, commissioners and class representatives. This group will act as the legislative body of ASB and will coordinate activities by considering student welfare, preparing budgets, paying bills, formulating policies, and studying parliamentary procedure, in order to conduct its affairs in a systematic manner. ASB plans and organizes school wide events in addition to maintaining the sales of campus supplies (yearbooks, spirit clothes, student handbooks, promotion gowns, tickets, etc.).

ACTIVITIES

We encourage students to be involved in a variety of school activities including: clubs, tutoring and ASB sponsored trips and dances. Parents, of any student engaging in disruptive behavior, will be called to pick up their son/daughter from school activities. Parents are asked to pick up their student promptly at the end of the activity. **Note: Students absent from school the day of a school dance/activity may not attend without prior permission from school administration.** Students who have been placed on the administrative Loss of Privilege List must remain off the school grounds during the after school dance/activity.

SPORTS

The Rio School District offers opportunities to participate in sports on the middle school campus during and after school. It's important to strive for a minimum 2.5 grade point average. The grade point average is based upon the most recent trimester report card and includes grades in all classes completed. Weekly progress reports may be requested as learning is a priority. Representing our school on an athletic team is a privilege; therefore, when students participate in these events, they agree to follow school rules and show appropriate conduct. Students who fail to follow school rules and demonstrate proper conduct may be suspended from a game(s) or the team.

PERSONAL GIFTS

The school will not accept, distribute or be responsible for items such as balloons, flowers, candy, pizzas, cupcakes and other personal gifts for students because they are a disruption to the educational experience. These items should be reserved for celebrations outside of school. Outside food is prohibited due to State health and safety restrictions.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Overt physical contact and/or excessive display of affection is not permitted. Students should be aware of what is acceptable behavior on campus or at any school activity or trip. Students failing to use good judgment will be warned and parents notified.

ACADEMICS

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Awards and Recognitions reflect standards-based grading and a student's progress toward meeting content area standards as well as career preparation skills in each content area.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

School staff expects all students to be successful on the merit of their own work. Academic dishonesty (cheating) is a deliberate attempt to disrupt the learning process by misrepresenting another's work as one's own. We do not tolerate cheating or dishonest acts of any kind. Students should be aware that academic dishonesty may result in a zero grade for all parties involved.

COMPUTERS and TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for all textbooks and technology items issued to them. Textbooks should be covered and maintained in good condition. Students will be charged for lost or damaged items. Student issued laptops, chargers, and cases are considered school property and shall also be maintained in good working condition. Any cost for repairs or loss to the computer may become the responsibility of the student and their parents/guardian.

PE LOCKERS AND CLOTHING

Students will be issued a lock and locker in which to keep their PE clothes. The school takes all reasonable precautions to ensure that lockers are safe. Students are reminded not to share lockers or locker combinations. If thefts occur, students should notify the PE department staff and all possible steps will be made to correct the situation. However, the school does not assume any responsibility for any loss of property from lockers. Students should be aware that lockers are subject to inspection by school authorities at any time.

Students are responsible for their PE lock, should it be lost it will be replaced at the cost of \$10 to the student.

PE Uniform = RDV PE T-shirt and shorts– available in ASB for \$12 each. T-shirts and shorts are available for \$24 total. When purchasing outside clothes, T-shirts and shorts must be the same length, style, and color as the RDV PE uniform without any logos, brands, color, hoods, zippers, or pockets. Approval is required from the PE teacher.

During cold weather, if we are in an activity that is outdoors, you can purchase a RDV PE sweatshirt or sweatpants to wear OVER your PE uniform. You must still wear your uniform to receive your full participation points. IF parents purchase outside, sweatshirts must be the same color gray as PE uniform without hoods, zippers, or pockets, or any logos. Sweats must be RDV attire.

STUDENT PROGRESSION, PROMOTION, AND GRADING

Philosophy

RSD provides every student, without exception, both the opportunity and the necessary support to benefit from a high-quality educational experience. A challenging and rigorous curriculum is implemented for all students in all content areas.

We believe that student retention is not an effective practice. Therefore, students who are struggling or who are at risk of failure should be identified early and provided with the necessary support to meet state standards and to prepare them for the next level.

In RSD, we support a Balanced Assessment System that uses three forms of assessment: Formative Classroom, Interim Benchmark, and Annual Accountability. At the middle school level, we wholly support putting students at the center of learning and engaging them in ways that allow them to assume responsibility for their own success.

Formative Classroom Assessment is an ongoing process used to inform instructional decisions made by the teacher and student. It is linked to the targets of daily instruction, and it provides continuous information. Formative Assessment is what happens when teaching is still underway. Formative Assessment helps shape decisions about what needs to happen next to better prepare students for the summative assessment. This may involve giving students ungraded practice, helping them see where they might improve, or informing teachers on how they might adapt instruction to help move students toward the target.

Common Formative Assessment fulfills the traditional role of measuring student progress. Results from tests feed into an evaluation, like a mark in a grade book or a report card. They reflect the level of student learning at a particular point in time.

Annual Accountability Assessment is used to improve future instructional practices in order to improve student achievement. Annual state assessments have an impact on student progression and decisions regarding future programmatic placement.

Procedures for Middle School

The RSD has approved the following procedures for assessing and reporting to parents the achievement of middle school students. Traditional, optional, and magnet programs may use alternate reporting standards and forms. Refer to student handbooks for those respective programs.

Components of Academic Grades

Academic grades reflect what the student knows and is able to do. Academic grades must include a minimum of four of the following:

- Cooperative Group Work
- Discussion/Problem Solving
- Homework
- In-Class Assignments
- Journals/Logs/Notebooks
- Participation
- Portfolio (Collection of Content Work)
- Projects/Performance Assessments/Presentations
- Quizzes and Tests
- Student Reflection

Participation points are not attendance points, and academic grades are not reduced as punishment for misconduct. Documentation of academic components is required. Each teacher must supply a copy of his or her grading procedures to the students and the principal. Parents/Guardians may obtain information about grading procedures from their child's teacher, during Back to School Night, and during parent/guardian-teacher conferences.

Determining Academic Grades

Letter grades represent the following:

A (Exceeds Standards)	90–100%
B (Meets Standards)	80–89%
C (Marginally Meets Standards)	70–79%
D (Below Standards)	60–69%
F (Unsatisfactory)	Below 60%

I or NM (Incomplete or No Mark)—Incomplete work due to absence must be completed and the grade recorded within two weeks of the end of the interim grading period. If the student has not completed the work within that time, the student's grade is recorded as a U. NM will be given to students who have been in attendance for less than 25% of the trimester.

Conduct Grades

Conduct grades represent the extent to which the student does the following:

- Shows self-control and self-discipline
- Respects the rights and feelings of others
- Accepts responsibility for his or her own actions
- Cooperates in group activities

Conduct is not a component of the academic grade except in physical education (PE) class.

Teacher judgment of student conduct in individual classrooms is indicated according to the following scale:

O - Outstanding

S - Satisfactory

I - Improvement Needed

U - Unsatisfactory

Grade Reporting

Interim grade reports are issued at the end of each six-week grading period. Each six-weeks grade represents a report of all work completed during that grading period. If a student is exhibiting unsatisfactory performance or is experiencing changes in performance, the teacher must notify the parents/guardians in a timely manner, prior to distribution of the interim grade report or report card. Any of the following forms may be used for this purpose:

- District-provided Notice of Significant Change in Student Performance
- District-provided Middle School Interim Progress Report
- School-designed Progress Report

After notification of a deficiency, the teacher, student, and parent/guardian must cooperate to develop a plan for improvement.

Student Support and Assistance

Students who do not meet grade level standards in their core subjects will be considered for intervention. Response to Intervention provides a framework making it possible for students to access a range of programs and obtain services that will support the individual needs of the child and his/her family. Both academic and Social/Emotional/Behavioral ("SBE") interventions are made available through site Intervention Progress Teams (IPT). The RtI process acts as a framework and organizing tool so that all district services and interventions will be accessible at the appropriate levels of interventions. The team is a regular education process that uses a positive problem solving approach to do everything possible to make students' school life successful. Parents of referred students are an important part of this process. A planned transitional program and the Response To Intervention (RtI) process is in place for students who need extra support in advancing through middle school. RDVMS support and assistance may include one or more of the following:

- English Language Development (ELD) Program
- Guidance department
- IPT (Intervention Progress Team)
- Specialized programs
- Summer programs when available
- Title I Programs
- Tier 2 and 3 Interventions
- Clinic

Procedure for Review and Reconsideration of Grades

1. Within ten days of receiving the grades, the parent/guardian informs the school principal in writing that a review and reconsideration are desired and provides reasons for initiating the process.
2. Within five days of receiving a parent's/guardian's letter, the principal directs the teacher(s) and counselor to review the request and examine appropriate records and classroom work. The teacher and counselor then give the principal a written recommendation, including a rationale that supports or rejects the request.
3. Within five days after receiving the recommendation, the principal schedules a conference with the parent/guardian. Any decision that results from the conference is given to the parent/guardian in writing within five days after the conference. If the decision results in the student being retained or it results in a final grade remaining as assigned, the principal copies his or her decision to the superintendent/designee.
4. The principal makes the final decision in the review of an interim grade. However, a parent may appeal the principal's decision concerning progression/retention, final grade, or meeting any of the promotion and transition from middle school to high school standards by sending a letter to the superintendent/designee within ten days of the principal's decision.
5. The superintendent/designee sends a written response to the parent/guardian stating the final decision.

HOMEWORK

The Rio Elementary School District Board Policy BP6154 states that the Board:

- Recognizes that homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline, and life-long learning habits.
- Recognizes that the time spent on homework directly influences student's ability to meet the District academic standards.
- Expects students, parents/guardians, and staff to view homework as a routine and an important part of students' daily lives

Recommended Amount of Time:

Homework assignments will vary in length and difficulty according to the individual student, but generally will take 60-90 minutes (grades 6-8). In addition to doing homework assignments, all students are expected to read nightly for a minimum of 40 minutes.

Nature and Purpose of Homework

- Promotes independence and responsibility.
- Provides additional practice/reinforcement of fundamentals.
- Allows for completion of unfinished class work or assignments missed during absences.
- Supports and encourages consistent daily reading.
- May include research/projects in assigned subject areas for which there is insufficient time in class.
- Keeps parents informed of current learning in class.

Principal's Responsibility

- The Principal will facilitate sending home Homework Guidelines for parents to read and review prior to attending Back to School Night.

Teacher's Responsibilities

- Teachers will communicate homework procedures and expectations to all parents at the beginning of school each year (i.e., Back to School Night, introductory letter, class syllabus).
- Teachers will clarify at the beginning of the school year whether parents are to review and/or assist in correcting homework before it is turned in.
- Teachers generally will assign homework four days a week. These assignments should not require that the homework be completed over weekends or holidays.
- Teachers will assign homework that is commensurate with the student's abilities so that the homework assignments are neither too challenging nor not challenging enough and can be completed independently.
- Homework copies will be legible and directions will be clear and understandable to students and/or parents.
- Homework will be meaningful and relevant to class work.

- Teachers will help parents understand the objectives of the school curriculum at Back to School Night and parent conferences and through student progress reports.
- Homework will be checked or corrected and returned to students in class or sent home. Teacher will review with student homework corrections/comments, if necessary.
- Teachers will notify parents when a student repeatedly fails to turn in homework on time.
- Teachers will guide students and parents to available homework support services, as needed.

Student Responsibilities

- Students are expected to complete assigned homework independently and on time.
- Students are expected to turn in neat and legible homework.
- Students will ask the teacher for clarification if the homework assignment is not clear.
- Students will be encouraged to talk with the teacher if homework assignments are too difficult or too easy.
- Students are expected to show parents any checked or corrected homework returned by the teacher.

Parent Responsibilities

- Parents are expected to provide a regular study and/or reading time in a suitable setting with appropriate materials.
- Parents are encouraged to offer guidance but avoid doing the assignment for the child.
- Parents are encouraged to provide a balance between homework and the child's free time. If a child consistently does not complete assignments within the recommended time frame (homework is too challenging/not challenging enough), parents should contact the teacher.
- Parents are expected to understand the objectives of the school curriculum and the relationship of the homework to these objectives.
- Parents are expected to ask the child to show/discuss checked or corrected homework.

If parents have questions or concerns at any time, they are encouraged to contact their child's teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are part of the student's learning experience and are part of the school curriculum. They are planned and supervised by the classroom teacher or school. A permission slip must be signed by the parent/guardian prior to the trip. No child may attend any trip for which his or her permission slip has not been returned. Field trips are an extension of the school program and all school rules apply, including the dress code policy.

Throughout the school year there will be opportunities for incentive field trips in which a combination of grades and behavior criteria will be used to determine eligibility, similar to that included in the 8th grade promotion criteria. Parents and students will be provided the criteria prior to the field trip.

SCHOOL GUIDELINES

BUS POLICY BP 513L.1

In order to help ensure the safety and well-being of students, bus drivers, and others, it is expected that students will exhibit appropriate and orderly conduct at all times when using school transportation, including while preparing to ride, riding, or leaving the bus. The Superintendent or designee may deny a student the privilege of using school transportation upon the student's continued disorderly conduct or his/her persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver.

DRESS CODE:

The Board of Trustees believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. The board expects students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for the school activities in which they participate. Student's clothing must not present a health or safety hazard or a distraction which would interfere with the educational process (BP5132(a)).

Primary responsibility for student grooming lies with the student and his or her parents. All clothing shall be neat, clean and acceptable in repair and appearance and shall be worn within the bounds of decency and good taste as appropriate for school. Appropriate school clothing does not include wearing items that are deemed for sleeping, unless there is a specific school event that permits the wearing of these items. Dress hemlines, shirt bottoms and pant cuffs must be neatly hemmed. Garments with **frayed edges, torn** or with **holes** are not appropriate for the school setting. Garments shall be sufficient to appropriately conceal undergarments at all times.

Clothing, jewelry and personal items (backpacks, gym bags, water bottles.) shall be free of writing, pictures, or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, which bear drugs, weapons, alcohol, or tobacco company advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic, age, gender, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation or religious prejudice.

- Articles of clothing, which display gang symbols, weapons, profanity or products and slogans which promote tobacco, alcohol, drugs; materially interfere with school work; create disorder or disrupt the educational process are not allowed. No professional athletic team logos and names are permitted on hats, beanies, jerseys, shorts, pants, socks, lanyards, jewelry, bags, purses, backpacks, accessories or other items. University or college clothing is acceptable and encouraged.

- Metal accessories and jewelry, including exposed body piercing jewelry, which presents a hazard to health or safety, are prohibited. Web belts with military style buckles or belts with emblems, engraving, initials, etc. are not permitted. Belts must be no longer than 6 inches after buckling. Oversized buckles or chains may not be worn. Wallets with chains are not permitted.

Hats, caps and other head coverings shall not be worn indoors. Each school shall allow students to wear sun-protective clothing, including but not limited to hats, for outdoor use during the school day (Ed code 35183.5)

- Hats, caps and sun visors may be worn outside of offices and classrooms for protection from the sun. They may not be worn inside without special permission. They must be plain colors, without any symbols, logos, emblems, pictures or lettering. They must be worn with the visor/bill end forward, not to the side or back. Sweatbands, hair nets, bandanas, curlers and "do" rags will be not permitted.

Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments, including shorts, at all times. See-through or fishnet fabrics, halter tops, off the shoulder or low-cut tops, bare midriffs and skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited. For example: bra straps must be concealed with a minimum two inch strap; pants must be pulled up so that underwear or shorts are not showing.

- Oversized clothing is inappropriate and must not create a safety hazard. Pants must stay up on the hips without the use of a belt and should not cover shoes. No clothing identifiable as gang attire or clothing the administration considers denoting gang involvement is permitted. Shorts that stop below the knee, worn with long white socks are considered gang attire and may not be worn. Socks should not be worn beyond mid-calf. There must be at least six inches of skin visible between the bottom of the pants and the top of the socks.

- Beach wear, halter tops, tube tops, bare midriffs or chest, see-through, mesh outfits, off the shoulder blouses or blouses with thin (spaghetti) straps are not appropriate or acceptable.

- Girls may wear tights with over garments that comply with dress code policy. Wearing tights with a t-shirt or sweatshirt is not considered an acceptable outfit. Shirts and blouses must sufficiently cover the chest and bosom. Skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited, use fingertip rule.

- Walking shorts are permitted and must be at least mid-thigh in length and not longer than below the knee. All sportswear-type shorts, bike shorts (spandex), frayed shorts, shorts with holes, or short shorts are unacceptable.

Shoes must be worn at all times. Flip-flops, backless shoes, shoes with heel straps, slippers, crocs, or sandals are not acceptable (for safety reasons, shoes with embedded wheels (Heelys) may only be worn with the wheels removed.)

- Closed-toe shoes or athletic shoes must be worn at all times (No slippers, crocs, beach wear, slides, flip-flops, open toe shoes, sandals).

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Students may not possess the following items on school property or at school events:

Alcoholic beverages, narcotics, e-Cigarettes (including but not limited to: vape pens, wax pens, cartridges, chargers), Hookah Pens, over-the-counter medications, cigarettes, tobacco products, inhalants, cigarette lighters, matches, and look-alikes.

Electronic signaling devices, laser pens, iPods, mp3 players, CD Players, beepers, cameras, TV's/DVDs, or any other electronic items of distraction will not be permitted to disrupt instruction, instructional programs, and/or school-related activities. **Cell phones must be completely silenced and stored in backpacks during school hours, including lunch and passing periods.**

Cellular devices that have the capability to take photographs or to record audio, shall not be used for such purposes while on district property or at a school-sponsored activity, unless authorized in advance by administration.

Violations of this policy by a student shall result in disciplinary action and may result in the confiscation of the electronic device.

If a student is found using an electronic device while on campus:

First Time: Device will be confiscated by teacher or staff member. The student may pick up the confiscated item(s) from the front office **after school** on the same day.

Second Time: Devices will be confiscated by teacher or staff member and ***the student's parent/guardian will need to come and pick the item up before or after school between the hour of 8:00-8:30 a.m or 3:00-4:00p.m.***

Third Time: Devices will be confiscated by teacher or staff member and the ***parent/guardian will be asked to leave the confiscated item until the end of the week. Parent/Guardian may pick up the item before or after school between the hours of 8:00-8:30 a.m or 3:00-4:00p.m.***

*If the item is found after this occasion, consequences will follow the District Discipline Matrix which may include the student's parent or guardian picking up the confiscated item(s) from the front office **on the last day of the school year.***

Any confiscated item may not be returned until a conference has been held with a parent/guardian.

The Rio School District assumes no responsibility or liability for the protection of, loss of, or damage to any electronic device.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The school administration may conduct a search of a student suspected of possession or involvement with drugs, weapons, alcohol or other materials in violation of school rules or state law. The search may include inspection of clothing, purses, wallets, backpacks, lockers and other personal property.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS – BE RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, SAFE

All students can learn and they have the right to:

- *Be safe and protected
- *Be free from verbal abuse and harm
- *Be treated with respect
- *Learn in a “cared for” environment
- *Be able to learn without distraction

Students are expected to display appropriate behavior while in class, on the school grounds and at school-sponsored events.

Note: All school rules are in effect on the way to school and on the way home from school.

- *Show respect for yourself and others
- *Be in your assigned seat, ready to work with all your materials, when the bell rings.
- *Remain seated at the passing bell until dismissed by the teacher.
- *Follow directions as they are given.
- *Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself /respect personal space
- *Students should treat all staff members and fellow students in a respectful and safe manner.
- *Attend classes, on time, on a daily basis
- *Students should carry their school ID on them at all times

The following behavior is UNACCEPTABLE at school and will result in consistently applied discipline (according to Education Code 48900)

- *Threatening, bullying, fighting, harassment, assault and battery and cyber-bullying
- *Extortion (taking or attempting to take money or property from another person by use of threat)
- *Truancy, excessive absences, tardies
- *Causing or attempting to cause damage to school or private property
- *Disturbing class or student activities
- *Use of profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity (includes sexting)
- *Disobedience, defiance, or disrespect to school employees
- *Inappropriate mode of dress (see dress policy)
- *Possession of electronic signaling devices (see prohibited items)
- *Possession, use, sale, or furnishing of tobacco related products, marijuana or any controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, alcohol or intoxicant of any kind, firearms, firecrackers, smoke bombs, lighters, matches or other explosive or incendiary devices, imitation firearms, chains, knives, marking pens or any other objects deemed dangerous or that could cause damage to school or private property.
- *Students are to remain within the campus boundaries
- *Students will not spit, use offensive language or make offensive gestures
- *Roughhousing (tackling on the field) is not allowed on campus as a safety precaution

*Students should carry a hall pass from the teacher or office if they are out of the classroom during the class period.

*Students are not allowed to bring gum, candy, sodas, energy drinks and caffeinated drinks on school grounds.

Note: Harassment can be anything from teasing to physically pushing someone and trying to frighten him/her or any unwelcome sexual behavior from another person, which may include sexual comments, jokes, rumors, graffiti, touching or staring in a sexual manner.

Students who believe that they have been harassed, sexually or otherwise, should immediately inform an administrator, teacher or counselor so that necessary steps can be made to stop this type of behavior.

Bicycles, Skateboards and Scooters

Students riding bicycles to school must park and lock them in the designated area immediately upon arrival at school. Bikes must be walked on school property and on sidewalks. Skateboards, bikes and scooters are not to be ridden on campus at any time.

Skateboards and scooters should be held and put away while on school property on the rack. Locks are strongly encouraged.

Bicycle (skateboard and scooter) riders under age 18 must wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet which meets specified safety standards when they ride on a street, bikeway, or public bicycle path or trail (Vehicle Code Sections 21212,21204).

School Dance Expectations

The following is a list of expectations for attending dances at the Rio School District's Middle Schools.

Ticket Sales

Tickets are available for sale both prior to the dance (pre-sale) and at the dance. It is highly encouraged that students purchase their dance tickets prior to the actual dance in order to avoid long lines and to receive any ASB discounts. Students must have a school photo identification card to be admitted to any dances.

Tickets may not be purchased for students attending other schools. School dances are for enrolled students only.

Dress Code

The established dress code for students will be in effect during school sponsored dances. Students who are dressed inappropriately will be asked to change into appropriate clothing.

Lighting and Music

ASB or sponsoring clubs will coordinate with the DJ to ensure that lighting and music at the dance is appropriate. ASB will generate a list of alternative songs that may be inserted as a way to divert grinding; student suggested songs that involve specific dance moves.

Dance Supervision

ASB or sponsoring clubs will ensure adequate staff supervision at dances to provide a safe environment for students.

Dance Standards

Dancing styles that involve touching of the breasts, buttocks, or genitals, grinding, straddling each other's legs, or that simulate sexual activity are not permitted. When dancing back to front, all dancers must remain upright – no sexual bending is allowed, no hands on knees and no hands on the dance floor with your buttocks touching your dance partner.

Consequences for Violating Expectations

If a student violates the rules and ignores warnings, they will be asked to leave the dance. Parents/guardians will be contacted and arrangements will be made for them to go home.

School Rules

Site administration has the right to deny entrance to dances and school activities. Students attending a school dance will be

held accountable for all school rules and regulations. Dances are a privilege for students and a reward for positive behavior. Students will not be eligible to attend if they have been truant, suspended, no-show to a detention, served two or more detentions, more than one mark per week in the agenda, office referrals, or more than 3 unexcused absences within the trimester that the dance is held. Students, who violate these rules after purchasing a ticket, will not be refunded.

Philosophy of Administrative Student Discipline in Rio School District (K-8)

Disciplinary procedures, when required, should be an educational process. Disciplinary sanctions are imposed to help students develop individual responsibility and encourage self-discipline, to foster a respect for the rights of others, and to protect the rights, freedoms, and safety of all members of the school community. Students who demonstrate an unwillingness or inability to follow established expectations will be treated consistently and fairly.

The Rio School District recognizes that each person has value to him/herself and to the community. To ensure that students acquire and apply the skills necessary to develop into responsible contributing members of the community, those responsible for such growth and development shall work to ensure the acquisition of self-discipline and respect.

The Board of Trustees recognizes the need and responsibility to provide for the programs, staff, and facilities conducive to fostering such student development.

The staff recognizes the need to assist each student in developing responsibility and accountability to both him/herself and the school community.

The student body recognizes the need to act in a positive manner, which encourages a healthy and safe school environment for both themselves and all members of the school community.

Therefore, it is the Board's responsibility to establish a discipline policy, which encourages, teaches, and fosters positive behaviors and the development of self-discipline on the part of each student.

To this end, the District has established a progressive discipline program. Progressive discipline ensures that the consequence for misbehavior is commensurate with the misconduct. In determining an appropriate consequence, principals and vice principals consider multiple factors: the age and developmental level of the student, the circumstances unique to each individual incident, the severity of the incident, the student's attitude, the student's behavior record, and guidelines set forth in Ed Code 48900 through 48918.5. Consequences should be designed to correct the problem with a minimum of attention to the misbehavior and a minimal disruption to the educational process. The ultimate goal is to instruct and counsel students in order to develop a sense of self-control, positive self-esteem, successful interpersonal skills, respect for others, acceptance of responsibility, good judgment, and good citizenship, remembering that suspension is to be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct (Ed Code 48900.5).

To develop these necessary life skills for success in a communal society, the District uses Positive Behavior Support strategies:

1. Positive Behavior Support focuses upon appropriate social skills, including anger management. (Counselors)
2. Facilitated peer mediation teaches students to resolve their own conflicts by applying the mores of our civilized society. (K-8)

3. Positive Behavior Support celebrates and encourages the values desired in a cooperative social environment. Students practice praising others, giving up put-downs, seeking wise people, noticing hurts, righting wrongs, and helping others. (K-5)
4. Positive Behavior Support focuses upon developing democratic classrooms which detail the rights and responsibilities of its citizens. Students create class rules related to the four compelling state interests -- property loss and damage, legitimate educational purpose, threat to health and safety, and serious disruption of the educational process. (K-8)

A key component of teaching good citizenship is the recognition of good student behavior. Therefore, schools are developing a recognition plan to celebrate positive attendance, academic achievement and effort, and also kindness and cooperation in citizenship.

Within each school community in the Rio School District, there is a professional commitment to keep students in school. Each teacher is responsible for maintaining a positive class climate that supports learning. All minor violations of class rules will be dealt with by the teacher. Such things as talking while the teacher is instructing, passing notes or chewing gum can be handled in the classroom by the teacher. More persistent and serious behaviors will be referred to the principal. For behaviors which cannot be settled in the classroom, our first step would be a parent contact, and a principal or vice principal-student conference. Outcomes might be detention; school community service at lunch, after school, or on Saturday; a counseling referral; and/or a facilitated peer mediation referral. If a pattern of repeated offenses emerges, a behavior contract, or behavior support plan which details the teaching of acceptable replacement behavior, will be written. A report to the Police or Sheriff's Department may be made in conjunction with any of the offenses which warrant law enforcement involvement.

Off-campus suspension or recommendation for expulsion will be requested for more severe behaviors in accordance with the California Education Code.

The progressive discipline procedures outlined have been adopted by the Governing Board to ensure that each of our campuses is a learning community committed to helping each and every one of our students achieve academic success, while at the same time developing character attributes that will help our students to become productive participants in the 21st century.

Bullying

The Rio School District is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, violence, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code and E.C.220 and disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. Both students who are bullied and students who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

What students and parents can do:

What students can do:

- Be a friend to others: introduce yourself to new students, invite other students to play or hang out with you, work with an adult to solve disagreements.

- Talk to an adult.
- Be a supportive Bystander; Speak to an adult if you see another student being bullied.

What parents can do:

- Volunteer in the school.
- Participate in the School Safety Committee, School Site Council, Parent English Language Committee, or other school wide committees.
- Notify your child's teacher, school counselor, or Principal if your child reports bullying to you or you suspect something is wrong

McKinney-Vento Education Program

Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act, McKinney-Vento Assistance Act requires Local Education Agencies (also known as school districts) to:

1. Ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth;
2. Remove barriers to enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless students;
3. Immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they lack the required documentation for enrollment;
4. Have access to educational and other services necessary for them to meet the same challenging performance standards as the other students;
5. Not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.

FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

According to the McKinney Vento Assistance Act, a homeless students is a person between the ages of two and eighteen who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence who is:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Staying in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
8. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in conditions described in above;

9. “Unaccompanied”, not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

Students who find themselves in any of these living situations are deemed homeless by the federal definition and are entitled to the following rights:

1. School placement must be made regardless of whether the child or youth resides with the homeless parent or has been temporarily residing.
2. Homeless students have the right to attend the school of origin, or the school in the attendance area in which they are temporarily residing.
3. Homeless students shall, to the extent feasible, be placed in their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of their parent/guardian, then the students will attend the school in the area where they are temporarily residing. School placement for homeless students is based on the student’s best interest as defined in law.
4. Homeless students have the right to attend the school of origin for the duration of their homelessness. If the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year, he or she is entitled to stay in the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year.
5. Students who become homeless in between academic years are entitled to attend the school of origin for the following academic year.
6. School districts are required to adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided to or from the school of origin, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison).
7. If a homeless student continues to live within the boundaries of the school district of the school of origin, the school district must provide or arrange transportation for the students to and from the school of origin.
8. If a homeless student continues to attend the school of origin but is living within the boundaries of another school district, the school district of origin and the school district where the homeless student is living must agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the students with transportation to and from the school of origin.
9. If the school districts cannot agree upon a method, the responsibility and cost for transportation are to be shared equally.
10. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the school district’s homeless liaison shall assist in placement or enrollment decisions, consider the views of the student, and provide notice to the students of his/her right to appeal rights.
11. If the student is placed at a school other than school of origin or a school requested by the parent/guardian, the school shall provide a written explanation of its decision, including their right to appeal the decision.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL

Per the MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT, schools must:

1. Identify students who meet the federal definition of homelessness.
2. Enroll immediately, even if records normally needed for enrollment are lacking, such as proof of residency, school records, immunizations, etc.
3. Contact the last school of attendance to obtain relevant records.
4. Do not immediately check out students due to change of address.
5. Investigate a student's change of address and if it is due to loss of housing, the student must be allowed to attend for the duration of homelessness.
6. When homeless students become permanently housed, allow them to complete the school year.
7. The school district shall provide transportation to the school of origin and share the cost of transportation if the student is displaced to a neighboring school district.
8. If a dispute arises, allow the homeless student to immediately enroll/continue attending in the school, pending resolution of the dispute. Explanations and the right to appeal **MUST** be provided **IN WRITING**, to parents/guardians.
9. School districts must have a dispute policy in place.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT

1. Enroll your children in school immediately.
2. Sign your children up for a food program (you automatically qualify).
3. Make sure your children attend school every day.
4. Ask about support services like tutoring, counseling, after school programs, etc.
5. Meet with your child's teacher regularly.
6. Give your input on what you think is best for your child.
7. Notify the school when moving.
8. When leaving a school, get current school records, such as immunizations, check out grades, IEPs, etc.
9. Contact the new district's homeless liaison for help in enrolling in the new school.



I acknowledge that I have received and read the Rio del Valle Middle School Student Handbook.

Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Parent/Guardian contact number:
