

**MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2011 – 2012**



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Welcome to River City Believers Academy

From the Pastor...

RCBA is a ministry of River City Community Church under the leadership of Pastor Sean Azzaro. Pastor Sean has a passion to see RCBA be a different kind of Christian school.

“Our mission at RCBA is to prepare students for real life. We work very hard to be a place where each student can grow in relationship with our creator and then acquire the tools to answer His call to change the world! Everything we do, from academics and fine arts to athletics and student life is an opportunity for our students to discover and become the individual that God created them to be! If you are looking for a school that will challenge students to grow as a whole person...spiritually, academically, socially and, physically, then RCBA is the school for you!”

Pastor Sean Azzaro

From the Principal...

God has been preparing me to serve the families and staff at River City Believers Academy over my last sixteen years in Christian education. I was called first to be a teacher, then a counselor, and then, an assistant principal. Looking at my experiences, training and knowledge, what I have learned could be viewed as “skills” to prepare me to be the principal here at RCBA, but the most important knowledge I bring with me as principal, is the knowledge that no amount of training or experience is enough to equip you to do anything apart from the leading of the Holy Spirit. (John 15:5)

God is definitely leading RCBA! We have purchased a facility which will allow our school to be a beacon for Christ in northeast San Antonio. We have added exceptional new faculty members who love Christ and kids. They will be great additions to our already dedicated faculty. Finally, He has brought **you** to join Him in this work.

I am excited to be able to serve Him at our school. I will lean strongly on His guidance this year (Prov. 3:5) and, I will also seek the guidance of the godly men He has placed over our school. How will we move forward this year in a way that pleases Him? Where He leads, we will follow.

Tonia Willars

I. RCBA Mission, Statement of Faith and Non-Discriminatory Policy

A. Our Mission...

River City Believers Academy exists to glorify Jesus Christ by partnering with parents to prepare students for real life.

River City Believers Academy is “a school for real life”! We exist to partner with parents to help students find the real life for which they were created. Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10) Preparing students for real life is a commitment to a Bible-based college prep curriculum that equips students to serve and lead in today’s world. Our school does not exist to isolate students from the world, but to help prepare them to be world changers!

B. Statement of Faith...

- God created man to love Him and have a personal relationship with Him. (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:4-5)
- Man has chosen to sin in rebellion against God’s laws and ways, thus separating him from God. (Romans 3:23)
- The penalty for sin is death and separation. (Roman 6:23, Isaiah 59:2)
- Jesus came to deal with the problem of sin by paying our penalty of sin with His own death on the cross. This made possible our reconciliation with God, our Father. (Romans 5:8)
- To receive this free gift of salvation from our sin, we must recognize and confess our need (our sin), express our honest desire to repent (turn away from) our sin, trust Jesus, and receive Him as our Savior and Lord. (1 John 1:9, John 1:12, Acts 2:38)
- If we’ll let Him, Jesus will forgive our past and lead us into a different kind of future! Eternal life begins today when you surrender your life to Christ! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

C. Non-Discriminatory Policy...

River City Believers Academy admits (and welcomes) students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, scholarships, or athletic and other school-administered programs. Inasmuch as English is the primary, and, in most cases, the exclusive language of instruction, RCBA may deny admission to students with limited English proficiency.

II. History of River City Believers Academy

River City Believers Academy began in 1981 as Believers Academy. Founded as a school to provide quality Christian education for the students of a local church, Believers Academy gradually expanded and began serving a broader student base. In 2009, the school took steps to position itself for future growth and became a ministry of River City Community Church.

Throughout our history, our students have excelled not only in the classroom, but also in athletics, music, drama, speech, and mathematics. Nearly 1 in 9 of our high school seniors have

participated at some level of the National Merit Scholarship Program, and more than 50% of those pursuing college receive some degree of scholastic award. Our various teams, be they athletic or otherwise, frequently compete and succeed at the state level.

While RCBA has a great history of Christian education, we believe the best is yet to come! Our pursuit of excellence is an evolving journey with the goal of impacting our world by producing disciples who embrace a relationship with Jesus Christ, who have a biblical worldview, and who are prepared in all aspects of education to continue a lifetime of learning. Our vision for the future is to develop students as world changers, preparing them to thrive in the 21st century!

III. Admissions Policy

River City Believers Academy offers a unique, hands-on, engaging learning environment where students can grow academically, spiritually, physically and socially. From our college prep curriculum, our dual credit course offerings, to our innovative Fine Arts program, our students are challenged to excel and discover their individual God-given gifts.

A. Registration Process...

- Tour the Campus for questions and answers
- All families who are believers must subscribe to our statement of faith and be supportive of our mission statement, policies, and procedures.
- Complete and submit an Admissions Packet
- Attend a scheduled family interview with the Principal

After the interview, the principal will determine whether or not the prospective student will be admitted. We reserve the right, and feel we have the responsibility, to deny admission to the student if we feel the school is not a good fit for him/her.

If the student is admitted, then the family will be required to:

- Pay the \$275 non-refundable registration fee
- Meet with the principal if the student is an incoming 8th through 12th grader to determine the student's schedule and graduation requirements

B. Re-enrollment Process...

- Students enrolled for the current academic year are offered early enrollment opportunities, at a discount, prior to offering enrollment to the community.
- Families who wish to re-enroll must meet the following criteria:
 - Students must demonstrate a cooperative attitude toward his/her school work, the faculty and staff, the rules and policies, and toward their peers.
 - Families must continue to attend church regularly.
 - Tuition, fees, and other account balances must be current before re-enrollment.

- Students must maintain an overall 70.0 grade point average or they will either be placed on academic probation the following fall semester, or not be allowed to re-enroll.
- Pay the non-refundable registration fee of \$275.

IV. Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

A. MS Curriculum...

Middle School is an important developmental stage, as students are beginning to realize who they are and how God has equipped them for service. Our Middle School offers a challenging college-prep curriculum, individual learning style assessments, differentiated teaching strategies, weekly chapel services, and experiences that will help shape each student's future.

We also offer a variety of sports opportunities at the MS level, if enough students show interest, which can include: Basketball, Soccer, Cross Country, Track, Tennis, and Swimming.

- 6th grade course offerings: New Testament Survey, Pre-Algebra, Earth Science, English 6, American History, Spanish, PE, Art, Choir
- 7th grade course offerings: New Testament Survey, Intro to Algebra, Earth Science, English 7, American History, Spanish, PE, Art, Choir
- 8th grade course offerings: New Testament Survey, Algebra I, IPC, English 8, Church History, Spanish 1, PE, Art

B. HS Curriculum...

At the high school level, students begin to take ownership of their own education and develop a biblical worldview. Through new experiences and challenges, they learn to take initiative and fully engage in the learning process. RCBA offers a rigorous college-prep curriculum, innovative teaching strategies geared to individual learning styles, AP preparatory and dual credit course offerings, a unique Fine Arts program, and weekly chapels which provide personal and spiritual growth opportunities. All students follow, by default, the Texas State Recommended Graduation Program.

In order to graduate from RCBA, students must pass all classes with a minimum grade of 70, and have taken the following courses:

- **Bible**- each year in attendance at RCBA
- **English**- four years required
- **Science**- four years required; must include biology, chemistry, and physics; and one more science course such as anatomy & physiology
- **Social Studies**- four years required; must include world geography, world history, U.S. history, government (1 semester), and economics (1 semester)

- **Math-** four years required; must include algebra I, geometry, and algebra II; and one of the following for the fourth credit: pre-calculus, calculus, or Independent Study: Finance
- **Foreign Language-** two years required in the same language; Spanish and American Sign Language are currently offered
- **Speech-** one semester required
- **Physical Education/Athletics-** the equivalent of one year required; can come from one full year of PE, or participation in two sports
- **Fine Arts-** two semesters required chosen from the following: Instrumental Music, Vocal Performance, Film and Video, Art, or Graphic Design
- **Electives-** 6 semesters required, chosen from the following: yearbook, or additional credits of PE, Foreign Language, or Fine Arts

C. Advanced Diploma Plan...

River City Believers Academy also offers the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP). In order to graduate on the Distinguished Achievement Program, students must take one additional year of the same foreign language, and achieve four advanced measures as set forth by the state. Advanced measures can be awarded by taking any approved college academic course or dual credit course with a grade an 80 or higher; by scoring a 3 or above on a College Board Advanced Placement test; by scoring high enough on the PSAT with a grade that qualifies the student for recognition as a commended scholar by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (usually a grade of 200); or by creating an original research project or any other project that is completed under the direction of a mentor and judged by a panel of professionals to an appropriate audience. Only two of the four advanced measures can be achieved by an original project.

D. Valedictorian and Salutatorian...

The guidelines for determining the valedictorian and salutatorian of the graduating class are as follows:

- The student must have attended RCBA for at least four consecutive semesters, including his/her entire senior year.
- Student must be current in all his/her course work and a full-time student taking a minimum of 6 RCBA classes.
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined by GPA only. The two students holding the highest GPAs will be awarded these positions consecutively. In case of a tie, when the grades have been calculated to the one-hundredth decimal place, the student who has been at RCBA for the longest length of time will be named Valedictorian.

E. Grading Policies...

All grades are recorded numerically and placed on the report card every 9 weeks. At the end of each 9 weeks, report cards will be sent home via e-mail. Grades that appear on the transcript are an average of the first and second quarter grades with the 1st semester final exam grade counting

as 20% of the 1st semester grade; and an average of the third and fourth quarter grades with the 2nd semester final exam grade counting as 20% of the 2nd semester grade. Grades will only appear on the transcript at the end of each semester. GPA's are calculated and updated on the transcript at the end of each semester.

The following grading scale will be used:

100-93 = A 92-85 = B 84-77 = C 76-70 = D 69 below = Failing

* Grades received prior to the 2010-2011 school year were based on a 10 point grading scale.

F. Add/Drop Policy...

Students may make changes to their schedules, with parental permission, up until the 3rd week of the first nine weeks of school. If the student wants to drop a course that is not required for graduation after the 3rd week, the course can be dropped, but a 'W' will appear on the transcript. If the course is required for graduation, the Principal will evaluate the student's transcript and decide if any change can be made.

G. Promotion Policy...

River City Believers Academy continually strives to promote high educational standards to all of its students. In the event that a student fails a class that is required for credit toward graduation, summer school will be necessary in order for the student to receive credit for the class. If the student attends a public school to make up a credit, the student must turn in a completed summer school course transcript showing a passing grade for the course before the student can return to RCBA in the fall.

H. Fine Arts Program...

The Fine Arts program is offered to all 9th-12th graders. This program provides an encouraging and secure environment for young artists to develop their talents and learn to use the arts not only as an outlet for personal expression, but also as an effective medium for creative communication in life and ministry.

The following courses are currently offered on a semester basis: Instrumental Music, Vocal Performance, Graphic Design, Art, and Film and Video.

I. Dual Credit...

Dual Credit courses can be taken through an ACCD college either online, or here at RCBA. All students who are interested in taking courses as dual credit must take the Accuplacer at one of the ACCD campuses. The Accuplacer indicates whether or not a student is ready for college based on their scores. Students who qualify may take the offered courses here on campus with RCBA teachers, or online. Students need to be aware that not all colleges accept all dual credit courses for credit. Check with the colleges you are interested in as you determine whether or not to take a Dual Credit course.

J. Honors Courses...

Students will have the ability to take some Dual Credit courses in conjunction with their regular RCBA classes if the student is registered for Dual Credit through the Alamo Community College District. For example, English 1301 can be taken at the same time as English 12. Students who take RCBA classes in conjunction with ACCD classes will be given honors credit for these courses. A designation of 'HNR' will appear on the transcript, and the student will receive a 4% grade increase for the course. Dual credit courses taken this way are considered honors courses because of the extra commitment students must make in order to be successful in these courses.

K. National Honor Society...

Membership in the River City Believers Academy Chapter of the National Honor Society is offered to students in their sophomore, junior, or senior year. Membership is based on the student's scholarship, service, leadership, and character. The middle and high school faculty and administration evaluate and determine whether or not scholastically eligible students meet the standards for membership.

Scholastic eligibility is determined during the fall semester to prepare for possible induction into NHS in the spring semester. A candidate is scholastically eligible for selection into the chapter with a minimum cumulative GPA of 90, or after 3 semesters, for sophomores; an 88, or after 5 semesters, for juniors; or an 86, or after 6 semesters, for seniors. (Seniors can also be inducted if their GPA is 86 or more after 7 semesters.) To determine if the student meets the service, leadership and character components of NHS membership, the student's service hours, demonstrated leadership abilities, and behavior will be examined to determine eligibility.

Upon approval of the faculty and staff at RCBA for membership in NHS, new inductees will be invited to a formal induction ceremony held during the spring semester. All new inductees will then meet with the RCBA high school faculty to further discuss expectations as new NHS members.

To retain scholastic eligibility, members must maintain the minimum required GPA for their grade level at the end of each semester. Students whose averages fall below the required GPA will be placed on a one-semester probation period. After one semester, if the GPA has not improved, students may be inactivated until such time that their grades would qualify them for reinstatement.

L. Merit, Honor, and High Honor Roll ...

Students in middle and high school have the opportunity to be recognized each quarter as achieving one of three different honor roll designations. Each quarter, students will be recognized based on their grades that quarter, regardless of the student's cumulative GPA. In this way, a student receives recognition for their excellent work in that particular quarter. In order to be placed on an honor roll, students must pass all courses with a minimum grade of 70, and:

- Merit Roll – Achieve a GPA between 83 and 87.

- Honor Roll – Achieve a GPA between 88 and 92.
- High Honor Roll – Achieve a GPA of 93 or above.

Students' honor roll status will be recognized in our *RCBA Navigator*, and at one of our Parent Partners meetings, where both the parents and students will be invited to come and celebrate the students' accomplishment.

V. Testing Policy...

General Guidelines

Teachers test in order to determine what students know and/or, how they can apply what they have learned. Tests are given generally every 2 to 3 weeks; however, no more than two tests will be given on any given day per grade level. All middle and high school students will take final exams at the end of each semester. These finals will be comprehensive. Seniors are exempt from finals both semesters if they have a grade of 90 or above in that semester.

- **Standardized Testing**

1. **Achievement Testing:** Each student in grades K-11th will take the Iowa Basic Skills Test. The purpose of this test is to determine a student's progress and scholastic strengths and weaknesses, as well as to help teachers look at areas that need overall improvement.
2. **PLAN:** Each student in the 10th grade will take the PLAN test. The PLAN is the precursor to the ACT and it concentrates on English, Reading, Math, and Science. Students who do well on the PLAN will probably do well on the ACT.
3. **PSAT:** All students in the 10th and 11th grades will take the PSAT. This test prepares the student for the SAT and if a junior, could qualify them for the National Merit Scholarship Competition.

VI. Homework Policy...

- Teachers are encouraged to give homework for the purpose of:
 1. Drill – repetition can be an excellent way to master new material
 2. Practice – practice is often necessary to ensure understanding
 3. Special projects – book reports, research assignments, and projects are great ways of reinforcing concepts and teaching organizational skills
- Homework should not take any more than 30 minutes per class per night for middle schoolers, and no more than 40 minutes per class per night for high schoolers. Understandably, major projects and research papers will require more time than usual.
- Students are expected to do all homework assigned and turn it in when due. Assignments not turned in on time will be given a zero. At a teacher's discretion, if homework is accepted late, a grade penalty should be given. If a student has an unexcused absence, any homework due that day will automatically receive a grade of zero.

- Since many of our students attend Youth Group on Wednesday nights, no major test should be given on Thursday if it was just announced the previous Tuesday.
- No homework will be assigned over a weekend that exceeds the usual daily assignment expectation.
- Copying homework is cheating so any work done “collaboratively” without prior authorization from the teacher, will receive a zero.

VII. Service Hours...

Jesus Christ modeled service to others as He washed His disciples’ feet (John 13:5). Our middle and high school students need to learn to follow Christ’s example by serving others also. Service hours are beneficial to the student also since colleges expect students to perform “community service” as part of their well-rounded educational program, and for the student’s development of a good work ethic. Service hours are mandatory for all high school students, and recommended highly for all middle school students.

Students’ hours are monitored through the Bible teachers’ classes. Each student is to complete 6 hours of service per 9 weeks. Each service hour is one actual hour spent serving others. Grades will be given equivalent to a Bible test grade in the following manner: 6 hours = 100; 5 hours = 90; 4 hours = 80; 3 hours = 70; and 2 hours or less = 60. Students have 9 weeks to complete their service hours and assigning a grade shows the student the importance we place on service to others.

Service Hours are accepted when a student:

- works without pay for a non-profit organization like his/her church; Elf Louise; SAMM Shelter; etc.
- helps teachers or the maintenance staff at RCBA
- goes on a mission trip

There are many other ways to get service hours. To ensure the hours will be acceptable, the student should check with his/her Bible teacher before completing the hours.

Service Hours are not accepted when a student:

- does his/her household chores
- babysits without pay for his/her family
- works for a family member beyond his/her regular chores; this type of service is expected in a family

VIII. Attendance Policies...

A. Texas Law...

RCBA students are subject to all laws outlined by the state of Texas in regards to attendance. Texas law states that a student must not miss more that 10% of the school year in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Failure to attend school is considered an absence. Each

absence will be considered unexcused unless written notification is given to the office upon the student's return to school, at which time the absence will be changed to excused. Even excused absences are counted toward the 10% absence law for school attendance.

If a student has more than 10 absences in the previous semester, he/she cannot be issued a Verification of Enrollment, which is required by the DMV to receive a driver's permit or license.

B. Excused Absences

1. An excused absence is any absence due to personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family, or medical or dental appointments. When students are absent for these reasons, the student will have one day per day absent to make up missed assignments, i.e., absent on Monday, return Tuesday, assignments are due Wednesday. It is the sole responsibility of the student to check with all of his or her teachers for missed assignments.
2. Pre-approved family trips (**trips should be no longer than 5 school days**); all assignments missed during the trip must be turned in the day the student returns to school.
3. Students are responsible for any work missed and they must check with their teachers to obtain assignments.
4. School field trips, the fall retreat, sports events, court appearances, obtaining a driver's license, college visitation days, or other school-sponsored events are considered excused absences, but all assignments missed for these reasons must be turned in the day the student returns.
5. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school if their child is absent. Upon the student's return, either a note from the parents stating the reason the student was absent or a doctor's note is required. If parents do not notify the school through email, phone message, or note, the student's absence will be considered unexcused.

C. Unexcused Absences...

1. Absences due to sleeping in; normal traffic; siblings not being ready to leave; alarm clocks not going off; staying home to study for a test or to complete a project; or missing school for hair or nail appointments are all considered unexcused.
2. The final authority to determine the legitimacy of an absence rests with the school administration.
3. Students who receive an unexcused absence must complete all the course work and homework missed, but a grade of zero may be given for the assignment. If a teacher accepts the missed work, the assignment cannot receive a grade higher than a 70.

D. Tardy Policy...

The school day begins promptly at 8:00am and ends at 3:00pm. Students who arrive between 7:00am and 7:50am must report and stay in the Youth Center until the start of school. At 7:50am, students will be released to report to homeroom. Attendance will be taken in homeroom at 8:00am. Students who arrive after homeroom will be asked to go to the office for an admittance slip. Attendance will also be taken in every class every day. Students tardy to class will have to go to the office for an admit slip.

Morning Tardies...

Sometimes tardies are unavoidable. Whether the tardy is considered excused or unexcused, will be based on the following guidelines or at the discretion of the administration:

- **Excused:**
 1. the first two morning tardies in each quarter that are considered unexcused, as determined by the administration, will be counted as excused
 2. tardies due to car trouble
 3. excess traffic due to inclement weather; or accidents on the major highways which delay the arrival of many students (as determined by the administration).
- **Unexcused:**
 1. tardies due to oversleeping
 2. laziness
 3. coming in late to finish an assignment at home
 4. stopping for breakfast.

Once the student's two unexcused morning tardies are given, the student will have to serve a morning detention for each unexcused tardy thereafter.

Class Tardies

Students who arrive to school after homeroom or late to one of their classes, will be considered tardy, unless the student's lateness was due to illness. The following procedures for tardies will be followed:

- Students will be granted two "free" class tardies per quarter. Thereafter, the student will be assigned a detention for each subsequent tardy.
- If a student is late more than five times in a quarter, the Principal may call for a parent conference to determine solutions for the student's tardiness, or the student may be given a one-day in-school suspension.
- All work must be made up for excused and unexcused tardies and will follow the attendance policy rules on make up work.
- If a teacher prevents a student from arriving on-time to his/her next class, the teacher must send a note to the next period teacher explaining why the student was late. The student will not be considered tardy in this case.

E. Late Arrivals or Early Release...

Students who arrive late or leave early due to medical/dental appointments, must have a note from a parent stating the reason why the student is late, or why the student must leave early. If a student becomes ill during the day, their parents will be contacted and the student will wait for pickup in the school office. In both of these cases, parents must sign their students out on the "Sign Out" sheet in the office.

F. Inclement Weather...

RCBA follows Northeast ISD in regards to school-related delays and closings. In the event that school is delayed or closed due to weather conditions, RCBA will contact the local news and radio stations to report this information. If we know in advance the school will be closed the following day, there will also be a message on the school answering machine informing you of the closing. Otherwise, teachers will have a call list to inform parents of the delay or closing.

IX. Health Services...

A. Illness...

For the welfare of your child and the others in the school, students who are sick must not be brought to school. Students who have had a fever of greater than 100 degrees, or who have had vomiting or diarrhea, may not come to school until these symptoms have not been present within the last 24-hours. If a student receives a doctor's recommendation to stay home, then the student may not come to school. If a student has been prescribed an antibiotic for an illness, the student must not return until he/she has been on the antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

B. Immunizations...

The state of Texas requires that students be immunized against certain infectious diseases at certain ages. All students must have current immunization records or an immunization waiver in their file prior to the first day of school. The school staff will check all students' medical records and inform the parents if any immunizations are needed.

C. Medication...

Students are not allowed to carry any medication in their backpacks, lunchboxes, purses, or in their lockers. All medications must be kept in the school office. Every student needing to take medication at school must have a signed release by the parent or guardian, or verbal consent must be obtained before the school office will administer any medication. This includes any over-the-counter medication as well.

The only exception to this rule is for those students with asthma or who are at risk for developing anaphylaxis. In these cases, the office needs to be made aware of the situation and the student must be able to self-administer their prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication.

All prescription medications must be sent to school in the originally-labeled container. Medication that is to be administered at specific times during the school day must be accompanied by a note from the parent specifying what times, and how much to be administered. Medication that has exceeded the expiration date or is not picked up by the last day of school will be appropriately discarded.

D. Health Screenings...

Each year RCBA administers state-mandated health screening tests. The service is provided free of charge and will be done by a qualified individual. If you prefer to have your student tested by your family physician, the completed results must be reported to the school since we are required to file a report with the Texas Health Department. Vision and hearing screenings will be done on all 7th, 9th, and 11th graders, as well as all new students. Additionally, ninth graders and all new high school students will be screened for scoliosis.

IX. Discipline

From a biblical perspective, discipline can be a very positive event in the life of a Christian, and can be a tool used by God to transform us into His likeness. A biblical approach to discipline will take into consideration five Scriptural truths:

- Humanity's inherent sinfulness (Jeremiah 17:9)
- Godly discipline must be rational (Hebrews 12:6)
- Parents have a God-given authority in their children's lives (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)
- The power to do what is right comes from the Holy Spirit working in us (Romans 8:5)
- The purpose of discipline is to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19)

The administration and faculty at RCBA acknowledge the authority of the parents in the lives of their children and will therefore rely on and encourage parental responsibility in managing their student's behavior. The staff will keep the parents informed at all times of any discipline issues that need to be addressed.

A. Detentions...

Whenever a teacher feels that a student's poor behavior or choices need to be dealt with outside of the classroom, the teacher will fill out an infraction slip and the student will be asked to sign it to acknowledge the infraction has been issued. The slip will specify the reason why the infraction was issued with the next consequence for that infraction clearly indicated. When the student has received two infractions for the same reason, regardless of which teacher issued the infraction, the student will be assigned a detention. This means that students will only receive one written warning prior to a detention being assigned. Detentions may be assigned by teachers or staff for various reasons such as:

- tardiness; disrespect toward a teacher or staff member (whether they are church or school staff); uniform violations; chewing gum in class; unauthorized cell phone usage; not adhering to classroom rules and regulations; repeatedly failing to sign out or in for off-campus lunch; skipping school/class; or disruptive behavior.
- failure to complete a homework assignment. Students will receive a detention the second time, and each time thereafter, they do not turn in their homework, per class. The student will receive a "0" on the missing assignment, but the student will still be expected to complete and turn in the assignment.

Detentions will begin at 7:00am in the school office. If a student is tardy or does not show up for detention, without an adequate explanation, the student will have to serve two subsequent detentions.

Receiving 5 or more detentions for the same offense in any given quarter will be considered excessive inappropriate behavior and could result in an in-school suspension.

B. In-School Suspensions...

A student who receives an in-school suspension will be assigned to a room to complete class work assigned by his/her teachers to be turned in by the end of the day. A student who serves an in-school suspension will be responsible for all missed assignments. If a student receives an in-school suspension and afterwards continues in the same behavior, he/she will receive an off-campus suspension, and could face possible expulsion.

In-school suspensions can be assigned for excessive infractions as listed above in the detention section, as well as for:

- Cheating or copying the work of another student
- Lying to a faculty or staff member
- Behavior that is deemed to be disrespectful
- Misconduct that continues after being repeatedly warned
- Leaving campus without prior written permission from parents
- Consistently disrupting the learning environment for other students

C. Off-campus Suspensions...

Some situations may merit more severe disciplinary actions. Students involved in the following activities or behaviors will be suspended from school for a length of time as determined by a school administrator:

- Fighting
- Use of profanity or obscene gestures to a staff member or student
- Theft
- Verbal, physical, or sexual harassment
- Threatening another student or bullying
- Failure to follow in-school suspension rules
- Possession or use of tobacco products, alcohol, and/or weapons

Before any suspension is given, there will be a conference with the parent/guardian and the principal. If appropriate, a teacher who witnessed the behavior can be part of the conference. Homework or other assignments missed by students serving an off-campus suspension will receive a "0". A student serving an off-campus suspension may take any tests that were missed, but the highest grade on any of these tests can only be a 70%. The goal of the suspension is to bring the student under the school's authority, to reconcile with others if necessary, and to allow the student time to reflect on his/her conduct in order to be restored to fellowship. Persistent suspendable behaviors could lead to expulsion.

D. Expulsion...

Student(s) involved in the following activities/behaviors can be considered for expulsion:

- Knowingly possessing, using, disseminating, or acting under the influence of any illegal drug or alcohol
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Possession of a weapon or use of any object as a weapon
- Possession of obscene material
- Vandalizing school property
- Threatening another student, faculty or staff member
- The unwillingness of parents to work with and support the school when serious problems arise with their student

Discipline is directed at behavior. As a school we reserve the right to consider students' off campus behavior and its implications for possible consequences.

X. Dress Code

Uniforms provide a way to dress that is appropriate for learning. They provide students with a sense of belonging and allows for individual expression and identity to be functions of personality rather than dress. The student uniform is symbolic of the student's acceptance of the authority of their parents, their school, and ultimately God. At RCBA we want uniforms to be cost effective and easy to find. Most of our uniform items can be found at local stores like JC Penney's, Academy, Target, or Old Navy. Some parents elect to order the uniforms from French Toast or Land's End. The school office also has a limited selection of new and gently used uniform items.

Starting this school year, 2011-12, each student will be required to purchase a white monogrammed polo from the School Yard clothing store. This polo will be worn for yearbook pictures, field trips, and any other activity that we want our students to be dressed "uniformly" to identify our school. Regardless of where you purchase the uniforms, the following standards and accepted options apply:

A. Middle School Girls...

- Navy blue pants, shorts, skorts, or skirts
- The shorts, skorts, and skirts must not be shorter than 2" above the knee.
- All the above options must be worn at the natural waist; no hipsters are acceptable.
- Burgundy or powder blue polo shirts; white monogrammed polo shirt.
- The length of the shirts must be below the waistline, and cannot have any kind of label or logo on the front.
- Students must either wear all black or all white tennis shoes, or brown or black flats. No open-toed sandals, flip flops, slip on moccasins, bedroom slippers or colored tennis shoes are allowed.
- Outerwear worn in class, such as jackets or sweaters, must be all navy, or a RCBA hoodie, sweater, or sweatshirt.
- Socks can be knee highs, anklets, or crew socks in either white or navy.

B. Middle School Boys...

- Navy blue pants or shorts
- Burgundy or powder blue polo shirts; white monogrammed polo shirt
- The length of the shirts must be below the waistline, and cannot have any kind of label or logo on the front
- Shoes must be either all black or all white tennis shoes, or black or brown dress shoes. No flip flops, slip on moccasins, bedroom slippers, or colored tennis shoes
- Outerwear worn in class, such as jackets or sweaters, must be all navy or a RCBA hoodie, sweater, or sweatshirt
- Socks must be white crew or anklets, or black dress socks

C. High School Girls...

- Navy blue or khaki pants, shorts, skorts, or skirts
- The shorts, skorts, and skirts must not be shorter than 2" above the knee.
- All the above options must be worn at the natural waist, no hipsters are acceptable.

- Burgundy, powder blue or navy polo shirts; white monogrammed polo shirt
- The length of the shirts must be below the waistline, and cannot have any kind of label or logo on the front.
- Students must either wear all black or all white tennis shoes, or brown or black flats. No open-toed sandals, flip flops, slip on moccasins, bedroom slippers or colored tennis shoes will be allowed.
- Outerwear worn in class, such as jackets or sweaters, must be all navy, or a RCBA hoodie, sweater, sweatshirt, or RCBA letter jacket
- Socks can be knee highs, crew socks, or anklets in either white or navy.

D. High School Boys...

- Navy blue or khaki pants or shorts
- Burgundy, powder blue, or navy polo shirts; white monogrammed polo shirt
- The length of the shirts must be below the waistline, and cannot have any kind of label or logo on the front.
- Shoes can be either all black or all white tennis shoes, or black or brown dress shoes. No flip flops, slip on moccasins, bedroom slippers, or colored tennis shoes
- Outerwear worn in class, such as jackets or sweaters, must be all navy, or a RCBA hoodie, sweater, sweatshirt, or RCBA letter jacket
- Socks must be white crew or anklets, or black dress socks

E. Other Dress Code Policies....

- School approved PE uniforms must be worn during PE classes. Uniforms can be purchased in the school office.
- **Spirit Dress Day:** Jeans, khakis, shorts, and a RCBA t-shirt may be worn for Spirit Dress Day. If students choose not to wear an approved t-shirt or athletic jersey, then they must be in uniform. Students may wear shoes other than the required uniform shoes such as boots, or closed-toe sandals. Flip-flops may never be worn as part of Spirit dress. Jeans may not be ripped, have holes or come below the natural waist.
- A student may not wear Spirit dress if he/she receives a morning detention any day that week. Spirit dress may also be denied a student if the student's behavior warrants that consequence, as determined by the administration.
- **Special Birthday Dress Day:** A student may request a special dress day from the administration on a day during their birthday month. It is the student's responsibility to seek permission before wearing special dress. The student's birthday will be checked and a specific day for wearing it will be assigned. If a student's birthday falls in the summer, special dress can be granted for their "Half-birthday" month; for example, students with June birthdays can wear Birthday dress in December.

F. General Appearance...

- **Girls:** No visible body piercings, tattoos, streaked or hair dyed in an unnatural color are allowed. Make-up can be worn in moderation. If ears are pierced, then no more than two piercings per ear is allowed.

- **Boys:** No visible body piercings, tattoos, streaked or hair dyed in an unnatural color are allowed. Hair must be well-groomed. The length must be above the shirt collar, may not cover the ears, and at or above the eyebrows. Faces must be clean-shaven.

Parents: Please check you students' uniforms before sending them to school. If clothing does not follow uniform guidelines or is deemed inappropriate by the administration, the student will be sent to the office to call home for a change of clothes. Repeated offenses will result in a detention.

XI. Parents

A. Parent Partners Organization...

RCBA Parent Partners is a parent organization supporting River City Believers Academy. The PPO's mission is to support students, school faculty, and other RCBA parents through volunteer work and fundraising. We also help one another by forming a close, supportive community that continues beyond the middle and high school years.

To join the PPO you must fill out the membership form, and pay a yearly fee of \$10.00 per family. The PPO meets on a regular basis throughout the year to discuss and implement ways to support the school.

B. Volunteer Hours...

Each RCBA family is asked to commit to giving at least 15 volunteer hours each semester to support the school. These hours can come from helping in the classrooms, the office, chaperoning field trips, substituting, assisting with fundraisers, or a host of other opportunities. Please sign the volunteer log in the office as you serve. Volunteers are vital to the efficient functioning of our school.

C. Parent- Teacher Communication...

Parent-teacher communication is essential to the educational process. The main source of communication from the administration comes from the weekly *Navigator*, our website, and RenWeb. Teachers will communicate through RenWeb, e-mail, or phone calls. There are times when the communication between teachers and student is incomplete; hence, you are urged to confer with your child's teachers before making it an administrative matter. If you have any question or a problem related to school, the principles of Matthew 18 should be followed to resolve the issue.

D. RenWeb...

RenWeb is a school database system that is available to parents at any time by using a login and password. When using RenWeb for the first time, please go to www.renweb.com. On the left side of the screen, you can find and click on ParentsWeb Login. Enter the school code BA-TX in the appropriate field, and enter your e-mail address on file with the school office. If you are a first time user, click on the New Parent Login tab and a password will be mailed to you. Once you receive your password, come back to this screen and enter it in the password box in order to

enter the system. Once you are set up and logged in, you will have access to daily lesson plans, homework assignments, your student's grades, and report cards.

Returning families who are not new to RenWeb, must log on at the beginning of each school year.

E. Fundraising...

As is the nature of any privately-funded educational institution, all of the funds necessary to provide students with the highest quality programs possible cannot come from tuition alone. Throughout the year there will be several opportunities for students and families to participate in events and fundraising activities that serve to generate funds to help keep the cost of tuition to a minimum. We strongly encourage each family to participate by both giving and volunteering.

XII. Financial Policies

Tuition and registration are annual fees. Income from registration pays for books, yearly supplies, testing fees, and other operational costs. The funds from tuition pay for employee's salaries for the current year. Our goal is to hold tuition to the lowest reasonable level while still providing the best possible educational opportunities for our students. For the convenience of our families, we offer the option of making tuition payments monthly, semi-annually, or annually. The monthly payment option is interest free. However you choose to pay, families are obligated for the entire annual tuition.

If a student is withdrawn or dismissed for any reason other than a military or job transfer, the family is liable for the next three months' tuition. The school's budget is based on a particular number of students, and if a family withdraws their student(s), the expenses remain the same. It places an undue burden on the remaining families to make up the loss of revenue if a student is withdrawn. Extenuating circumstances may be evaluated when presented to and evaluated by the school principal.

Any family whose annual fees are not paid in full by June 30th of the current year, will not be allowed to re-enroll, nor will academic or medical records be released to any other school, Christian or public.

A. Tuition Options...

- The annual tuition may be paid in ten equal monthly payments beginning in July and ending in April.
- The annual tuition may be paid in two equal payments, the first payment being in July and the second in December. (No discounts apply)
- The annual tuition may be paid in full at the time of registration. (No discounts apply)

Monthly payments are due in the office by the 5th of each month. Payments received after the 15th of the month will be subject to a \$25 late fee. Students whose accounts are 30 or more days late will not be admitted to class until the account is brought current. Returned checks will incur a \$35 fee. The office will notify you immediately if a check is returned. In the event that unexpected circumstances occur that will cause your payment to be late, or if you need to pay tuition on a

different day in the month, it is your responsibility to contact the principal to make other arrangements. Payments may be mailed, brought by the school office, or dropped off at the church office. Monthly account statements will be sent via e-mail.

B. Family Discounts...

RCBA offers family discounts when two or more children from a family are enrolled in the preschool or school. A 10% tuition discount will be applied to the second child in a family and a 15% tuition discount will be applied to all children after the second. A 10% tuition discount is also given to all River Community Church members. The family must be on the church rolls and not just considered 'attendees'. Registration fees are not discounted for multiple students. A \$50 early registration discount applies for students who register for the following year on or before March 31st.

C. Withdrawal Procedures...

- A minimum of two weeks' notice is required in writing and must be given to the school office.
- Parents must request the appropriate paperwork by filling out a withdrawal form at which time the Principal will process the request. An exit interview may be requested by the Principal to discuss withdrawal issues.
- All teachers must clear the student. All books must be turned in, and all fees must be paid in full before any records can be released. Any books that are lost, damaged beyond use, or not turned in will be subject to the replacement cost of the book.
- No portion of tuition will be refunded for any reason other than military or job transfers unless the Principal determines there are extenuating circumstances. This also applies to students who are dismissed for disciplinary or academic reasons, and all SEVIS students.

D. International Students...

River City Believers Academy is a SEVIS certified school, offering the opportunity of a Christian education to international students. All international students are subject to the same admissions policies and procedures as all other students with the following additions: An I-20 cannot be given until the registration fee of \$275.00 is paid and the student's English proficiency is tested to determine placement. In the event that an incoming student's visa is not accepted and the student does not enter into the U.S. for schooling, a refund of \$150.00 will be given upon written request.

XIII. General Information

A. Law Enforcement Officials...

When a suspected violation of criminal law involving the operation of the school has occurred on the school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity, law enforcement officials will be notified and their presence requested for the questioning of suspected students. Reasonable attempts will be made to contact a student's parents or guardian who, unless an emergency exists, shall be given the opportunity to confer with the student and be present during questioning.

B. Search and Seizure...

School officials have the right to search or conduct a search of lockers, backpacks, or vehicles when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search will reveal evidence that the student has violated, or is in violation, of the law or rules of the school. Searches may be conducted of students' property when at school or at school-related functions.

C. Unauthorized Items...

Any items that are considered a disruption during class such as pagers, lighters, CD players, walkmans, laser pointers, or cell phones can and will be taken by the teacher if they are used during class time. If a student's cell phone is taken by the teacher, the student will receive a warning and the phone will be turned in to the office. Any subsequent violation may mean that the student will lose cell phone privileges as determined by the administration.

D. Public Displays of Affection...

Whereas attractions to a person of the opposite sex is natural, students are not allowed to show affection by touching, hugging, holding hands or kissing a person of the opposite sex during school or at any school-sponsored events. Doing so will result in disciplinary actions.

E. School Insurance...

Your child has accident insurance that covers accidents on school property, travel as a group under school supervision to any scheduled school activity, or injuries related to school-sponsored events. RCBA is the second carrier if you have primary coverage. This insurance does not cover accidents involving student drivers on or off school property.

F. The School Office...

Students may request to use the phone in the school office in the case of an emergency or illness with the permission of the office staff. Students are NOT allowed to use the school copier/printer for printing any homework assignment without permission from the administration. If permission is given, there will be a 25 cent per page charge.

G. Student Drivers...

Parking on campus is a privilege offered to all students with valid driver's licenses. Students wishing to drive to school must turn in a fee of \$5, and all information about the car the student will be driving to school, such as make, model and license plate number, to the school office within the first week of school. A student can lose his/her parking privilege if he/she is found speeding on campus, parking illegally, vandalizing another student's car, or leaving campus without permission. If the violations are considered minor, then the student could be assessed a fine. Refusal to pay the fine could result in the student's loss of parking privilege.

In addition, all students driving to school must submit:

- Proof of insurance, and
- A current written permission form from a parent or guardian

Students must park in the Redland Road side of the parking lot. Students may not go to their cars during the school day, nor sit in their cars while waiting for school to start. Students are strictly prohibited from transporting other students to and from campus without written permission from a parent or guardian. Junior and senior students ONLY are allowed to leave during lunchtime, with written permission from their parents.

Anytime a student needs to leave campus for any reason, he/she must have their parent or guardian contact the school office by phone or note, and then sign out in the office. Students who do not adhere to these rules will lose their driving privileges.

H. Campus Hours...

The school is open each day from 7:00 am until 4:00 pm. All students must come to the Youth Center where they will be monitored by a staff member. Students are not permitted to hang out in the parking lot, locker area, or play basketball in the parking lot in the mornings. At 4:00 pm the school doors will be locked and students will be asked to wait outside the building. There will be no supervision by RCBA staff members at this time. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis when requested by a parent.

I. Campus Visitors...

All visitors and parents must sign in at the school office before visiting the campus or the classrooms.

J. Change of Address or Phone Numbers...

It is very important for the safety of your children and for the purpose of communication that all addresses and phone numbers are current. If you move or change contact information, please inform the school office as soon as possible so that we may update the information in our records.

K. Computers...

Students are expected to follow all the instructions concerning the care and use of the RCBA computers. We recognize that the Internet is a valuable educational tool and RCBA will take reasonable efforts to attempt to limit access to objectionable material. Students are not permitted to use RCBA computers without the presence of an adult or without permission from the administration. Students are not allowed to access any social networks such as "Facebook" and are not permitted to hang out and play games in the media center.

L. School Equipment and Textbooks...

RCBA attempts to provide its students with the equipment and tools needed for education. Items such as computers, microscopes, physical education and sports equipment, chairs, and desks are all items that need to be taken care of properly. Purposefully destroying or damaging any of these items will result in a fine that is equal to what it will cost to replace the item.

Textbooks are issued by the school at the beginning of the year. Teachers will assess the condition of each textbook before handing them out. Students whose textbooks are lost or returned in unusable condition will be charged the cost of the book to replace it.

M. Printed Material...

The use of the RCBA logo and/or school name on any printed material such as, but not limited to, t-shirts, bumper stickers, banners, or decals is strictly prohibited without prior permission of the school administration. This applies to athletic t-shirts as well.

Policies Acceptance

Please print a copy, sign, and turn this page in to the office.

I have read the contents of this handbook carefully and completely. I acknowledge that I understand the policies set forth in it. I agree to support and abide by these policies. I further understand that all conflicts will be handled in the following manner:

1. I will contact my child's teacher or the person whom I have a conflict with to discuss the matter in accordance with the instruction in Matthew 18:16.
2. If an agreement or understanding is not reached, I will confer with the teacher or the person with whom I have a conflict and the principal in a joint meeting.

I understand that the principal of RCBA reserves the right to make any additions, deletions, or alterations deemed necessary to this Handbook without prior notification, and the Principal reserves the right to interpret, execute, and expand all school policies as set forth in this handbook.

I understand the Non-Discriminatory Policy as it is stated in the front of the Handbook. I further understand that if I don't read the Handbook, and return this page signed to the school office, my child(ren) will not be permitted to wear Spirit Dress until I do.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date