

BUG OUT PROGRAM

BUG OUT is a program sponsored by the Student Council to reward those students who raise one academic subject by one letter grade from the 1st to 2nd quarter and the 2nd to 3rd quarter or students earning straight A's for two consecutive quarters. While raising at least one subject the student must maintain their grades in the other subjects. The Student Council has a pizza party for all those who qualify.

COMPUTER EDUCATION

The River Ridge School District provides for computer use by students in the Middle School. A technology curriculum is being designed to prepare students for the technological and social impact computers will have upon their lives. The curriculum will involve additional instruction in the Middle School's Computer Lab.

With the inclusion of the Internet in our classrooms and lab, students will have to have a Technology Agreement signed by both student and parent to be able to use the Internet.

(see Appendix for a copy of the technology agreement)

CURRICULUM

6th

Literature
English
Science
Social Studies
Math
Exploratories
 *Computer
 *Modular Technology
 *Art
 *FACE

PE
Study Hall
*Band, Chorus

7th

Literature
English
Science/Health
U.S.History
Math or Pre-Algebra
Exploratories
 *Modular Technology
 *Art
 *FACE
 *Spanish

PE
Study Hall
*Band, Chorus

8th

Literature
English
Science
U.S.History
Pre-Algebra or Algebra
Exploratories
 *Computer
 *Modular Technology
 *Art
 *FACE

PE
Study Hall
*Band, Chorus

* Band, Chorus, and Yearbook are electives at the Middle School. The electives are scheduled during 3rd hour study hall. Students have an opportunity to exhibit their work and/or perform for an audience twice a year.

EIGHTH GRADE PROMOTION

In order for a student to be promoted from eighth grade to a freshman in River Ridge High School, the following requirements must be met:

1. A student must successfully complete the study of English (grammar and composition), Literature, Science, History, Math and Exploratories. [Please see Middle School Curriculum]. See the Promotion and Retention section of this handbook for complete details on requirements for promotion to the next grade level.
2. A student must complete the requirements prescribed by the Physical Education curriculum.
3. A student must complete a study of the United States Constitution, Illinois Constitution, and a study of the American Flag. The student must pass a written examination on the United States Constitution.

Should a student fail eighth grade, the student may be retained for an additional year at the same grade level. After consultation with members of the academic staff, the principal will make the decision, and parents will be notified.

Only if the parents sign a "Refusal of Grade Level Retention" against the recommendation of the professional staff, and state that the parents assume full responsibility for any future failure by the student, will placement into the next grade be considered. *Nevertheless, the Middle School Principal makes the final decision as to grade promotion, retention, or placement.*

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Following are the extra-curricular activities in which middle school students may participate:

School Play	Academic Bowl
Student Council	Yearbook
Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball
Girls Volleyball	Boys Football
Cheerleading	

**Basketball, Football, Volleyball, Cheerleading, and Academic Bowl are only available for seventh and eighth graders.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are curriculum-oriented, and must be approved by the building principal and the superintendent. All students must be included on field trips that are directly related to classroom subject matter and grades. At the time of the field trip your child's teacher will send home a field trip permission slip to be signed giving permission for your child to be included on the trip. **The 8th grade trip to Springfield will have a few provisions in order for students to qualify to go. If a student has been suspended for a total of 3 days or more during the school year he/she will not be eligible to go on the trip. This total includes both in school suspensions and out of school suspensions, which means any combination leading to three or more suspensions will disqualify the student from going on the trip.**

GUIDANCE

A counselor is available to assist you in planning programs to achieve your educational objectives. The counselor will, with the aid of the faculty, help you select a course of study, develop a class schedule, and organize a sound educational program. In addition, the counselor can provide career information, study help, and interpretation of test results. You may also discuss school, social or family concerns, or any other questions with the counselor. Your parents are welcome and encouraged to utilize the counselor as a resource concerning educational programs, student/family concerns, or personal development

HOMEWORK

Homework is a very important aspect of the instructional program at the Middle School. Students may have homework in one or more of their major subjects EACH night. Every student is to use an assignment notebook to develop orderly work habits, and to relay information about the work between teacher and parent. The Middle School staff believes that homework is an important part of the educational process:

1. Homework assists students through reinforcement and practice.
2. Homework helps students develop study skills and essential habits.
3. Homework contributes to the growth of responsibility, self-direction, and independent learning by students.

In view of these fundamental objectives, teachers may assign homework to reinforce learning within the class, to complete unfinished work, to study for tests, to prepare oral and written reports, to create projects, to provide enrichment activities, to allow for extra credit, to extend learning, to make up missed work, or to prepare for the next day's lesson.

Students at the Middle School are expected to maintain a neat, legible assignment book; to do all homework listed in the notebook thoroughly and accurately; to turn in homework on time; to make corrections on homework marked and returned by the teacher; and to show homework to parents each night.

If it seems that your child is having difficulty completing the required assignments, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

LIBRARY/ MEDIA CENTER

The River Ridge library contains a Library/Media Center with books, computers, software, videos, filmstrips, audiocassettes, and more. Students may come in to study, to do research, to seek answers to questions, or, simply, to find a good book to read.

Throughout the school year, students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will be allowed to check out books for a period of two weeks. No fines are charged for overdue books, but students with overdue or lost books must return them or pay for them before they may take out any other books. Overdue books are also subject to demerits.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

Each student will be issued a hall locker and lock and a PE locker and lock. Lockers and locks are the property of the school, with fees being assessed for the purpose of maintenance and replacement. (A \$5.00 fee will be assessed for a lost or damaged lock.) Lockers are expected to be kept locked at all times to eliminate the possibility of lost items. Lockers are intended for storing books, coats, lunches, gym clothes, and school supplies. Students do not have the right to store contraband items such as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, or weapons. River Ridge Middle School expects that students' privacy will be honored concerning their lockers. Students are expected to stay out of another student's locker.

Lockers may be inspected *periodically, at random, and without notice* throughout the school year. In case of reported or suspected storage of illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or other forbidden items, school district authorities may use state and local police officers and/or canines to inspect for illegal contraband.

Students should not bring large amounts of money to school to keep in their lockers. Students should not keep anything in their lockers they would not want their parents to find. ONLY MAGNETS OR LOCKER PUTTY may be used to affix pictures and items to the inside of locker doors—NO TAPE. Lockers should be kept clean and neat, and will be checked periodically to assure that doors can close properly. Finally, students must empty lockers at the end of the school year. Any items left in the lockers will be disposed of.

LUNCH RECESS

Supervision will be provided for students in the gymnasium during a portion of the lunch period. This privilege will be taken away based on student behavior.

MERIT-DEMERIT PROGRAM

The faculty, staff and administration of River Ridge Middle School wish to establish the best possible learning environment for all RRMS students. The Merit-Demerit Program described below is a discipline system utilized to insure such an environment by setting behavioral expectations that help our students become responsible, self-disciplined and academically successful individuals. Through this program students who choose responsible behavior are rewarded with the privilege of participating in specially planned merit activities. Most importantly, students who meet behavioral expectations are also more likely to achieve academic success.

Unacceptable behavior threatens the learning environment of the individual student as well as the collective student body and will not be tolerated. Demerits are used to increase parental communication, awareness, and to encourage a student to correct inappropriate behaviors. An individual student's accumulation of demerits will lead to that student receiving after school detentions and losing out on the opportunity of participating in the specially planned merit activities

Special surprise events will be provided on an unannounced basis for the students who are exhibiting acceptable behavior. These events will involve students who have not received demerits in the five days prior to the activity. These merit activities will be during 6th hour activity period. During the year, merit field trips are planned for students who are not on the restricted privilege list or the academic ineligibility list.

Students who have received no demerits will receive special recognition at the end -of-the-year River Ridge Middle School Assembly. Of course, the greatest reward for good school citizenship includes a student's report card. Positive behavior leads to positive grades leading to, above all, a positive self-concept.

DEMERITS: Documenting behavior through demerits will allow staff to monitor student behavior, allowing us to make appropriate interventions when needed. The following are guidelines for demerits earned for unacceptable conduct. More, or fewer, demerits may be given depending on the severity of the problem. The judgment of the staff involved must be used in determining the final number of demerits issued for each offense. It also should be noted that demerits are not the only consequence that may be used in dealing with student behavior. Keeping this in mind, the following are suggested guidelines:

SOME INFRACTIONS THAT ARE MERELY GUIDELINES FOR DEMERITS--STAFF HAS THE DISCRETION IN DETERMINING THE FINAL NUMBER OF DEMERITS ISSUED FOR EACH OFFENSE.

1. Unprepared for class as per instructor
2. Miscellaneous (other)
3. Overdue library books (per day)
4. Inappropriate language and behavior
5. Defiance or disrespect of ANY school personnel (including sub teachers)
6. Disrespect or harassment to fellow students
7. Violation of the district electronic use policy
8. Deliberate damage to school or private property
9. Stealing
10. Cheating
11. Fighting

Extreme or illegal behaviors (including but not limited to, possession, use or under the influence of illegal substances; acts that endanger the safety of self, other students and staff) will be dealt with by the administration, school board and any other authorities appropriate to the situation.

If a student receives a demerit, a copy of the student discipline report will be sent home to the parent, if it is the student's first demerit the parent can sign the demerit form and have the student return it. If the student returns it the next school day, the demerit will be erased.

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| 3 demerits | one week of eating lunch in a designated area |
| 6 demerits | one detention and a week of eating lunch in a designated area and not going on the merit trip. Also, a behavior improvement plan will be sent home to the parents which will provide students the opportunity to erase their demerits. |
| 9 demerits | two detentions and one week of eating lunch in a designated area. |
| 12 demerits | three detentions and one week of eating lunch in a designated area. |

HOMEWORK POLICY: Each incomplete homework assignment for each class results in a demerit. If a student refuses to accept the responsibility of completing assigned schoolwork, it is interpreted as a behavioral problem, and demerits will be given. Every attempt will be made to be certain that the student understands, and is capable of, completing the assigned work. Since much of the assigned work is work that is to be completed beyond regular school hours at a student's home, there must be parent communication to be sure that missed or incomplete work is dealt with as a behavioral, rather than as an academic, deficiency.

PRIVILEGES: Participating in any activity other than the students' required class schedule is considered a privilege. If a student's required class schedule is interrupted by an **alternate** educational activity, the student will be allowed to participate.

LOSS OF PRIVILEGES: Students placed on the Restricted Privilege List have lost the privilege to attend school activities other than those required for their regular class schedule. A student may attend an after school activity **ONLY IF** directly supervised by a **PARENT**.

RESTRICTED PRIVILEGE LIST: Students placed on the Restricted Privilege List will not attend extracurricular activities or merit activities until they are off the restricted privilege list. On the day of a merit field trip, students on the restricted privilege list will be expected to attend school.

TEAMS: River Ridge Middle School wants to insure students' successes, create opportunities to learn, and help develop responsible citizenship within its students. To successfully achieve these goals, students will belong to a small group (team). The team leader will be a middle school faculty member who will monitor individual students' progress, communicate to parents, and promote success.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The River Ridge Board of Education, administration, and staff want students to be successful. Every opportunity, including special help, will be offered students to achieve that success. The responsibility to provide an appropriate education rests with the District. The responsibility to take advantage of these opportunities rests with the student and the student's family.

All decisions concerning the placement of the student must be made in terms of the individual involved. Students are promoted to a higher grade based on academic achievement; mastery of minimal skills; maturity; and regular attendance. No specific rules can be laid down which apply to every individual in cases of retention, however. Many factors are taken into account.

It may be necessary for the professional staff to recommend retention. Any student receiving 7 or more F's for the entire school year will be retained. This total is based on a cumulative count of the 4 nine week grading periods. There are a total of 28 classes in one year for a middle school student (this includes Exploratories, which WILL be factored as ½ credits into the total count). If the student receives 7 or more F's out of these 28 classes he/she will be retained. Parents will be notified at the earliest opportunity.

In all cases, parents will be invited and encouraged to attend a staffing to discuss the possibility of retention, and to help outline the best educational program for the child. For retention to be successful, parental cooperation is very important. If the recommended retention is not acceptable to the parents, the parents will be asked to sign a statement indicating that they are opposed to the school's retention recommendation. The parents, in signing, assume responsibility for the student's grade placement. The building principal, however, makes the final decision for retention.

REPORT CARDS

The River Ridge School District is on nine-week grading periods, and reporting of grades to parents of middle school students is completed at these time intervals.

Student progress, grades 6 through 8, is rated on the following:

A+ = 4.2 grade points	A = 4.0 grade points	A- = 3.8 grade points
B+ = 3.2 grade points	B = 3.0 grade points	B- = 2.8 grade points
C+ = 2.2 grade points	C = 2.0 grade points	C- = 1.8 grade points
D+ = 1.2 grade points	D = 1.0 grade points	D- = 0.8 grade points
F = 0		

Mid-term reports are sent home with every student and are to be brought to their parent/guardians. Report cards will be mailed home during the week following the end of each quarter.

SCHOOL DAY

School begins at 7:50 a.m. and dismisses at 3:03 p.m. Students will be allowed in the building at 7:40 a.m. Students are asked not to arrive prior to 7:40 a.m. Any student arriving before this time is to remain outside the school building unless the weather dictates otherwise. Many school-endorsed activities are carried on either before or after school, in which case the sponsor/coach will assume responsibility for the supervision of such participants.

In brief, students are never to be in the building when school is not in session unless under direct supervision of an employee of the Board of Education. Students from other buildings are not to be in the building either during school hours or before or after school unless they have signed in at the office. Deviations of these policies will need administrative approval.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education services are provided by District #210 through the Northwest Special Education Agency in Freeport and are made available on a specific-need basis. If you suspect your child may qualify for special education services you may request that a referral and testing be made. School personnel may also initiate such requests. See the building principal for further details.

Students identified as qualifying for Special Education services are under the supervision of a certified Middle School Special Education teacher and will likely spend at least part of the school day in the Resource Room. For some academic subjects and for other periods of the day, such as Study Hall, Art, Band, and Chorus, Special Education students are often mainstreamed.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR 6-8 BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The goal of a school discipline plan is to establish a systematic plan for both in class and out of class behavior. In general, students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect towards all staff members and other students. *This applies to the regular school day, and to any school - sponsored events, such as away games, either on or off -campus on a 24-hour basis.*

IN - CLASS BEHAVIOR:

The classroom is the domain of the teacher and the teacher's students. Classroom behavior and conduct will be dealt with through demerits from the teacher in accordance with the guidelines set by the Middle School Merit/Demerit Committee. Disciplinary actions such as removal from the group, loss of privileges, a phone call home, special assignments, detentions, parent conferences, in-school, and out-of-school suspensions are allowed in conjunction with the Merit/Demerit Plan as approved by the School Board. Any student who distracts or disrupts the classroom learning environment will be subject to demerits or more rigorous disciplinary action.

SEVERE CLAUSE:

In cases of bodily danger to self or others, destruction to property, or possession of *drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, or weapons*, the student will receive the maximum number of demerits allowed and be sent directly to the office.

EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL MAY BE THE CONSEQUENCE OF EXTREME BEHAVIOR AND IS AN ACTION THAT CAN BE TAKEN ONLY BY THE RIVER RIDGE DISTRICT #210 SCHOOL BOARD.

OUT-OF-CLASS BEHAVIOR:

Threats, verbal abuse, harassment, or physical violence against any employee of River Ridge School District #210 and, therefore, the State of Illinois will not be tolerated in any building, on any campus, or off the campus of the River Ridge School District. This policy is in effect 24 hours a day and covers the employee's family, home, auto, and personal possessions as well. Violations will be dealt with by demerits issued by any staff member or more rigorous disciplinary actions, if needed.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council at River Ridge Middle School is made up of students from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Their grade-level peers select representatives. Sixth, seventh and eighth grade officers and representatives are elected in the spring by the student body.

The purpose of the organization is to establish mutual understanding between students and teachers, and to encourage enthusiasm and spirit towards the school.