Welcome to Ronan Middle School

What We Believe at RMS

..........RMS Code of Character .........

Respect and Responsibility

RESPECT … for all.

Respect (n): willingness to show consideration for the feelings and ideas of others.

When I am respectful, I treat others with courtesy. I show appreciation for the contributions of others. I will seek solutions to conflicts without using violence by showing respect and keeping others and myself safe. I will show respect and compassion for my school, my environment, and all living things.

RESPONSIBILITY … with no excuses.

Responsibility (n): being reliable and accountable for obligations and duties.

When I am responsible I am reliable and trustworthy. I use sound judgment to make good choices and learn from the consequences of my mistakes. I take the initiative, thinking and working independently to complete my homework, keep the area clean, and encourage others to do the same.

On behalf of the Ronan Middle School Staff, we would like to welcome you for the coming year. We look forward to assisting you in fulfilling your educational goals. Ronan has a history of fine academic and extracurricular accomplishments. We encourage you to strive for high academic standards and pursue excellence. RMS can offer you a rich experience. Involve yourself to help reach your potential. Staff members will be here to assist as you journey your way through the middle school years. Please read through this handbook as it can provide useful information for you. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

RMS Staff

School District No. 30/RMS

Contact Information

All district employees can be reached by dialing 676-3390 and the appropriate extension.

Mark Johnston, Superintendent ext. 7200
Sandra Beal, Principal ext. 7400
sandra.beal@ronank12.edu
Ryan Wells, Vice Principal ext. 7400
ryan.wells@ronank12.edu
Kierra Moll, Secretary ext. 7400
kierra.moll@ronank12.edu
Lorillie Nelson, Attendance ext. 7433
lorillie.nelson@ronank12.edu
Jennifer Cheff, Counselor ext. 7402
jennifer.cheff@ronank12.edu
Charity Cheff, Special Services ext. 7450
Brian Hines, SRO ext. 7461
Matt Gaut, Transportation ext. 7230
Brad Benson, Maintenance ext. 7230
Marsha Wartick, Food Services ext. 7226
Welcome Parents!

RMS Orientation & BBQ: The school year at RMS is kicked off with an orientation and BBQ on August 29th from 5:00 – 6:30. Students and parents have a chance to meet school staff and get information about the upcoming school year.

Parent Teacher Conferences: Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on November 7th & 9th. Teachers and administrators are available to discuss student performance and progress at any time.

Student Enrollment: When a student is enrolled in school, a copy of his/her birth certificate, social security card, and immunization records are needed. A request for records is also completed at the time of enrollment in order to obtain records from a previous school. Student enrollment also requires completing an enrollment form, student insurance information, lunch form, permission for emergency treatment, and Authorization for Student Release. In addition, if a student has Title VII eligibility, tribal enrollment numbers will be needed. Students will be given an agenda and a lunch menu.

Parent Information: Parents are asked to update the contact information on file in the office whenever a change occurs. It is essential that current phone numbers and physical addresses are on file in the event of an emergency. Parents are also asked to provide the name of a relative or close friend who may be called in the event of an emergency when the parent cannot be reached. An update of student information form is available in the RMS Office.
Student Recognition Assemblies / House Meetings: There will be designated dates at RMS for staff to recognize excellence in the form of a student recognition assembly / House Meetings.

Parent Volunteers: There are many opportunities for parents to help in computer labs, support classes, library, and/or regular classroom activities. In addition, parents may assist with tutoring, clerical work, and preparation of instructional materials on a regular basis. Contact the administration for more information.

Parents, visitors, and/or volunteers are asked to sign in and out at the RMS Office.

Teachers welcome the presence of parents to assist with field trips, classroom activities, and projects.

Support Programs

Special Education Program(s): RMS has certified special education teachers that serve students with varying disabilities. Students receive support services in their classroom and in the resource room according to their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). A district speech therapist, school psychologist, occupational and physical therapists are available to provide related services to eligible students. Instructional/behavior aides are available to provide additional support for students.

Counseling Program: RMS provides counseling and social services assistance to students, parents, and staff and includes community resources in a variety of ways. It is comprehensive and balanced and strives to address responsive services for all participants in the school experience. Guidance curriculum provides information, materials, and resources to all grade levels. The intention of the curriculum is to give students necessary tools to make positive choices.

SRO Program: The School Resource Officer for School District No. 30 is Lake County Deputy Sheriff Officer Brian Hines. He is an employee of Lake County and partners with District administration. Officer Hines is often called upon to resolve a very diverse range of problems at RMS, within the community of Ronan/Pablo, and within the agencies involved at RMS. One of the most important tools the SRO has at his disposal is the ability to “be” and “use” available resources. The SRO provides a proactive approach to problem solving in the school and assists us in providing a safe and secure school environment. The SRO is trained in dealing with law enforcement, law-related issues such as domestic violence and child abuse, youth and Youth Court Services, and educational services pertaining to Montana and Federal Laws.

Student Activities

RMS believes that all students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities. Being involved in school activities helps students gain new friends, explore interests, discover new abilities, and simply have fun. Colleges look closely for a rich history of extracurricular activities in student records, as well.

Student Council: Students are encouraged to take a leadership role at RMS by getting involved in helping lead RMS. Student Council officers and representatives are elected by their peers. Ask your homeroom teacher how to get involved or visit with their teachers, Mr. Wells, Vice Principal and/or Ms. Beal, RMS Principal.

4th Grade Transition: 4th graders from the two elementary schools begin in April to learn about life at Ronan Middle School. In May, 4th grade students will come to the middle school with their teacher for a walkthrough to become acquainted with the facility, students, and staff.

8th Grade Transition Activity: 8th grade students begin to learn about life at Ronan High School in the springtime. In May, 8th graders will meet with the high school administration and counselor to discuss class options and what to expect as an incoming freshman.

Academic Bowl: A team consisting of five 7th graders and five 8th graders, with two alternates, represents RMS in Lake County academic competitions. Student teams from St. Ignatius, Charlo, Polson, and Ronan meet four times throughout the school year, with each school hosting a meet. Teams compete by answering a variety of questions in history, math and logic, language arts, and science. The competition has both a written and an
oral format. Team members practice and work hard in order to be competitive but also have a great time while learning!

**Competitive Athletics:** Program offerings include grades six through eight. Students who are serving an after-school detention must serve the consequences on the day it is assigned before competing in an athletic competition. RMS athletics consist of football, cross-country, basketball, wrestling, track and field, tennis, and volleyball. All athletics and extracurricular activities require a student to purchase an activity card to participate. An activity card costs $25. This entitles the bearer to free admission to all RHS/RMS home events except tournaments. Students who participate in extracurricular events will be given the eligibility guidelines for the sport. Students’ eligibility shall be determined at the end of each quarter as follows:

- A participant must be registered and enrolled in School District No. 30.
- Each participant is required to pass five classes each quarter. Students who have an “F” at quarter or midterm will be required to attend after school study sessions (see activities handbook). If a student-athlete is struggling in a course at any time an administrator may require the student to fill out the Athletic Eligibility Weekly Sign-off Form temporarily until the student’s grades are improved.

Sixth grade students entering Ronan Middle School are eligible for the first semester of middle school.

Sports physicals are required prior to participation.

**Sportsmanship**

It is expected that all athletes and fans demonstrate good sportsmanship, which is shown by handling both defeat and victory in a gracious and respectable manner. Poor sportsmanship is unacceptable and berating opposing players, using artificial noisemakers, making obscene cheers or gestures, or complaining about officials will be addressed per district guidelines.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

The federal law, No Child Left Behind Act of 2000, requires the learning community to be accountable for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Making Adequate Yearly Progress is a shared responsibility between all parties. Students will be assessed annually. Tests include Northwest Evaluation Association MAP testing MontCAS and SBAC.

**Grading:** The District believes that the cooperation of school and home is a vital ingredient in the growth and education of the student and recognizes the responsibility to keep parents informed of student welfare and progress in school. Parents shall be notified in writing by RMS staff of their student’s progress at mid-term and at the end of each quarter. Mid-term progress reports are mailed to parents during the grading term. The RMS administration encourages contacts by the classroom teachers to parents regarding student progress. Parent-teacher conferences will be held at least once each year. Parents may access student grade information online at www.ronank12.edu through the PowerSchool link. The school will provide a secure username and password for each student’s parent or guardian. Parents should contact the teacher if questions arise regarding student grades.

**Grading Scales:** The standard grading percentage is used at RMS in determining **final quarter grades** that are submitted to the RMS office, which include:

- Excellent A 90 % – 100 %
- Above Average B 80 % – 89 %
- Average C 70 % – 79 %
- Below Average D 60 % – 69 %
- Failing F Less than 60 %

**Homework:** The District believes that homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. Homework may be assigned to help student’s master specific skills which have been presented in class, to gain the maximum benefits from future lessons, to provide students with opportunities to transfer specific skills or concepts to new situations, and/or to require students to integrate many skills and concepts in order to produce original responses. RMS has a Zero Procedure for homework. Students are expected to get homework in on the due date. If this does not happen, the student will be given one additional day to complete the assignment (late reduction determined by the teacher). If the student does not have the assignment at the beginning of the second class period, an afterschool detention will be assigned to the student. The student will bring the afterschool detention slip home for the parent/guardian to sign and return to the assigning teacher. Failure to return the slip by 8:35 a.m. will result in a lunch detention, and
the school will contact the parent/guardian regarding this assigned detention. We strongly encourage students and parents to routinely check PowerSchool in an effort to ensure students’ work is being completed.

**Make-Up Work:** The District’s policy regarding student absence places the responsibility for a student’s attendance directly on the student and his/her parents. An excused absence will permit a student to make up the work missed. It is imperative that the student contact each teacher on the first day of class after an absence to receive make-up work. Students are required to make up missed assignments as soon as possible. Each teacher will supply the student with a written statement, at the beginning of each course, regarding make-up work, tests, homework, and assignments. Failure to assume responsibility for make-up work may result in lower grades for the work missed. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate and follow through with the completion of the work.

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**Student Health**

**Prescribed medications** are to be turned into the school nurse for storage in a locked cabinet. The school nurse and/or trained designee will distribute the medication as prescribed by the doctor. All medication must come in the ORIGINAL pharmacy bottle. The pharmacist will give you a second bottle for school, if needed. Parents need to fill out proper paperwork for dispensing of both prescribed medication and over-the-counter medication such as ibuprofen, Tylenol, or cough drops. Students are not to keep medication in their bags, lockers or have it in their possession. A parent or guardian must bring the prescription medication to school.

**Accidents/Illness:** Occasionally students are injured or become ill while at school. Should a child become injured or ill at school, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed on the child’s enrollment forms will be contacted. It is important that school staff be kept informed of current addresses and telephone numbers. If we cannot reach you, we will use our best judgment in deciding what care is needed.

**Lice:** Children who have live head lice will be sent home. They must be treated and combed with a nit removing comb. Upon return to school after treatment they will be re-examined by the school nurse and if live head lice are found they will be sent home. We strongly encourage parents to routinely check their children for head lice.

**Immunizations:** State law requires that students may not be enrolled in school without documentation of appropriate immunizations. Parents are responsible to provide this documentation. Only official records signed by a physician, nurse, or health department official are acceptable. Immunizations against the following diseases are required: diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus (DPT), rubella (German measles), mumps (MMR), and poliomyelitis. A child may be exempted from the immunization requirement by: certification of a licensed physician that immunizations would seriously endanger life or health or a statement signed by the parent or guardian and notarized, indicating that immunizations are in conflict with his or her religious teachings. Immunization exemptions must be renewed yearly before the student may enter school. Effective 2006, the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences of the State of Montana requires a second MMR immunization for all students entering kindergarten. Students entering the 7th grade are required to have a Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) booster. School District Policy #3416 addresses administering medicines to students.

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**Attendance Policy**

The primary responsibility for good attendance for students rests with the parents. Parents are required under Section 20-5-103, MCA, to assure that their children attend school regularly. The District recognizes the importance of monitoring the parental responsibility for their child’s attendance. Further, the District is committed to taking whatever action is necessary, up to and including legal action, to assure that students attend school regularly. A telephone call or note from either parent or guardian is necessary when a student is absent or late for any reason. Notes must be given immediately to the attendance secretary. When a student arrives late or after an absence, the student is required to report directly to the office. All absences and tardies will be recorded on the report card. The principal or designee will attempt to contact, by the end of the school day, any parent, guardian, or legal custodian whose child is absent from school but who has not reported the child as absent for the school day. We do this in order to determine
whether the parent, guardian, or legal custodian is aware of the child’s absence from school.

**Reporting Absences:** When a student must be absent parents must inform the school by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. If the student is not present, and the parent has not notified the school of the absence, the school will attempt to call the parent by 11:00 a.m. the same day. The fact that the school will attempt to call the parent does not relieve the parent of the responsibility to call the school to report their child’s absence. If in the event that a parent was unable to contact the school, a parent note upon the student’s return to school will verify the absence. The school secretary will maintain a permanent record of student absence and tardies.

**Excused Activities, Excused Absences:** It is the parent’s responsibility to notify teachers prior to being absent. Teachers may require the work to be completed and turned in prior to departure. If not requested by a teacher, students will have one day to make up work for each day missed, upon return. Absences for school-sponsored activities are excused, but students are held responsible for the work missed. In order to participate in an extracurricular activity or school sponsored event, including practice or dances, students must be in school 75% of the instructional day (5.25 class periods) on the last school day of the week prior to the activity. Exceptions may be made by the administration. Excused absences are not exempt from the 10-day policy. After acquiring absence number 10 in any class for any reason absences will be considered excused when certified with written documentation for the following reasons:

1. Illness;
2. Bereavement;
3. Pre-excused cultural or religious activities;
4. Pre-excused extended family activities;
5. Other unforeseen absences approved by the Principal

School work missed during an excused absence can be made up at full credit. Students shall have one day to make up work for each day missed.

**Unexcused Absences:** As a means of instilling values of responsibility and personal accountability, a student whose absence is not excused shall experience the consequences of his/her absences. A student’s academic grade in a particular subject or course may be adversely affected by reason of excessive tardiness or absence, and disciplinary action consistent with School District Discipline Policy and building level discipline procedures may be imposed. Excessive tardiness and absences are defined below.

**Excessive Absences:** Excessive absences are defined as follows:

1. Three or more instances of skipping a class
2. Three or more unexcused absences
3. Continual tardies to school or a class
4. Ten or more absences of any kind during a semester, unless prior approval is given by the principal for special circumstances
5. When appropriate, the Board shall, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, consider expulsion for chronic absenteeism.

**Tardies:** Classroom tardies should be handled by the teacher. Excessive tardies may be referred to the building administrator’s office.

**Attendance Letters:** In an effort to help keep parents and guardians informed regarding their child’s attendance, each semester RMS sends attendance letters home after students acquire 5 absences, and another letter after students acquire 10 absences, for any class period. Attached to this letter is a detailed description of the student’s attendance trends, including tardies. The goal of this letter is to improve communication between the school and families. This is a form letter and is not tailored specifically to each individual student’s circumstances, so families are strongly encouraged to check PowerSchool and communicate with administration as necessary.

**The McKinney-Vento Act for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program**

**Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youth**

They have rights to:

- Immediate enrollment in school without proof of residency, birth certificate, proof of immunization, or other documents.
- Attend school. Homeless children must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- Continue attending the school in which they were enrolled when they became homeless, the school last attended, or the school closest to their temporary residence, if feasible and in the best interest of the child or youth.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before they became homeless.
- Automatic enrollment in the free/reduced lunch program without proof of income or residency.
- Automatic qualification for Title I services.
- Expedited assessments for services under LEP, Migrant, Title VII and IDEA.
- Receive all school-based services for which they qualify.
- Participate in all programs and activities offered to other students, including athletics, music, clubs and other extracurricular activities.
- Have their parents participate in and attend school events and activities.
• Challenge decisions on school selection made by schools and districts through the OPI Dispute Resolution process.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth
The term “homeless children and youth,” refers to individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Under the law a child may qualify as homeless if he/she is:
• Living in an emergency shelter, domestic violence shelter, or transitional housing;
• Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground, were abandoned in a hospital, or are awaiting foster care placement;
• Living in a car, park, public place, bus or train station, abandoned building, or other structure not meant for housing;
• Doubled up with relatives or friends due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
• Children who are not living with a parent or legal guardian may be considered a homeless, unaccompanied youth if their living situation meets one of the four definitions listed above.

Daily Schedule
The school day is from 8:30 – 3:30, unless noted as an early out on the district calendar. Students may come to school early and gather in the Grand Commons prior to the 8:10 bell which signals they can go to their grade level houses. Students may, with prior permission, go to classrooms to have assistance from teachers, gather make-up work, and/or complete assigned work.

Closed Campus
Ronan Middle School has a closed campus policy. Upon arrival at school, students may not leave unless checked out by a parent or guardian. Leaving the school grounds is an issue of truancy and safety. It is also a violation of school policy and shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or notification of police.

School Breakfast, Lunch & Salad Bar
Breakfast is served 7:30 to 8:20.
All enrolled students of K. William Harvey, Pablo Elementary and Ronan Middle School will receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at no charge to your household each day of the school year.
No further action is required of you. Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or submit an application for the entire school year.
Middle school students have a choice between the salad bar or the lunch entrée of the day.

Lunchroom Rules: Students should refrain from pushing/shoving, taking cuts, and keep hands/feet to self. Students should line up in an orderly fashion and comply with directions from staff and lunch personnel. Students are responsible for cleaning up their table areas and disposing of trash appropriately.
Students should eat food in the lunchroom only.

Bus Transportation
Bus service for students is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to follow the same guidelines for behavior on buses as they do in school. Safety is a major concern on buses.
The following is a list of student expectations when riding the bus:

❖ Follow directions
❖ Remain seated at all times
❖ Keep your hands, feet, and other objects to yourself
❖ Keep your voice down. Whistling, yelling, vulgar or obscene language is unacceptable.
❖ No smoking or chewing
❖ Absolutely no fighting
❖ No vandalism
Behavior infractions will result in consequences. Consequences may include the following: Conference with the driver to discuss the problem, assigned seat, parent contact, bus conduct report to the principal, and/or bus privileges suspended.

**Inclement Weather Plan**

We will attempt to operate the school buses every school day. In the event of school closure or bus route cancellations, the District will notify KERR Radio station - 750 AM / 93.9 FM. Information will also be listed on the school's website at www.ronank12.edu as soon as possible to reflect any changes to the regular routes.

**Equal Education and Non Discrimination**

**STUDENT RECORDS (Notification of Rights Under FERPA):** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents certain rights with respect to their minor children’s educational records. They are: (1) the right to inspect and review the student’s educational records, (2) The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights, (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent, (4) The right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by Ronan School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA, (5) The right to obtain a copy of the Ronan School District’s student records policy. You can obtain a copy of the policy from the principal’s office in each school within the district. Copies of School District No. 30 Policy on Student Records (Policy #3600) are on file at each of the school offices, school guidance office, and school libraries. Copies may also be obtained from the District Administration Office. School District No. 30 designates the following items directory information: student home, parent’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, dates of graduation, awards received, school previously attended and photograph. The district may disclose any of those items without prior written consent, unless notified in writing to the contrary prior to September 1st each year.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY:** To comply with Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, the Ronan/Pablo School District No. 30 provide equal opportunity in that: "No person shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity of the Ronan/Pablo School District No. 30 Public Schools." In order to answer any questions or complaints concerning the provisions of Title IX (Equal Education, Nondiscrimination and Sex Equity Policy 3210), contact the Title IX Coordinator for the school district. The coordinator can be reached by calling the district office at 676-3390 ext. 7200.

**Harassment:** Physical, verbal or sexual harassment, retaliation, intimidation, discrimination, hazing, threatening, bullying or initiation is prohibited and may result in consequences such as a suspension. Anyone who believes they are being harassed, should let the offender know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive and not acceptable, and report the incident to the administration as soon as possible. All information and complaints will be investigated in a manner that preserves confidentiality to the maximum practical extent possible without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation. Violations may result in interventions, suspension, notification of authorities, and/or recommendation for expulsion. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is prohibited in the district. Students who believe that they may have been sexually harassed or intimidated should contact a teacher, counselor, or the principal to receive assistance. Further information can be obtained from the district Title IX coordinator.

**SECTION 504:** The school does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its program or activities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute which provides that: “No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States … shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.

**AHERA COMPLIANCE:** The plan and report are on file in the district office and available upon request.

**NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION:** The Ronan School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Sandra Beal, RMS Principal or Charity Cheff, Special Services Director, 421 Andrew St. NW, Ronan, MT 59864, 406-676-3390.
Student Conduct

Expectations for student conduct are based on the RMS Code of Character (RR) at the beginning of this handbook (page 2).

Respect…for all.
Responsibility…with no excuses.

Student Discipline

The Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI) is a process of assisting educators and students in improving behavior and nurturing a positive school culture. It is a proactive approach to teaching behavior to students by setting positive examples and using positive supports to encourage appropriate behavior while promoting a healthy social culture for all. The goal of MBI is for all students to be equipped with the skills necessary for success. It offers the framework within which we can nurture a healthy and safe school environment and the systems through which we can support students’ behavioral and social growth.

School discipline is directed toward assisting each student in developing self-discipline, the ability to judge the correct course of action in a given situation. It consists of encouragement to act in a positive way, as well as progressive consequences, which naturally occur if a student chooses to do otherwise. A copy of the school student discipline policy will be given to students and parents.

A school-wide after school detention program will be implemented this year. Teachers may issue after school detentions to students for disciplinary or academic purposes. Parents will be notified by the classroom teacher whenever an after school detention is issued to their son/daughter. Failure to serve an after school detention will result in further disciplinary action such as additional detention, in-school suspension, and possibly an out-of-school suspension.

TIME TO TEACH

School district staff follows basic rules requiring the behaviors of safety, respect for property and other people, and responsibility. A safe, positive learning environment needs to exist at school and thus, there are rules requiring appropriate behaviors.

Time To Teach is the program used by the district to improve both discipline and academic performance.

Time To Teach schools enjoy a number of advantages over those in either punitive or permissive settings. The program focuses on proactive strategies versus reactive behaviors. By paying prompt attention to the “little stuff” it is hoped that the “big stuff,” can be prevented thus allowing for increased learning time for all students.

The school climate should be one of mutual respect. We all deserve to feel respected. Teachers “teach to” the expected student behaviors. The students are taught what behaviors are expected of them.

Improved school behavior is as beneficial to students as it is to teachers. Under “Time To Teach”, a student is asked to “refocus” (“Think It Through”) if the behavior is keeping the teacher from teaching, others from learning, and/or himself/herself from learning. A “refocus” is an instructional tool to help the student recognize the behavior that is causing a disruption in learning and help the student think through better ways to handle the problem. A “refocus” is not a disciplinary consequence but a time to think things through before the behavior becomes a problem.

On rare occasions, when a student does not respond to a refocus or repeatedly disrupts the learning environment, then disciplinary consequences will be issued and a referral will be made to the office. When a disciplinary referral is made, the student will be given a reasonable opportunity to express their views. If students continue to exhibit inappropriate behaviors after initial consequences have been issued, more severe consequences will be given. Staff members will notify parents if behaviors are of a serious nature.

Consequences for behavior infractions may include low level interventions, conferences, parental involvement, loss of privileges, and/or detentions. As infractions become more severe or repetitive in nature, consequences will be increased and may include in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and/or for extreme violations, students may face expulsion. Any action that is illegal may result in the police being notified.

The mission of the District is to assure learning experiences help all students develop skills, competencies and attitudes fundamental to achieving individual satisfaction as responsible, contributing citizens. All students who attend the District’s schools shall comply with the written policies, rules and regulations of the schools, shall pursue the required course of studies, and shall submit to the authority of teachers, principal, and Superintendent.

Attendance Violations: Students who have unexcused absences or tardies or who skip will be issued consequences. Consequences include, but may not be limited to loss of privileges, parent conference,
community or school service, lunch detention, before school detention, and/or after school detention, assignment to the learning center, suspension.

**Absolutes:** Behaviors that are not allowed at school include violence, drugs/alcohol, and weapons (knives or other objects that could harm someone). Drugs, alcohol, weapons, and violence are not only against school rules but against the law. If students engage in these behaviors, they will be referred to the office. Parents will be notified of serious behavior infractions.

Students, while on school property or on a school sponsored activity, who:

1. physically abuse a person under the jurisdiction or employment of the School district with or without a weapon;
2. verbally abuse, threaten, or defy a person under the jurisdiction or employment of the School District;
3. disrupt any classroom in a violent manner;
4. steal or destroy school or personal property;
5. are caught in the possession of or using drugs, including prescription drugs and over the counter items (see “prescribed medications” in Student Health section on page 6) or possession of weapons;
6. are caught smoking or chewing;

will receive, at the discretion of the administrative authority, punishment up to and including suspension from school. The administrative authority may require a meeting with the student and the student’s parents before the Board of Trustees, who may, in turn, either further suspend or expel the student. Further information on suspension and expulsion are included in School Laws of Montana 20-5-201 and a copy of the law can be requested from the school office. In the cases of theft or destruction of property, all reimbursements for damages will be collected based on the replacement costs. All reimbursements for stolen property not returned will also be based on the replacement costs. The district will hold the parents liable for all theft and damages caused by their student.

**Weapons:** Students with weapons on campus (the building or school grounds) may be suspended or recommended to the Superintendent for expulsion. Weapons include firearms, explosives, knives, paintball guns/markers, toys that look like guns or any object that could, through the use or intent, be considered dangerous or is used in a threatening manner. These items may not be brought to school or school functions. This includes but is not limited to knives, guns, paint ball guns/markers, toys that look like guns, ammunition, etc. As this is a substantial threat to the safety of staff and students, anyone with a dangerous object may be suspended or expelled. If an object that may be construed as dangerous is needed for a class project, the student should have prior administrative approval to bring it to school and it should be stored in the office when not being used in class.

**Drugs & Alcohol:** Students who are found to be in possession of, or under the influence of drugs, drug paraphernalia and/or alcohol may be suspended. Students will be searched if the administration has reasonable suspicion that a student has drugs or alcohol on their person, or in their locker, or backpack. Law enforcement may be notified. Students determined to be under the influence of a controlled substance by the administration may be suspended. Drug sniffing dogs may be used periodically to conduct searches of lockers, backpacks, and vehicles on school property.

**Bullying/Harassment:** All students will be informed and educated about what constitutes bullying behaviors and what they need to do if they feel that they have been or are being bullied. All students also will be informed of the school’s expectations on bullying behaviors and will know that it is not allowed. The school attempts to create a safe and educational learning environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and hazing is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes cyber bullying: sending or posting harmful or cruel messages or pictures using the internet, e-mail, instant messaging, cell phones, texting or other digital communication devices.

RMS uses the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program which defines bullying as:

A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending him or herself.

Four anti-bullying rules:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help students who are bullied.
3. We will try to include students who are left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Many researchers currently acknowledge and define three different types of aggression: **Aggression is Bullying!**

a. **Physical Aggression** = This behavior involves direct physical attacks, such as punching, tripping, kicking, pushing, shoving, hitting, or any other form of physical aggression against another individual.
b. **Verbal Aggression** = This behavior involves the attempted humiliation of an individual through both overt and covert verbal abuse, including name-calling, putdowns, threats, howling, sighing, and other audible expressions.

c. **Relational (or Alternative) Aggression** = Behavior that aims to manipulate the web of third party relationships in order to hurt a particular individual. Spreading rumors, gossip, lies -- telling secrets, eye-rolling, exclusion, ‘cyber bullying’ and ‘the silent treatment’ all aim to promote cruelty through the social networks include making fun of someone’s clothes or appearance and bumping into someone on purpose. Many of these behaviors are quite common in girls’ friendships, but when they occur repeatedly towards a particular victim, they constitute bullying.

Penalties for bullying/harassment will range from a verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of the incident. Law enforcement authorities will be contacted in severe circumstances.

**Gangs and Gang Activity:** The school is committed to ensuring a safe and orderly environment, where learning and teaching may occur void of physical or psychological disruptions, unlawful acts, or violations of school regulations. Gang activities create an atmosphere of intimidation in the entire school community. Both the immediate consequences of gang activity and the secondary effects are disruptive and obstructive to the process of education and school activities. Students on school property or at any school-sponsored activity shall not:

1. Wear, possess, use, distribute, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other items which are evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang and/or representative of any gang;
2. Engage in any act, whether verbal or nonverbal, including gestures or handshakes, showing membership in or affiliation with any gang and/or anything that is representative of any gang; or
3. Engage in any act furthering the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to:
   a. Soliciting membership in or affiliation with any gang;
   b. Soliciting any person to pay for protection or threatening another person, explicitly or implicitly, with violence or with any other illegal or prohibited act;
   c. Painting, writing, or otherwise inscribing gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols, or signs on school property;
   d. Engaging in violence, extortion, or any other illegal act or other violation of school property.

**Violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or notification of police.**

**Computer Use:** Students are to use the school computers for educational purposes. Students are to log in under their student ID and log out when done using a machine. Student computer use is by permission only. Violations may result in the suspension of computer privileges. School District Policy #3612, District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks at the back of this handbook includes more information on proper computer use.

**Student Conduct for Guest Teachers:** When a guest teacher has taken over the classroom for a teacher, the guest teacher must be treated with respect and students should adhere to all classroom rules set up by the regular teacher. If students do not conduct themselves within school behavior standards, they will be held to strict accountability. Student misbehavior can reflect badly on the student as well as the school and community.

**Public Displays of Affection (PDA's):** Students are reminded that the school is a formal setting, much like a place of business. Public displays of affection will not be allowed.

**Searches of Students and Their Property:** To maintain order and discipline in the District and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school officials may search a student’s person, personal property or district property when there is a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence that he/she is violating the law, Board policy, administrative regulation, or other rules of the district or school (e.g., purse, wallet, backpack, coat, locker, cellular phones, and/or other electronic devices). School lockers and desks are and shall remain the property of the District. If a search of a student or his/her property or district property yields illegal or contraband materials, such materials may be turned over to proper legal authorities for disposition. In order to provide for the health and safety of its students, the Ronan School District may, from time to time, utilize drug-sniffing dogs in an effort to promote and maintain a safe, drug-free environment for students and staff.
Parents wishing to appeal an action in the discipline process may get a copy of the policy and the form from the school or district office.

**Dress Code:** Dress should be neat, clean, and appropriate for an educational setting. Shoes will be worn at all times. No clothing or other items may display alcohol, tobacco, drug, or questionable comments. Revealing clothes such as belly shirts, tank tops with large armpit holes, skimpy tank tops, backless tops, spaghetti straps, and clothing which shows undergarments are not allowed. Shorts and skirts need to be of appropriate length, below the fingertips when standing straight. Bulky, oversized/baggy clothing has been used to conceal dangerous objects designed to harm others and are not to be worn once students are inside the building. All clothing must be worn in an appropriate manner including removing headgear when entering a building. Administration reserves the right to deem what is appropriate in the school setting.

**Video Surveillance:** The Board authorizes the use of video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students or staff in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies. Video recordings may become a part of a student’s educational record or a staff member’s personnel record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention (Board Policy 3235).

**Miscellaneous**

**Hallway Passes:** Students should have a hall pass to be in the halls during the instructional day.

**8th Grade Promotional Activities:** In order to participate in any end of the year promotional activities students must meet the following conditions:

- Maintain a cumulative grade point of at least a 1.5 for their 8th grade school year. Transferring 8th grade students grades from their last school attended will be factored in.
- Have no more than 10 absences without a valid excuse (deliberately stayed away from school on his or her own volition) during the 8th grade.
- Have returned all books checked out to the student (both textbook and library books) or paying the replacement value of the books.
- Accumulate no more than 10 discipline referrals during 8th grade.

Each 8th grade student who is not eligible to participate in promotional activities shall conference with the student’s parent/guardian and an administrator. A written notification shall be provided to parents/guardians of the reasons for the ineligibility.

The administration reserves the right to make the final decision of who participates in 8th grade promotion.

**Library Materials:** School library and classroom library books are provided primarily for use by school district students and staff. Library books may be checked out by either students or staff. Individuals who check out books are responsible for the care and timely return of those materials. The building librarian may assess fines for damaged or unreturned books.

**Cell phones, electronic equipment, and personal possessions:** Personal electronic equipment such as cell phones, IPODs, and/or cameras should be brought to school with caution. Pictures and/or recordings of school staff, students may not be taken without prior authorization from administration (e.g., yearbook pictures). Electronic devices are not allowed in school locker rooms and/or restrooms. Possession of electronic devices in an unauthorized area is grounds for consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion from school. If an electronic device is brought to school, it can be used before 8:25 a.m. in the Grand Commons Area. After that time, it must be turned off and kept out of sight. Portable/wireless speakers are not to be used at school. If a student has an electronic devise confiscated, it will be turned in to the office where it can be picked up at the end of the day. In the case of multiple violations of this policy or refusal to give the device to a staff member, students will receive disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension from school. The school is not responsible for any item left in a classroom, locker, the gym area or any unattended place. School lockers, even when locked, may not be secure. Students bringing personal items do so at their own risk. In addition, due to the dangerous capabilities of inappropriate use of laser pointers, the use or possession of them at school is not allowed for students. Please note that administration reserves the right to follow
district guidelines for “Searches of Students and Their Property”.

Skateboards and/or Roller blades: Students are strongly discouraged from bringing skateboards and/or roller blades to school as skateboard and/or roller blade use on school property is prohibited. Violations of this policy shall result in consequences, up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

Lost and Found: Clothing, school supplies, and personal articles of students should be clearly marked. Anyone finding lost articles should turn them into the lost and found at the main office. Checking the lost and found on a periodic basis is highly encouraged. Students should mark their names on possessions and are responsible for their safe keeping. If items are not claimed in two weeks, they can be disposed of to local welfare agencies. RMS is not responsible for lost items. Students should check the main office for lost items as soon as possible.

Food/Drink/Classroom Parties: Classroom parties, involving food and drinks, must be approved by administration. No food or drink is allowed outside of the school Grand Commons cafeteria area. It will be up to the discretion of the teacher if water bottles may be used in their classroom.

Lockers: The office assigns lockers to students. Lockers are the property of the school and we reserve the right to inspect them at any time without a search warrant. If school administration needs to enter the locker without your presence and no combination was given to the homeroom teacher, then the lock will be cut off at the owner’s expense. Keep your locker neat and clean. You are responsible for any damage done to your locker during the year. Make sure that you inspect your locker before moving in. Any offensive material displayed on or in the locker will be disposed of promptly. Only school sponsored signs of co-curricular activities are allowed on the lockers. You are strongly encouraged to bring a lock for your locker to secure your property and give the combination or key to your teacher as well. Students are responsible for their own valuables. The school is not responsible for any item left in a classroom, locker, the gym area or any unattended place. Take care of your possessions.

Money & Valuables: Students should not bring large sums of money or other valuables such as electronic games or devices to school.

Early Outs: The early out schedule and times are on the district calendar. Please consult the calendar.

Phones: Only in cases of an emergency or for important business will students be allowed to use school office or classroom phones. Interruptions to the classroom instruction are a consideration as the learning environment must be maintained. When calling the school, please leave a message and your son/daughter will be contacted prior to school dismissal. He/she will then be allowed to use the office or classroom phone for local calls with adult supervision. To ensure your student gets their message, please try to call the school before 3:00 pm.

Deliveries: Deliveries of balloons, flowers, and gifts are accepted; however classes will not be interrupted for deliveries. Students will be contacted to pick up their item at the office after 3:30 pm.

Textbook/educational materials: The district furnishes textbooks and supplementary educational materials to all students. Students are responsible for textbooks and materials checked out to them and are expected to exercise care and responsibility in the treatment of these items. Parents/students are required to pay for lost or damaged books and materials.

End of School Activities: Students with unpaid fines, fees, behavior issues, or unreturned books may be restricted or removed from end of school year activities.

Out of School Suspension: Students who are on out-of-school suspension may not attend after school functions such as dances, sporting events, or other school sponsored activities.

After School Hours/Public Events: When students are on school grounds, after regular school hours, they are still expected to follow school behavior rules. Only students in a school sponsored activity, enrolled in the Afterschool Program, or supervised by a staff member may remain on campus after 4:00 p.m. Any staff member employed by the school district may ask a student to leave the school grounds if their conduct is not satisfactory and contact a parent/guardian for transportation. The privilege of attending public events, at school, may be revoked and a law enforcement referral made, should it be warranted.

Playground: Students are expected to follow the Teach To’s for playground behavior. This includes transitions to and from the playground area.

Student Agendas 2017-2018: Communication between home and school is highly encouraged. The student agenda is an excellent way to communicate. Student’s
daily assignments (short and long term), and anticipated due dates for major projects should be kept in their agenda. Students are given a free agenda at the beginning of the school year or upon entering RMS. If students lose their agenda, a replacement may be purchased for $5.00.

School District No. 30 (Required by the Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule, §§ 763.84(c) and 783.93((g)(4))

In 1987, the US Environmental Protection Agency finalized a regulatory program which enforces the AHERA mandate. These regulations are incorporated within the Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule, (40 C.F.R. Part 763, Subpart E). The inspection report and management plan are on file in the District Office and available for review upon request. The district’s head of maintenance is the designated Asbestos Program Coordinator for Ronan School District No. 30. Please direct all inquiries regarding the Asbestos Management Plan to him/her at telephone (406) 676-3390 ext. 3600.

District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

General
The District makes Internet access and interconnected computer systems available to District students and faculty. The District provides electronic networks, including access to the Internet, as part its instructional program and to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The District expects all students to take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access, including good behavior on-line. The District may withdraw student access to its network and to the Internet when any misuse occurs. District teachers and other staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise use of network and Internet access; however, student cooperation is vital in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

Curriculum
Use of District electronic networks will be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the District, as well as with varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of students and will comply with selection criteria for instructional materials and library materials. Staff members may use the Internet throughout the curriculum consistent with the District’s educational goals.

Acceptable Uses
1. Educational Purposes Only. All use of the District’s electronic network must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and in furtherance of the District’s stated educational goals; or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right. Students and staff members have no expectation of privacy in any materials that are stored, transmitted, or received via the District’s electronic network or District computers. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store, at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage.

2. Unacceptable Uses of Network. The following are considered unacceptable uses and constitute a violation of this policy:

   A. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law, including but not limited to transmitting offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by the District’s student discipline policy; viewing, transmitting, or downloading pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intruding into the networks or computers of others; and downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials.

   B. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property, including but not limited to engaging in defamation (harming another’s reputation by lies); employing another’s password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating, or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; uploading a worm, virus, other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in “hacking” activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or other information.

   C. Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.

   D. Uses that are commercial transactions. Students and other users may not sell or buy anything
over the Internet. Students and others should not give information to others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers.

**Warranties/Indemnification**
The District makes no warranties of any kind, express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this policy. The District is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. The District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet. Any user is fully responsible to the District and will indemnify and hold the District, its trustees, administrators, teachers, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims, or damages resulting from such user’s access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchase of goods or services by a user. The District expects a user or, if a user is a minor, a user’s parents or legal guardian to cooperate with the District in the event of its initiating an investigation of a user’s use of access to its computer network and the Internet.

**Violations**
If a student violates this policy, the District will deny the student access or will withdraw access and may subject the student to additional disciplinary action. An administrator or building principal will make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated this policy and any related rules or regulations and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time, with that decision being final.