

Riverside Community Care

Riverside School

Admissions Packet

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I. Statement of Purpose

The Riverside School is a Massachusetts approved chapter 766 private school that provides a therapeutic educational experience for students experiencing mental health issues and/or learning challenges. The program works closely with families and school systems to provide ongoing consultation and support in order that student's successfully transition to the least restrictive education setting. The school provides services for students from grades 6-12. We operate on a 12 month schedule and provide a small highly structured and supportive educational setting with low student teacher ratios and a skilled clinical staff. We are a strength based program whose educational goals are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. In addition to setting high educational standards we are committed to helping children improve their coping and social skills in order to maximize functioning within the home, school, and community. We are dedicated to helping children experience success in a supportive academic environment. The school provides student's access to a variety of therapeutic groups that are facilitated by licensed clinical staff. Groups are based on standards of best practices, including DBT/CBT, psycho-social education and pro-active social skill building, through a creative and engaging group process.

Riverside School provides a therapeutic milieu that supports academic achievement by:

- Providing excellent teaching by highly qualified staff that incorporates evidence-based practices for educating special needs populations;
- Providing professional development to ensure curriculum and pedagogy reflects current academic standards and best practices; and
- Developing individualized action plans that guide the provision of therapeutic support services that assist students in participating in their education, within the school day, at home, and in the community.

Riverside School provides ongoing consultation and support to students, families, and public schools for students who transition to the next educational, work, or other appropriate environment, by:

- Developing transition plans in partnership with the student, parents/guardian, and school well in advance of the student's discharge from Riverside School; and
- Providing ongoing consultation to the student and personnel for the first semester of the students' transition to the next educational, work, or other appropriate environment.

Riverside School provides a supportive and therapeutic milieu that enables students to experience success in various social situations, by:

- Providing opportunities for student reintegration into broader communities;

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- Empowering students to develop self-esteem and confidence through exposure to group, individual and family therapy; and
- Supporting opportunities for leadership within Riverside School, at home, and within the larger community.

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II. Services Provided

IEP Development/Planning

An individualized education plan (IEP) is developed for each student by the referring public school district. Goals are linked to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and reflect the standards set for each age group of students. Formal tools may be used to help determine appropriate goals.

Each classroom is highly structured with an emphasis on active participation by all students throughout the day. If a student needs one-to-one attention to learn a new skill, the other students in his/her group work on independent tasks. These tasks foster maintenance of skills and also teach the student to work independently for increasingly longer periods of time.

Physical Education and Recreation

The school's physical education and recreation program is designed to develop healthy lifestyle habits. In addition to classroom instruction of physical education topics, Riverside School holds a membership with the CATZ gym, which will provide students with weekly opportunities to explore the facility and participate in a wide array of physical activities. Students will also be involved in community excursions to local parks and hiking trails to learn real world applications to physical education topics.

Child Psychiatry

Riverside School contracts with an adolescent psychiatrists to provide staff consultation to on an as needed basis.

Vocational Services

Students between the ages of 12 and 15 years may take part in career exploration activities. The students are introduced to a variety of vocational areas and individual strengths and interests are assessed. Students 16 years and older continue to expand upon their work and living skills in preparation for employment in the community. Individual vocational training and internal employment help to prepare the students for community employment.

Implementation – Related Services: Braille Needs

If a student were to be served within the Riverside School who presented with significant visual impairments, the school would work with the student's LEA to obtain consultation services from the Outreach Satellite Program of the Perkins School for the Blind. The school would also access services of the American Printing House for the Blind.

Assistive Technology Devices/Services

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For students presenting with significant communication deficits, the school will work with the student's LEA to identify appropriate assistive devices. If the team agrees to use a computerized device, the school staff will be trained in its use.

Communication Needs

Students served at the school generally do not present with significant communication difficulties. For students who have verbal skills, objectives are developed to enhance these skills. For others who are non-verbal or for whom spoken language is not the primary mode of communication, alternative strategies will be developed. This may involve the use of a communication book as an adjunct to the adolescent's spoken language.

Communication Needs – Deaf/Hard of Hearing

If a student were to be served within the school who presented with a significant loss of hearing and who communicated primarily through sign language, the school staff would work with the student's LEA to obtain consultation from the Learning Center for the Deaf or some other expert in American Sign Language. Consultation would also be requested around environmental design.

Mobility/Orientation Training

If a student were to be served within the school that presented with significant visual impairments, the school would work with the student's LEA to obtain consultation services from the Outreach Satellite Program of the Perkins School for the Blind. Consultation would be provided regarding strategies to help the student orient and travel throughout his/her environment. In some cases, this may involve the use of a cane or some modification of the same. Training would be provided to those staff working with the individual.

Parent Involvement

Parents play an essential role in their child's academic and treatment program at the Riverside School. Weekly written and phone contact is made to ensure that parents are kept abreast of their child's progress and participation. Parents can expect to meet with teachers and counselors monthly to review the child's progress and discuss home-related issues. Referrals may be made to the Riverside Family Stabilization Team for additional family interventions as needed. All parents are invited to participate on the Parent Advisory Board. Parents are also encouraged to review the Parent/Student Handbook that is provided to each family as part of the admissions package.

Parent Consent

Personnel will obtain verbal and written authorization for any prescription medication self-administered to treat a physical illness child. Medications brought to school by the students must have a physician's order. A parent consent form must be signed for approval for the student to administer his/her own medication, and

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medications must be delivered to the Nurse or Program Director in a clearly labeled prescription bottle

Transportation

As noted in the policies and procedures, transportation to and from the school is the responsibility of the referring public school districts and/or parents.

Physical Therapy

Should a student present with physical therapy needs as a requirement of their IEP, arrangements will be made with the referring school district. This may include providing space to allow the Physical Therapist to visit the student during school hours. Alternatively, parents may pick up students during school hours for scheduled appointments. Given the needs of the students served in the Riverside School, it is anticipated that physical therapy will rarely be required.

Occupational Therapy

Should a student present with occupational therapy needs as a requirement of their IEP, arrangements will be made with the referring school district. This may include providing space to allow the Occupational Therapist to visit the student during school hours. Alternatively, parents may pick up students during school hours for scheduled appointments.

Recreation and Leisure Skills

The development of appropriate recreation and leisure skills are an integral part of the therapeutic environment of the Riverside School. Groups that focus on building recreation and leisure skills includes, but is not limited to, Healthy Living Group, Reading Rainbow Group, Self-Esteem Group, Expressive Arts Group, and Fitness Group.

School Health Services

Riverside Community Care consults with a RN who oversees all healthcare policies and human rights issues. Additionally, she is available for consultation during school hours. In the event of a medical emergency, local hospitals and the local rescue squad provide may provide emergency medical services.

Psychological, Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling, and Social Work Services

The students in the Riverside School have daily access to clinical staff representing an array of mental health fields. In addition, Riverside School staff has access to and regularly scheduled consultations with medical, psychiatric, mental health and social work professionals.

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III. Admission Criteria

The Riverside Life Skills School serves students in grades 6-12 who present with acute anxiety and depression as well as other mental health and educational needs. The school's capacity is 8 students.

Criteria

Students will be considered for admission with the following characteristics:

1. The student must have a primary diagnosis of major mental illness.
2. The student must be between the ages of 12 to 18.
3. It must be reasonably clear that the child would benefit from and tolerate a structured group and milieu treatment.
4. The student must be willing to attend, voluntarily, a designated evaluation interview and a minimum half-time day academic/ treatment schedule.
5. Parents/guardians are willing to allow school staff to collaborate with identified child/adolescents other providers.
6. The student is not exhibiting any current acute suicidality or homicidality. The student must be able to contract for all necessary steps for safety – for example, s/he will make no attempts to harm self or others; s/he will stay within program boundaries; etc.
7. The student must be willing to attend the program according to his or her prescribed schedule and to follow program expectations.
8. Parents/guardians of the student must be willing to meet regularly with program staff as deemed necessary.

Screening/Intake

Upon referral the Program Director will determine if the student meets criteria and is appropriate for an interview. Admissions decisions will be based on the student's identified behavioral and academic strengths and deficits. While a student is being assessed, an interview is conducted with the parents/guardians to obtain a specific profile of the student's abilities and needs. The parent's concerns regarding their child and their expectations of the program will be discussed and parental participation requirements will be presented.

Admission

If all requisite criteria are met, a letter of acceptance is sent to the family and the referring public school. The letter describes the recommendations for educational programming and the services that Riverside Life Skills School will provide. The letter will also include any contingencies to the acceptance. If an opening is available, the start date will be included in the letter. Finally, the letter informs parents of the enrolled student that copies of its policies and procedures manual are available to them upon request.

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Requisite Documentation

The following forms must be completed and returned to Riverside Life Skills School prior to admission:

From Parents

1. All requisite consent forms
2. Massachusetts Health Care Record, including immunization record, current physical, dental exams and postural, vision and hearing screen
3. Emergency Contact Information
4. Privacy Notice
5. Informed Consent
6. Release of Information
7. Copy of student's insurance card
8. Physicians Order if needed,
9. And copy of birth certificate

From referring school district

1. Current IEP signed by both parent and public school district representative
2. Current Placement page
3. Contact information for LEA or special education administrator
4. Service agreement/ funding contract signed and dated by designated school district representative
5. Student record
6. Results of all evaluative assessments conducted by special educator or school clinician (i.e. IQ test, Woodcock Johnson Battery Test, etc.)

In accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's requirements, specifically 603 CMR 28.06(3), fully executed contracts are maintained on file.

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IV. Parent's Rights

You have the right to participate in your child's treatment planning. If so requested in writing, you will receive a copy of your child's treatment plan.

You have the right to receive a copy of all program and school rules so that you are familiar and able to reinforce said rules with your child.

You have the right to receive advanced notice of all scheduled meetings pertaining to your child.

You have the right to attend all meetings pertaining to the treatment of your child. In addition, you have the right to send a child/education advocate on your behalf if you cannot attend a scheduled meeting.

You have the right to contact the primary clinician and/or the Program Director to obtain progress updates regarding your child. If those persons are unavailable, you have the right to a timely response within 24 hours.

You have the right to request a copy of the Riverside School Policies and Procedures Manual.

You have the right to fully participate on the Riverside Schools' Parent Advisory Board.

You have the right to address any concerns with Riverside staff at any time.

You have the right to be informed and receive a copy of the Riverside Consumer Complaint Procedure.

You have the right to provide feedback for Riverside School by completing a Family Satisfaction Survey, which is mailed directly to Riverside Quality Assurance Department.

You have the right to receive emergency hotline information.

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V. Health Care

Physician and Nurse Consultation

Kathy Janssen, R.N. and Director of Quality Assurance will provide the consultation for healthcare needs of students enrolled at the Riverside Life Skills School.

1. On an annual basis, the nurse will review all health and safety policies, recommending revisions and changes as needed.
2. The nurse will provide ongoing consultation to assist programs to maintain compliance with all applicable health standards and regulation.
3. The nurse will assist the program to respond promptly to student medical concerns and will recommend appropriate course of action.
4. Nurse's shift: on-call all days/hours of operation. This is sufficient for the population traditionally served.

Administration of OTC Medication

Riverside School shall maintain a stock of first aid and over-the-counter (OTC) medications. The following procedures apply to the administration of medication:

1. No medication shall be administered to a student without written authorization from a parent. Such authorization shall be renewed annually.
2. Provided parent/guardian consent, OTC medications will administer to students as needed, including:
 - *Acetaminophen(Tylenol)*: 60 mg per year of age up to max of 650 mg for temperature over 100 degrees, for discomfort or to alleviate pain)
 - Advil
 - *Bacitracin*: for cuts and abrasions
 - *Cough drops*: for throat irritation
 - *Calamine Lotion*: to affected area as needed for poison ivy or itchy rash
 - *Hydrocortisone Cream*: 1% as needed for itchy rash
 - *Mylogel or Antacids (Tums)*: per instruction for heard burn or indigestion
 - *Sunscreen and bug spray*: for sun protection
3. Riverside School prohibits the administration of prescription medication to a student without the written order of the physician prescribing the medication to that student.
4. The school maintains written policies and procedures regarding prescription and administration of medication including authorization, prepackaging, and staff training.
5. Any change in medication or dosage must be authorized by a new order from a physician.
6. A written record shall be maintained of the prescription of medication to students. A written record shall also be maintained of student self-

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- administration of prescribed medication. Significant side effects of medications shall also be recorded.
7. All medicine shall be kept in a locked, secure cabinet and labeled with the student's name, the name of the drug and the directions for its administration.
 8. The school shall dispose of or return to the parents any unused medication.
 9. Medications must be delivered to the school by a responsible adult in a container labeled by the physician or pharmacist.
 10. Provision must be made for refrigeration of medications, when necessary.
 11. The school shall specify the amount of medication to be kept on the premises at any one time for each student receiving medication.
 12. A review of medications administered to a student shall be incorporated into all case reviews conducted at the school with staff regarding the student.

Student Self-Administration of Medications

Riverside School encourages students to have medication administered before and/or after school hours. School clinical staff will support families in contacting their child's psychiatrist if necessary. A student may be responsible for taking his/her own medication after the school nurse has determined that the following requirements are met:

1. If it is not feasible to administer medication before and/or after school hours, a prescription bottle, labeled with correct name, medication, dose and specific instructions, and a signed copy of the Self-Medication Administration Consent and Physician Consent Form must be delivered to the school nurse by a parent or guardian, unless the student has consented to treatment (under M.G.L.c.112.s.12F) or other authority permitting the student to consent to medical treatment without parental permission;
2. The student, school nurse and parent/guardian, where appropriate, enter into an agreement, which specifies the conditions under which medication may be self-administered;
3. The school nurse, as appropriate, develops a medication administration plan, which contains only those elements necessary to ensure safe self-administration of medication;
4. The student's health status and abilities have been evaluated by the school nurse who then deems self-administration safe and appropriate. The school nurse or designee shall observe self-administration of the medication;
5. The school nurse is reasonably assured that the student is able to identify the appropriate medication, knows the frequency and time of day for which the medication is ordered;
6. If requested by the school nurse, the licensed prescriber provides a written order for self-administration;
7. Documentation of self-administration of medication is maintained;

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8. The school nurse establishes a policy for the safe storage of self-administered medication and, as necessary, consults with the Director or designee, the student, and parent/guardian, if appropriate, to determine a safe place for storing the medication for the individual student, while providing for accessibility if the student's health needs require it. This information shall be included in the medication administration plan. In the case of an inhaler or other preventive or emergency medication, whenever possible, a backup supply of the medication shall be kept in the health room or a second readily available location;
9. The student's self-administration is monitored based on his/her abilities and health status. Monitoring may include teaching the student the correct way of taking the medication, reminding the student to take the medication, visual observation to ensure compliance, recording that the medication was taken, and notifying the parent, guardian or licensed prescriber of any side effects, variation from the plan, or the student's refusal or failure to take the medication; and
10. With parental/guardian and student permission, as appropriate, the school nurse may inform appropriate teachers and administrators that the student is self-administering a medication.

Emergency Medical Information

At the time of admission, all students will be required to have the following documentation on file:

1. Personal Information Assessment
2. Emergency contact information card
3. Insurance Card (copy)
4. Physical Exam on record, copy of Dental and Hearing and Vision Screen
5. Immunization Records
6. Evaluations and/or lab reports if applicable

Antipsychotic Medication Self-Administration

Riverside School has established the following guidelines in order to ensure safe self-administration of antipsychotic medication for students. The school shall not permit the self-administration or arrange for the administration of antipsychotic medication except under the following circumstances:

1. Antipsychotic medication shall be prescribed by a licensed physician for the diagnosis, treatment and care of the child and only after review of the student's medical record and actual observation of the student.
2. The prescribing physician shall submit a written report to the school detailing the necessity for the medication, staff monitoring requirements, potential side effects that may or may not require medical attention and the next scheduled clinical meeting or series of meetings with the student.

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3. No antipsychotic prescription shall be administered for a period longer than is medically necessary and students on antipsychotic medication must be carefully monitored by a physician.
4. Staff providing care to a student receiving antipsychotic medication shall be instructed regarding the nature of the medication, potential side effects that may or may not require medical attention and required monitoring or special precautions, if any.
5. Except in an emergency, as defined in 18.05 (9)(g), the school shall neither administer nor arrange for the prescription and administration of antipsychotic medication unless informed written consent is obtained. If a student is in the custody of his/her parent(s), parental consent in writing is required. Parental consent may be revoked at any time unless subject to any court order. If the parent does not consent or is not available to give consent, the referral source shall be notified and judicial approval shall be sought. If a student is in the custody of a person other than the parent, a placement agency or an out-of-state public or private agency, the referral source shall be notified and judicial approval shall be sought.
6. In an emergency situation, antipsychotic medication may be administered for treatment purposes without parental consent or prior judicial approval if an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state calls for immediate action and there is no less intrusive alternative to the medication. The treating physician must determine that medication is necessary to prevent the immediate substantial and irreversible deterioration of a serious mental illness. If the treating physician determines that medication should continue, informed consent or judicial approval must be obtained as required by 18.05(9)(e).
7. Riverside School staff shall inform a student twelve years of age and older, consistent with the student's capacity to understand, about the treatment, risks and potential side effects of such medication.
8. If the student refuses to consent to administration of the medication, Riverside School staff will follow procedures outlined in policies ES 500.8 and 500.9. If a crisis situation presents due to noncompliance, staff shall contact Riverside Emergency Services and/or 911 to assist with evaluation of the student's mental stability, and follow protocols outlined in policy ES 400.2 for immediate notification to all appropriate parties.

Emergency First Aid and CPR

At admission, Riverside School shall receive written consent from parents regarding the administration of emergency medical treatment to the student enrolled.

General Administration:

1. All staff are trained in CPR/First Aid.
2. No emergency first aid or medical treatment is administered to a student without prior consent of parent/guardian. Consent must be given annually.

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3. First aid supplies are available within the school located in a secure area of the staff office and readily available to all school staff. Basic supplies are available including bandages, body isolation gloves, gauze, adhesive tape, hydrogen peroxide.

Physically Ill or Injured Students:

1. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called.
2. A student who is physically ill or injured may receive a consultation by a program nurse (if available).
3. First Aid supplies are maintained on site and will be administered as appropriate. The first aid kit will contain gloves, gauze, bandages, adhesive tape, cleaning solutions, antibacterial solution, and body substance isolation materials.
4. Arrangements will be made for emergency transportation via ambulance at the discretion of staff or parental request.
5. See Riverside Health and Safety Policies for further information.

Follow-up and Documentation:

1. The student's family/guardian or Emergency Contact will be contacted.
2. Incident Reporting per policy and applicable regulation.
3. In instances where a student is in the care of DCF, the Educational Surrogate Parent shall not have the authority to consent to routine or other medical care. For such students, consent shall be obtained consistent with the applicable Department of Children and Families requirements.
4. In the cases where parents cannot be reached, emergency services will be administered as described herein and the Director or designee will continue to attempt to reach the parents to advise them of the incident.

Food and Chemical Allergies

Upon admission, parents /guardians will be asked to provide information regarding known allergies. This information should include a list of all known allergies to foods, medication, and other materials or chemicals.

In addition, parents/guardians will provide information regarding the signs of exposure to the allergenic and medical action that may be indicated in the event of an exposure.

The Director or school nurse will review the list of allergies with the parent and determine if the student can be safely served in the program:

1. The school may be unable to serve students with severe life threatening allergies due to the lack of immediate access to emergency medical facilities.
2. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with manageable food allergies.

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3. Students requiring administration of an Epinephrine Pen may be accommodated if the student is independent in its use.

Food Preparation and Storage

1. The school shall allow students to eat at a reasonable, leisurely rate. Staff and students dine together from 12-12:30pm, Monday - Friday.
2. Everyone shall wash and/or sanitize their hands before and after handling food.
3. Students and staff will be encouraged to wash all fresh fruits and vegetables prior to consumption.
4. Parents and students are asked to provide any dietary restrictions and/ or allergies.
5. Students are encouraged to eat a well balanced diet. Each student brings a lunch from home and healthy snacks as needed. Fresh water is readily available. Caffeine intake is not permitted during program hours.
6. The school shall encourage students to eat a well balanced diet, but no student shall be force fed or otherwise coerced to eat against his/her will except where medically prescribed.
 - a. Students with known eating disorders will require a special plan to discourage starvation, purging, bingeing, or other such behaviors at Riverside School.
7. Following use, all tables, stove, counter tops, utensils and other utilized items are thoroughly washed and stored properly.
8. All disposable items and other waste products shall be disposed of promptly and properly.
9. The refrigerator shall be maintained at appropriate levels of cleanliness. All food stored in refrigerator shall be wrapped and dated when opened and have freshness expiration dates. Staff will inspect the refrigerator at the end of each day to ensure the appropriate standards of cleanliness.
10. The Director or designee is responsible for the oversight of the food and nutrition program.

Preventative Healthcare

1. Riverside School, in cooperation with the student's parents and/or human service agency which is responsible for payment, shall make provision for each student to receive an annual comprehensive medical and dental examination. The school shall require a written report from the physician(s) of the results of the examination and any recommendation and/or modification of the student's activity.
2. Riverside School shall, in cooperation with the student's public school, develop a plan to ensure that vision, hearing, postural and other screenings are conducted.
 - a. DPH requires annual vision and hearing screenings.
 - b. M.G.L.c.71, § 57 requires postural screenings for grades 5-9.

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3. Parents and referring school districts will be asked to provide evidence of required immunizations.
4. Any student or staff with a reported communicable disease shall be required to present a letter of medical clearance by an authorized physician before returning to school. All parents and referring agencies shall be notified according to procedures outlined in the Immediate Notification policy ES 400.2 following the introduction of a reported communicable disease into the school. The local board of health shall also be notified in accordance with M.G.L.c.111, § 111.
5. The school shall provide a locked, secure cabinet to keep all toxic substances, medications, sharp objects and matches out of the reach of students. Medications and medical supplies shall not be locked in the same cabinet as other toxic substances. Toxic substances shall be labeled with contents and antidote. The phone number for the nearest poison center shall be posted clearly.
6. Where appropriate, the school shall provide or arrange for the provision of family planning information, subject to any applicable state or federal legislation.
7. The school shall require that all students have necessary immunizations as required by the Department of Public Health.

VI. Student Discharge

It is the goal of the Riverside Life Skills School to help all students meet state, district, school, and IEP benchmarks and eventually transition to a less restrictive academic environment. The Riverside School outlines procedures that address transition planning, working with the responsible school district to discuss each student's transition needs are addressed annually at the IEP TEAM meetings and documented on the DESE Transition Planning Form.

Transition Planning

1. Upon admission to the program, the family, referring school district representative and student meet with staff to review the student's areas of strength and needs. The resulting needs are addressed on the IEP and within the school setting; ongoing review is provided at student progress review meetings and documented within student IEP progress reports.
2. Each student's transition needs will be discussed annually beginning no later than students 14th birthday.
3. The TEAM considers specially designed, measurable goals based on age-appropriate transition needs related to training, postsecondary education, employment, and, where appropriate, to independent living skills.
4. Students are invited and encouraged to give input into their transition services.

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5. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Transition Planning Form will be utilized to document transition discussions and will be maintained in the student record.

Less Restrictive Placement

1. As students achieve established goals, the TEAM begins to discuss transition plans to an appropriate, less restrictive environment. This discussion includes the exploration of educational options within a referring school district.
2. Staff is available to visit other programs to observe and assess the appropriateness of the placement and to gain information that will guide the recommendations.
3. Once the placement has been identified, staff from the new program may be invited to observe the student in the current placement at the Riverside School.
4. School staff will be available to accompany the transitioning student into the new program for a predetermined number of days as the student adjusts to his/her new placement.
5. Follow up phone calls are made after the transition.
6. Consultation will be offered on an as needed basis.

Transition to Adulthood

Transitions to adult services will include similar supports as families identify appropriate services for their adult child. When a child reaches the age of 18, a 688 referral may be made if deemed appropriate by the TEAM. The school staff maintains regular contact with the family to help them understand the options available to their child as s/he approaches adulthood.

Terminations

The Riverside School will not terminate a student even in emergency circumstances until the public school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the public school district, the Riverside School will delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency TEAM meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination. With mutual agreement between the public school district and the Riverside School, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

Planned Terminations

The Riverside School shall notify the public school district of the need for an IEP transition meeting. The public school will provide notice of this meeting to all appropriate parties ten (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The TEAM will develop a clear and specific termination plan for the student that

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shall be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

Emergency Terminations

In circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, the school shall follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 29.09(12)(b) and immediately notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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VII. Behavior Support

The Riverside School implements a comprehensive set of policies and procedures dealing with behavior support and discipline that meet all federal and state special education requirements. In the event that school staff deems it necessary to create individual student behavior plans, the student, parents/guardians, and referring public school LEA will receive a copy of this plan. Additionally, a copy will be maintained in the student record.

Components

Upon acceptance and admission to the school program, all students will sign a code of conduct contract that outlines school behavioral expectations and agreed upon behavior. Students and parents/guardians will also receive a copy of the schools behavior support system and disciplinary processes.

1. Methods for Preventing Student Violence:

All students meet weekly with their clinician as well as attend weekly group therapy to address concerns, discuss prevention of violence, human rights, and coping skills. Students participate in weekly community meetings – open forum discussions to discuss community concerns and violence prevention. Students are involved in monthly community trips and team building activities. In addition Riverside school will conduct Parent Advisory Groups in order to inform parents of policies, elicit feedback and provide training as necessary.

2. Methods for Preventing Self-Injurious behavior and Suicide:

All students meet weekly with their clinicians as well as attend weekly therapeutic groups. These groups include the use of Dialectical Behavior Therapy strategies, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy strategies, development of coping skills and communication skills. When a student is deemed at risk for self-injury or suicide a comprehensive safety plan is developed with the family and other community supports. Within the school community students are consistently monitored for safety and risk level. There are specific groups that directly discuss self-injury and suicide for students at high risk.

3. Alternatives to physical restraint:

Upon acceptance and admission to The Riverside School, all students will sign a code of conduct contract that outlines school expectations and appropriate behaviors. Students and parents/guardians will also receive a copy of the school's behavior support system.

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Annually staff participate in NAPI training (Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention), CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention), Policies and Procedures, Behavioral Support/Discipline, Civil Rights and Human Rights, bully prevention as well as monthly staff meetings to discuss/review behavioral concerns, safety, and welfare of students.

Staff shall be trained in de-escalation techniques annually. The Director of the school shall consult with the student's TEAM and the Riverside Risk Team, when appropriate, to develop proactive crisis and risk plans for students with potential for engaging in high risk behaviors. These plans shall incorporate known precipitants with progressive supports to avoid potentially dangerous behaviors.

Support Systems of Privileges

A support system will be used to encourage and reinforce positive behaviors. A detailed description of this system is outlined in school policy ES 200.7.

- Beginning – (enrolment through the 1st month. or more if deemed appropriate) upon enrollment students coming into the Riverside School will be on the beginning level.
This is designed to get to know students and to let students become acclimated to the program. Students are closely monitored by school staff. This includes supervision at all times as well as daily check-ins. Decision to participate in school incentives and activities is made by the Riverside team on an individual basis. During this time students and their family's work with their clinician and teacher to identify individual goals, review IEP goals, and determine how these goals will be obtained. An Individual Action Plan is developed with the student and their family that outline goals and benchmarks.
- Learning – (2nd month – ongoing) Students are actively engaged in working on their individual and educational goals. Based on an individual basis students may earn more independent privileges such as running errands, using the rest rooms independently, accessing library to work independently, requesting time with staff, ordering out for lunch on Fridays, and other privileges that may be requested by student and are deemed appropriate by the students Riverside team. Students are expected to remain in good standing behaviorally, actively be working on their Individual and Educational goals as well as learning and applying strategies identified. Students on Learning and in good standing are eligible for all classroom and school wide incentives.

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- Transitioning – (when a student is preparing to step down to a less restrictive setting)
During this time students have been identified as making significant progress on individual and education goals and are attempting to step down to a less restrictive setting. Students should be able to function as role models within the school and therapeutic milieu with significant independence. This may include such things as completing independent study projects, assisting in activity based group implementation, peer tutoring, and other leadership roles as identified by the student or Riverside team. The goal for students on this level is to put into practice the skills they have learned both clinically and educationally across all settings. During this time students are also identifying future goals and resources that can assist them in their continued growth.
- Independence – Students who have demonstrated maturity, growth, and healthy decision making; and whose team feels they have demonstrated leadership within the community, are eligible to apply for independent status. Students on Independence are able to run errands, act as peer mentor, act as welcoming host to new students and families, assist in planning community activities and other incentives, and with prior permission from staff are able to have structured unsupervised time within the program. This may include music time, game play, and sensory time. Students may be eligible if in good academic standing to request one block a week off in order to engage in a preferred activity
- Safety - If a student is exhibiting unsafe behaviors such as lying, self-injurious behaviors, homicidal ideation, or general mental health difficulties that require close monitoring, they will be put on a safety alert. Students on Safety are to be within close proximity to staff at all times and all conversations with others will need to be closely monitored. The team will meet weekly or more if needed, to discuss progress, need for a behavioral plan or other interventions. Once a student is deemed to be in safe space the safety alert will be lifted with or without restrictions.
- School Wide Incentive Plans: Each month during staff meetings and during community meeting with students, ideas for school wide incentives are recognized and criteria for attaining that incentive identified. Incentives may include social events, school trips, or community projects. Students will participate based on attainment of identified criteria and safe behavioral standing.

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- **Classroom incentives:** Based on Individual Education Goals and Community Spirit students are eligible for classroom incentives as identified by the teacher and students. This may include an agreed upon goal for the entire classroom or be based on individual performance. Dependent on the classroom population such incentive may include but not be limited to:
 - Daily recognition such as positive notes home, independent reading time, puzzle time, or computer time.
 - Weekly classroom drawings for items such as pencils, coupons, and other small rewards.
 - Earned trips or activities that may include, cooking activities, educational off campus trips, or social events (popcorn party, ice cream party, ...)

- **Clinical Supports:** All students meet weekly with their clinician as well as attend weekly therapy groups to address concerns and treatment. In addition clinicians communicate with families weekly to review clinical updates and goals and offer family therapy sessions as needed.

- **Taking Space:** If students are unable to respond to cues or redirection they may be asked to take space. The student would be asked to go the space room in order to refocus and process with staff before returning to their activity. Taking space is usually only for a few minutes, and students are encouraged to utilize coping skills during this time. Taking space is recorded in the individual student behavioral logs.

- **Individual Behavioral Plans:** When a student is presenting with more complex and involved behavioral difficulties that cannot be addressed with the regular Behavioral System, the team, including the student and parents may meet to develop an individual student behavior plan. The student, parent/guardian, and referring school will receive a copy of this plan. Additionally a copy of the plan will be maintained in the student's record.

- **Management of unacceptable behavior and minor disruptive behaviors:** When students are unable to adhere to the agreed upon code of conduct, staff will use reminders or redirection activities. If the behavior continues staff will employ limit setting techniques. This includes explaining
 - Which behavior is inappropriate
 - Why the behavior is inappropriate and
 - Give reasonable choices with consequences
 - Allow time
 - Follow through with consequences if needed – taking space, use of coping strategies,

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- Time Out: If a student is unable to manage their behavior safely or with assistance from staff, or presents as disruptive to the learning environment, they may be asked to temporarily separate from the learning activity or classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff for the purpose of calming. This would include removal to a quiet, clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate area for the purpose of calming and processing with their clinician or teacher. Students must be continuously observed and staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. Separation from program may be for up to 30 minutes. If time is to exceed 30 minutes, approval from the director or designee will need to be obtained. All separation from program time is documented and time out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. Students are never to be left alone in a room or area from which they are physically prevented from leaving.
- Re-Entry Meeting: A re-entry meeting may occur for serious behavioral incidents or for continued difficulty managing behaviors. A re-entry meeting will include the teacher, clinician, student, parent/guardian and the director. The purpose of the meeting is to review expectations and discuss supports that may be needed. A behavioral plan may be developed at this meeting.
- Management of physically disruptive behaviors (non assaultive): If students are unable to manage disruptive behaviors given redirection or limit setting, the student will be separated from the rest of the school population and evaluated and monitored for safety. This may include continued separation from the population and/or encouraging use of coping skills that may include sensory strategies, positive self talk, or journaling activities.
- Suspension Suspensions may be administered by the director for the following reasons (but not limited to):
 - Aggressive/Assaultive behaviors
 - Destruction of property
 - Assaultive behaviors
 - Threatening
 - Harassment
 - Substance use, including arriving to school under the influence
 - Possession of a weapon

Procedure:

- Should a student require a suspension either 3-5 day or 10 or more days, the school will immediately notify the parent/guardian as well as the sending public school district or human service agency involved with the child.
- Written notice of suspension and right to appeal will be sent within 24 hours to the parent and sending school district.
- The Director will notify parent/guardian to schedule a meeting.

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- In case of the need for immediate suspension, the parent/guardian will be contacted to transport the student home.
- A team meeting will be scheduled to discuss alternatives or program modifications

- Management of serious disruptive behaviors such as destruction, aggression:
The student should be separated from the rest of the school population. The student will meet with clinical staff and/or the director. Student will be evaluated and monitored for safety. This may include continued separation, grounding techniques, a re-entry meeting with parent/guardian, and may include suspension. The student may also be withheld from off-site events based on safety concerns and or loss of incentives. (Student's will not be denied access to state or district-wide assessments, meals or counseling or medical services)

- Restrictions of Program Services
 - At the discretion of the Director of the school or designee, students demonstrating unacceptable or unsafe behaviors may be withheld from school events and activities that are offsite and/or used to reward positive behaviors (i.e. access to privileges, field trips).
 - Students shall not be denied access to school, state or district-wide assessments as a form of punishment or behavior management.
 - Counseling or medical services shall not be withheld as a form of punishment or behavior management.
 - Meals shall not be withheld as a form of punishment or behavior management. No student shall be denied or unreasonably delayed a meal for any reason other than medical prescriptions.

- Management of Assaultive Behaviors:
Physical assault is defined as assault on another person with intent to harm, or with sufficient intensity and lack of control that the risk of harm to another person is intrinsic to the situation. Physical assault includes bodily assault and assault by means of an object. If a student becomes physically assaultive they will be immediately removed from the rest of the school population. Dependent on the circumstances surrounding the assaultive behavior, the student will need to participate in a re-entry meeting with their parent or guardian or may be issued a program suspension of up to 3-5 days, depending on the severity of the incident and the implications for program safety. If warranted a longer suspension or discharge may be imposed in accordance to school policy.

The first staff person to arrive at the scene will begin de-escalating the situation, call for other staff as necessary and immediately inform the

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Director or designee. The Director or designee will be responsible for managing the incident and coordinating the responses.

The Director or designee shall designate specific staff to:

Call the police or Riverside Emergency Services, if necessary;

- Call the parents/guardians to inform of the situation and arrange a family meeting to discuss suspension and other necessary steps, in accordance to school policy ES 200.10
- Family meeting to discuss suspension and other necessary steps, in accordance to school policy ES 200.10;
- Clinically evaluate the students involved for safety;
- Manage the environment and response of the non-involved students.
- Immediately notify parents/guardians, public school LEA, and other appropriate persons or agencies; and
- Write an Incident Report
- The Director of the school or designee will be responsible for overseeing the completion and submission of the report within 48 hours of the incidence.

For the student responsible for the physical assault, an automatic suspension is imposed of 3 to 5 program days in accordance to school policy ES 200.9. Depending on the severity of the incident and the implications for program safety, a longer suspension or emergency discharge may be imposed in accordance to school policy ES 200.10.

When a student requires a safety or behavior plan the team will meet to develop the plans along with the parents and student.

All plans and behavior logs will be maintained in student file

Monthly the team will meet to discuss/review behavioral concern, safety, and welfare of students.

Parents are notified of extended time out of program or significant behavioral concerns including but not limited to: safety issued or concerns, physically disruptive behaviors, program restrictions or assaultive behaviors.

Physical Restraint used in emergency Situations:

The Riverside school annually trains staff in the use of:

- NAPI training (Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention); which is based on a trauma informed care model in a non-coercive, nonviolent milieu- This is a 16 hour course with annual refreshers and;
- CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention), that focuses on crisis prevention and the creation of a restraint-free environment through a commitment to Care,

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Welfare, Safety, and Security. While considered a last resort, physical intervention procedures are taught as part of the program

Use of Physical Restraint: Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. The use of physical restraint will only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. Nothing in 603 CMR 46.00 shall be constructed to limit the protection afforded publicly funded students who have been found eligible to receive special education services; or precludes any teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent serious, physical harm.

Use of Seclusion, Medication Restrain, Mechanical Restraint and Prone Restraint are prohibited.

Documentation of Disciplinary Actions

1. School staff administering disciplinary actions will note in the student's record each occurrence that required behavior management beyond a verbal warning.
2. Data regarding student discipline and behavior shall be discussed at the subsequent TEAM or key meeting to determine the need for revising the student's IEP, IAP, and/or behavior plan.

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VIII. Contractual Obligations

The Riverside School shall inform in writing any party, other than a local school district, responsible for placement of a student that said party is financially responsible for any costs incurred as a result of any placement not made pursuant to the requirements of 603 CMR 28.00.

Parents and students will be financially responsible for any damage to property caused by student. Additionally, services which exceed the school districts obligation and/or approval will be the responsibility of parents. Parents will be fully informed prior to the delivery of services.

IX. Religious Observances

Riverside maintains and promotes a policy of equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, age, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, or political or union affiliation. The Riverside School will accommodate students' religious observances, in terms of taking religious holidays into consideration when scheduling assessments and allowing students to miss a portion of the school day to celebrate their religious holiday. The Riverside School will not require students to practice religious rituals during school hours.

X. Student Dress Code

All students will comply with the following standards for appropriate dress:

1. Clothing should be clean and neat;
2. No revealing clothing is to be worn;
3. Clothing depicting or glorifying drugs, alcohol or violence are prohibited; and
4. Clothing with inappropriate or offensive language is prohibited.

The Riverside School and Life Skills Program (Riverside Community Care) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age in treatment or employment at Riverside, admission or access to Riverside, or any other aspect of the educational programs and activities that Riverside operates. Riverside is required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Age Act), and their respective implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Parts 104, 106, and 110, not to discriminate in such a manner. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding these non-discrimination policies:

- Section 504 Coordinator(s): Monica Garlick, (781) 320-5383, 270 Bridge Street, Suite 301, Dedham, MA 02026
- Title IX Coordinator(s): Paulo Fulton, (781) 320-5312, 270 Bridge Street, Suite 301, Dedham, MA 02026
- Age Act Coordinator(s): Monica Garlick, (781) 320-5383, 270 Bridge Street, Suite 301, Dedham, MA 02026

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School Directory:

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ssorenson@riversidecc.org

Doreen Shea, M.Ed
Program Director,
508-422-9250
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Julie Hart, RN
Nurse Consult
jhart@riversidecc.org

Riverside Emergency Services
1-800-294-4665 or 508-634-3420