

# Ross Upper School Student & Parent Handbook

Updated September 20, 2024

*Note: This document is subject to change as the school year progresses. Please check Blackbaud for the most up-to-date version of the Student Handbook.*



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## Ross School Mission

Our mission is to change the way education meets the future; to foster interdisciplinary, integrated thinking and innovative leadership; to engage fully in the global community; and to facilitate lifelong learning.

Ross School prepares students for meaningful lives and active participation in the global community at a time of monumental, rapid-paced change. We aim to help students understand their needs and responsibilities in this place and time relative to the past in order to prepare for and embrace the future. We are dedicated to providing the best possible education for our own students while exchanging information about integrated curriculum development, teaching strategies, and school organization with other schools all over the world. We are part of a growing network of students, teachers, school leaders, and mentors of all ages and backgrounds, at locations around the globe, working and learning together.

Ross School's unique curriculum is based on world cultural history and the evolution of consciousness. The curriculum interweaves knowledge in an integrated manner, incorporating skills and content from all disciplines. Because history is studied in a continuous and consecutive thread, students are equipped with a narrative that accounts for significant historical shifts leading up to the major transformation of the present time. The narrative and the integrated nature of the curriculum provide students with tools and opportunities to explore and solve problems in a holistic manner.

Ross School focuses on educating the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—with daily programs in health and wellness. Our teaching methods are informed by the theory of Multiple Intelligences developed by Dr. Howard Gardner and the latest developments in curriculum design, pedagogy, and communications technologies. The teachers, who come from a variety of cultures and professions, collaborate with one another and with experts from around the world to create engaging, progressive curricular units for the students.

At Ross School, students from diverse cultural, academic, and socioeconomic backgrounds develop the skills and core concepts they need as they go forward, learn about the complex world they live in, and explore new challenges together while honoring and respecting individual diversity, experiences, intelligences, and abilities.



# Student Calendar 2024–2025

## AUGUST 2024

8/30 New Boarding Students Arrive—US

## SEPTEMBER 2024

9/2 Labor Day Holiday  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off  
9/3 Returning Boarding Students Arrive—US  
New Boarding Students Testing  
New Boarding/Day Student Orientation  
9/4 First Day of School (Retreats)—US  
First Day of School—K–5  
First Day of School—EC  
9/4–9/6 Early Dismissal—EC  
9/5 First Day of Classes—US  
9/18 US Back-to-School Night  
9/19 LS Back-to-School Night

## OCTOBER 2024

10/3–10/4 Rosh Hashanah  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off  
10/14 Indigenous Peoples' Day  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off  
10/28 US Family-Teacher Conferences  
No School—US Students  
10/28–11/1 US Family-Advisor Conferences

## NOVEMBER 2024

11/11 LS Family-Teacher Conferences  
No School—LS Students  
11/23 Boarding Houses Close 12 pm  
11/25–11/29 Thanksgiving Recess  
No School—All Students

## DECEMBER 2024

12/1 Boarding Houses Open 9 am  
12/2 Classes Resume—All Students  
12/20 US Semester 1 Ends  
12/21 Boarding Houses Close 12 pm  
12/23–1/6 Winter Recess  
No School—All Students

LS = Lower School, Grades K–5\*

US = Upper School, Grades 6–PG

\*EC = Lower School Early Childhood Program, Grades N & PK

## JANUARY 2025

1/6 Boarding Houses Reopen 1 pm  
US Boarding Students Arrive  
1/7 US Semester 2 Begins  
Classes Resume—All Students  
1/20 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off

## FEBRUARY 2025

2/17–2/21 Presidents' Day Recess  
No School—All Students  
Boarding Houses Remain Open  
2/24 US Field Academy Begins

## MARCH 2025

3/7 US Field Academy Ends  
3/10 US Semester 2 Resumes  
LS Family-Teacher Conferences  
No School—LS Students  
3/22 Boarding Houses Close 12 pm  
3/24–4/4 Spring Recess No School—All Students

## APRIL 2025

4/6 Boarding Houses Reopen 9 am  
4/7 Classes Resume—All Students  
4/18 Good Friday  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off  
4/21–4/25 US Family-Advisor Conferences

## MAY 2025

5/26 Memorial Day  
School Closed—Faculty/Staff Off

## JUNE 2025

6/4–6/5 Grade 12 Final Exams  
6/6 Grade 12 Graduation Rehearsal 8 am  
6/7 Grade 12 Graduation 1 pm  
Grade 12 Boarders Sign Out 8 pm  
6/11–6/12 US Final Exams  
6/13 US Make-Up Exams  
Early Dismissal at 12 pm—All Students  
Boarding Houses Close 5 pm

### SEMESTER DATES

Semester 1 9/3–12/20

Field Academy 2/24–3/7

Semester 2 1/7–6/13



# Section 1: General Introduction and Core Values

Ross School is an open, inclusive learning community in which students and faculty come to appreciate the contributions of past cultures to their own lives while gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a global society. The Ross community itself reflects a worldview that allows students from different cultures to work side by side in an active learning environment. Sustaining and continually improving our learning is fundamental to Ross and are expectations shared by the whole community.

Students, parents, faculty, and staff are asked to conduct themselves in such a way as to leave Ross School in better condition than they encounter it, whether by contributing to the School's intellectual journey or by preserving the comfort and beauty of the physical space that nurtures that journey.

We offer an exemplary learning environment where all members of the community work and learn together with mutual kindness, respect, and consideration for one another, the cultures we study, and the learning environment. We believe that all disciplines should encourage the development of self-discipline and that our role is to help students take responsibility for their actions and empower them in their growth toward becoming effective adults.

These goals are reflected in the eight Core Values that we ask all members of the Ross community to embody:

- > Compassion
- > Cooperation
- > Courage
- > Gratitude
- > Integrity
- > Mindfulness
- > Respect
- > Responsibility

All of the policies outlined in this handbook are designed for safety, for the protection of the rights of others, and for academic benefit. Parents and students are, therefore, expected to be familiar with the contents of this handbook and to return the acknowledgment form when requested by the administration. This handbook can be considered a "work in progress" for a vibrant organization; accordingly, changes may be made throughout the year at any time. The School will provide notice of revisions or modifications as soon as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

This student handbook is published only for the use of the Ross School community for School purposes. Because we want to protect the privacy of our families and employees, we do not distribute the handbook to anyone for commercial or other purposes, nor do we permit anyone else, including parents and students, to use the information in this student handbook for commercial or other purposes.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

Parents will receive weekly emails from Ross School with announcements and reminders. These weekly emails help families remain current with all the exciting events on campus. The Head of Lower School and the Head of Upper School also send regular emails to parents. Parents can also check [Blackbaud](#) for information, forms, and calendars.



## **PARENT VISITS**

- > When arriving at school, Upper School parents are asked to check in at the Upper School Office in Building 1 to receive a security pass.
- > If parents wish to meet with a specific person, they should call in advance for an appointment to make sure the person is available.
- > If parents need access to a campus building outside of school hours, they are asked to contact Security at the East Hampton campus (631-907-5100).
- > The use of facilities (classrooms, weight rooms, etc.) is limited to official Ross programs and activities. Parents who wish to use available Ross facilities should contact the Upper School Office (631-907-5185).

## **PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

All parents and guardians of Ross School students are automatically members of the Ross School Parents Association (PA). The PA collaborates closely with the administration and teachers to elevate the student experience and strengthen our community. Questions regarding the Ross Parents Association should be emailed to [rosspa@ross.org](mailto:rosspa@ross.org).

## **GIFTS AND CLASS COLLECTIONS**

While the Ross School Parents Association collects annual dues, separate funds for faculty gifts are not solicited. Families are invited to recognize and thank teachers in their own way if desired, though nothing is required. If you choose to express your gratitude to a faculty/staff member, we ask that you limit the value of the gift to fifty dollars (\$50.00).



## Section 2: Daily Routines

### ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS

Grades 6–PG: Boarding students and students who arrive on early buses who would like to eat breakfast may do so from 7–7:45 am. First-period classes begin at 8 am, at which time attendance is taken for the day.

All students arriving after 8 am **must go directly to their class, the parent/guardian must send an email to [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) or call 631-907-5185.** Communication is essential and expected as it contributes to complete information about which students are on campus.

Failure to properly communicate will result in a phone call home. Repeatedly failing to communicate when arriving late may result in additional consequences.

### CAMPUS DROP-OFF AND PICKUP

Students being dropped off or picked up by car must use the grade level locations listed below. Parents are required to pull all the way up to the front of the loop and move through it as quickly as possible. If there is a need to come into a building, parents are asked to park in a parking lot, not in the loop. Buses will drop off and pick up in the bus lane adjacent to the Athletic Fields.

Grades 6, 11, and 12: Center for Well-Being (Building 5) Loop

Grades 7–10: Upper School/Media Buildings (Buildings 1/2) Loop

Pick-up is in the same location at 3:05 pm.

District buses depart at 3:45 pm.

Athletics and clubs end by 5:15 pm.

### CAMPUS DISMISSAL

First Dismissal (Parent Pickup only): 3 pm

Second Dismissal (District Buses): 3:45 pm

Third Dismissal: 5 pm, or earlier, depending on the end of the Athletic program

Day students are permitted to remain on campus through 3:45–5 pm (Monday–Friday) if they are in an athletic practice, watching an athletic competition, attending a club, meeting with a teacher for extra help, or participating in another School-sanctioned and supervised activity. Day students in Grades 6–8 may not remain on campus after 3:45 pm if they are not supervised. All individual day student pickup is from the loop at which the student is dropped off in the morning. Boarding students are expected to remain on campus, engaged in organized activities, through the dinner hour.

### CLUBS

Upper School clubs will be offered from 3:05–3:45 pm; these opportunities will be announced to students throughout the year, beginning in September.



## **BOARDING STUDENT AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES**

From 3:05–5 pm on weekdays, students will be involved in clubs, activities, sports, studio time, or extra help sessions. All boarding students will have an opportunity to select their activities. Attendance will be taken; absence from activities during this block will be considered unexcused.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

### **Early Dismissal for Day Students**

Early dismissals should be kept to a minimum and reserved for appointments that cannot be accommodated after 3 pm. Upper School Day students being picked up before the end of the day should have a parent/guardian contact the Upper School Office by email, [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org), or by phone 631-907-5185.

Students will not be released early without authorization from a parent. Parents must email [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) or call the office at 631-907-5185 and leave a message.

### **Early Dismissal for Boarding Students**

Early dismissals should be kept to a minimum and reserved for appointments that cannot be accommodated after 3 pm. Boarding students being picked up before the end of the day should be met in the Upper School Office. Boarding students will not be released early without authorization from a parent. Parents must have emailed authorization to [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) and completed the Residential Life sign-out procedure in Orah.

## **WEEKEND ACTIVITIES**

All Ross students are strongly encouraged to participate in our weekend activities and programs, including chaperoned trips to New York City, athletic and cultural events, and outdoor adventures. These activities help to build the community culture at Ross. Weekend activity sign-ups will be sent to students and families on Monday mornings, and students will have until Thursday afternoons to sign up for their preferred activities. Students who sign up for an activity but do not attend will be charged for the cost of the activity through their school account.

## **ROSS SCHOOL CELL PHONE POLICY**

All use of cell phones, as with all technology, must be of an appropriate nature.

Phones may not be used to take photos or videos under any circumstances unless authorized by a teacher. Any student engaged in cyberbullying, defined as the use of electronic information and communication devices to willfully and repeatedly harm a person or persons through the medium of electronic text, photos, or videos, will face school suspension and or expulsion.

The student is solely responsible for their electronic device. The School assumes no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged electronic devices, nor for any damage, loss, or theft of any device that is confiscated. The School reserves the right to alter this policy at any time during the school year. It will inform students and parents of any changes.

### **Grades 6–8 Cell Phone Policy**

For students in Grades 6–8, cell phones and phone watches must be turned off and stowed from 8 am until 3:45 pm unless a teacher has granted prior permission or specifically requested their use for a particular class activity. This policy also applies to lunch, study hall, and transitions between classes. Cell phones will be confiscated from students if they are misused. If parents need to communicate with their child, they are asked to call the Upper School Office at 631-907-5185.



### **Grades 6–8 Cell Phone Discipline Policy**

A student's failure to adhere to this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- > First offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day.
- > Second offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day and the student serves detention from 3:05–3:45 pm.
- > Third offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day and the student serves detention from 3:05–3:45 pm.
- > Fourth offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day. The student and a parent/guardian must meet with the Head of Upper School and the Upper School Counselor. The student may be assigned an in-school suspension.

### **Grades 9–PG Cell Phone Policy**

In Grades 9–PG, phones are to be off and put away during class times, assemblies, and during lunch in the Café. Teachers may collect phones and other electronic devices and store them during the class period. If parents need to communicate with their child, they are asked to call the Upper School Office at 631-907-5185.

### **Grades 9–PG Cell Phone Discipline Policy**

A student's failure to adhere to this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- > First offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day.
- > Second offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day and the student serves detention from 3:05–3:45 pm.
- > Third offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day and the student serves detention from 3:05–3:45 pm.
- > Fourth offense: Phone or phone watch is confiscated and stored until the end of the school day. The student and a parent/guardian must meet with the Head of Upper School and the Upper School Counselor. The student may be assigned an in-school suspension.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES POLICY**

Students are expected to arrive on time to attend school every day that it is in session. Ross School is a closed campus. Students are not permitted to arrive at or leave the school during the day without permission from a parent or guardian or the Residential Life Office in the case of boarding students. Ross School does not assume responsibility for the supervision of day students before or after school hours or on weekends, except at regularly scheduled and supervised on-campus activities or trips. Day students may not remain on campus after 5 pm in anticipation of evening events.

If a student is absent from school, parents are asked to email the Ross School at [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) or call 631-907-5185 before 8:30 am that day. If a student is absent and notification from the parents has not been received, the School will contact the student's family.

Determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused will be made by the Division Head.



### **Responsibilities for Excused Absences**

In the case of an excused absence, students are responsible for speaking with their teachers and making up any missed work. **If a student misses more than 18 days during the school year (9 days per semester), excused or unexcused**, the student, the student's advisor, and the student's parent/guardian will be required to meet with the Head of Upper School or their delegate to determine whether academic credit will be given.

### **Responsibilities for Excused Planned Absences**

In the case of an excused planned absence, such as attending a family function, going on a college visit, or fulfilling a medical appointment, students are required to complete the Planned Absence Notification Form. This form, available on Blackbaud under Student Resources, requires students to check in with each of their teachers to obtain the necessary classwork to stay current in their studies. The form must be completed 48 hours in advance of the planned absence and submitted to the Upper School Office for final approval.

### **Responsibilities for Unexcused Absences**

Generally, students will not be provided with an opportunity to make up missed assignments or exams for an unexcused absence.

Students will receive a detention for their first unexcused absence and two detentions for their second unexcused absence. A meeting with the Division Head, the student's advisor, the student, and the parent will be set if a pattern of unexcused absences develops.

If a student misses more than 18 days during the school year (9 days per semester), excused or unexcused, the student, the student's advisor, and the student's parent/guardian will be required to meet with the Head of Upper School or their delegate to determine whether academic credit will be given.

### **Short-Term Leave**

A short-term leave is an approved absence from the School for health reasons lasting no more than two weeks. In most cases, students will be asked to return home or be in the care of a guardian appointed by the family. The responsibility for staying current with coursework lies with the student. Repeated short absences, or an absence that becomes too extensive, might indicate the necessity for a more sustained level of intervention, and the School and family may consider a medical leave of absence.

### **Medical Leave of Absence**

A medical leave of absence is an approved absence from school due to a physical or psychological cause that prevents a student from participating in the educational program for an extended period of time. The Head of Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support Services, retains the authority to grant a medical leave of absence and to grant permission to return from a medical leave of absence. All terms of medical leaves of absence remain at the discretion of the School.

The need for a medical leave of absence may result from personal or medical issues that impact the student's ability to function successfully or from strong concern that the student's issues are negatively impacting the school community. Examples of such behaviors include but are not limited to depression, eating disorders, self-harm, alcohol or substance abuse, and suicidal ideation or attempt.



## **Request and Approval of a Medical Leave of Absence**

There are two means by which a student may be put on a Medical Leave:

1. A student and their family may request a medical leave of absence by contacting the Head of the Lower or Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support Services. The student's medical or mental health professional must confirm in writing that a medical leave of absence is needed due to a health problem and may be required to provide information regarding the expected duration, treatment, and so on. Ross School may request supporting medical documentation. In determining the need for a medical leave of absence, the School will consider the student's various medical, psychological, academic, athletic, social, and personal needs and commitments. In addition, the safety and well-being of the student, their schoolmates, and the community at large are considered in determining the need for such a medical leave of absence.
2. If a student is unable to meet classroom expectations (classroom assessments or actively attend school) to an acceptable measure (incomplete assignments, homework, or missing class time), it may be determined that the student would be better served by taking a Medical Leave. If this is the case, the Head of the Lower or Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support and Division Heads, may make that decision. Until the point at which that student is evaluated (with the documentation mentioned in the section below "Returning from a Medical Leave of Absence") as being ready to return to normal school attendance and performance, the student would be placed on a Medical Leave.

## **Student Status During a Medical Leave of Absence**

The conditions of the medical leave of absence (including the departure date and expected duration, the specific treatment recommendations, any associated administrative actions, and any adjustments or alterations to academic or campus commitments and responsibilities) take into consideration the specifics of the student's given situation and needs. These conditions are set out by Ross School in consultation with administrators, faculty, the Director of Student Support Services, the student's advisor, and other pertinent school personnel when appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Head Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support Services, to communicate the specific conditions and details of the medical leave of absence to the student and their family in writing.

The School will make every effort to establish clear expectations of the academic work requirements that the student misses in their absence. Because so much of the academic experience at Ross School relies on student-centered classrooms, it may not be possible to earn academic credit for all coursework missed or to earn a diploma in the student's senior year. The School will work with the student and their family to accommodate the student when reasonable for short leaves; longer leaves may require repetition of courses.

If the duration of a medical leave of absence is longer than initially planned, approved, or expected, the terms and conditions of the leave may be reconsidered.

## **Return from a Medical Leave of Absence**

The return of any student following a medical leave of absence will be determined by Ross School. Before Ross School can consider reentry for a student on medical leave, the School will require any and all documentation relevant to the program of care the student underwent during the medical leave. Select Ross School administrators will need permission to speak with any professional involved with the student's care or program. The School will require proof, to its satisfaction, that the student is ready to resume day-to-day functioning at school and that it is in the best interest of the student and the school community for the student to return from the medical leave of absence.



Once all information is received, the School requires up to five working days to review the case. The student's previous medical history, disciplinary record, academic performance, and residential experience will all be taken into consideration as part of the procedure. The Head of Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support Services, will communicate with the student and their family regarding the student's return to school and any conditions or requirements relevant to their return.

If it is determined that a student is not capable of returning from the medical leave of absence, or if it is not in the best interest of the school community for a student to return, they will be so notified. The student's advisor, the Director of Student Support Services, and the Head of Upper School will work with the student to best facilitate withdrawal.

All medical information provided to the School in connection with a medical leave of absence will be considered confidential and, therefore, will only be shared with appropriate school personnel on a need-to-know basis.

### **Emergency Leave**

Emergency leave is appropriate in cases where a student needs immediate medical care and attention. In all likelihood, the student will be required to take a short-term or medical leave of absence and must meet the conditions described above to return to school.

### **Religious Holidays**

The School respects any member of our community who wishes to fulfill a religious obligation while school is in session. On those days when it is expected that a significant number of students will be absent, faculty will conduct meaningful curriculum-based enrichment classes but will make an effort not to cover new material that will later be assessed and therefore put those observing the religious holiday at a disadvantage. Also, tests and quizzes will not be given on those days, nor the day following the holiday, as students may not have had sufficient time to prepare. It is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher of the impending absence, in addition to completing and submitting the Planned Absences Notification Form. If a student misses work due to observation of a religious holiday, teachers will make accommodations by allowing the student to make up the work without penalty.

### **Class Attendance**

All students are expected to be familiar with their schedules each semester and to plan their day to allow for timely attendance in all scheduled classes and activities. **Students must be present for 50 percent of their classes in order to participate in any after-school sports or activities that day.**

### **Excused Absences from Individual Courses**

From time to time, it may be necessary for a student to miss a regularly scheduled class. The student is responsible for making up any missed work and communicating with the teacher regarding the absence.

### **Unexcused Absences from Individual Courses or the Entire School Day**

Work missed during an unexcused absence or "cut" will result in a failing mark (below 70) on the assignment or assessment without the opportunity to make it up. Many rubrics include timeliness, so late assignments, projects, and homework will affect student assessments. Teachers are not required to prepare special assignments or administer makeup tests or assessments in the case of unexcused absences. Unexcused absences from individual courses (i.e., skipping a class) and or for the entire school day are reported to the Division Head and the consequences are as follows:



- > *First offense:* Student is required to attend one weekday session of after-school detention.
- > *Second offense:* Student is required to attend two weekday sessions of after-school detention.
- > *Third offense:* Student is required to attend a disciplinary hearing with the Head of Upper School, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

**An unexcused absence for an entire day could result in an immediate movement to hearing.**

#### **Lateness to School or Class**

Students coming late to class must submit a late pass from their previous classroom or supervising teacher. A pattern of lateness is defined by three or more late arrivals in a one-month period. If such a pattern develops, the student may be subject to detention or other accountability.

- > *First offense:* Student is required to attend one weekday session of after-school detention.
- > *Second offense:* Student is required to attend two weekday sessions of after-school detention.
- > *Third offense:* Student is required to attend a disciplinary hearing with the Head of Upper School, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

#### **STUDENT VISITORS**

All Ross School students who wish to bring a student visitor on campus during the school day must complete and submit a Student Visitor Approval Form, with all required teacher and administrator signatures, at least 24 hours before the visit. The form and all the instructions for visitors can be found online in the Student Resources section of Blackbaud. The form must be approved by the Division Head. The School reserves the right to deny a student visitor at any time at its discretion.

#### **SPIRAL GARDEN**

The Spiral Garden is a restorative and energizing space for Ross students, faculty, and staff.

- > The rest and play area in the garden is for everyone. Students in Grades 6-8 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- > The garden doors must be closed and locked at the end of your visit to prevent deer and other animals from entering the garden.
- > Please remove any trash and items that do not belong in the garden.
- > Please report any breakages to the Director of Facilities.
- > The growing areas of the garden and equipment are restricted to students and adults in the school garden program. Please do not walk on the vegetable and flower beds or remove or modify any items or parts of the garden.
- > The hammocks and tree swing are for everyone, with no age restriction for Upper School students. Only one person is allowed on each device at a time.



## Section 3: Boarding Program

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Jeff Dionne, Director of Residential Life

Email: [jdionne@ross.org](mailto:jdionne@ross.org)

Phone: 631-907-5451

Ross School Nurses

Email: [nurse@ross.org](mailto:nurse@ross.org)

Phone: 631-907-5138

### INTRODUCTION

The Ross School Boarding Program is committed to providing a stable, caring, supportive, family-like environment for all students. Because of its international focus, the program provides students with a unique opportunity to learn to appreciate and understand a variety of cultures from around the world. Living and learning together in a harmonious setting allows students to celebrate their diversity by sharing language, food, and culture and exploring other students' ideas, values, and histories. This rich experience consequently teaches students that, despite their obvious differences, they have many more similarities shared among them as human beings.

All Ross School programs, including our boarding program, encourage students to be responsible, productive, and ethical citizens with the skills to think creatively, reason critically, and communicate effectively while modeling an attitude of respect toward people of other cultures. Each student is expected to contribute to the health of an open and trusting environment where there is mutual respect among the community members, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, or gender identity.

### ENVIRONMENT

The family-like environment of the Ross Boarding Program is enhanced by the fact that our students do not live in a traditional dormitory setting. Our students live in local homes in the Hamptons, each of which houses between 10 and 14 students. Each house has at least two adult House Parents who take turns being on duty at night and on weekends when the students are not at school. This ensures that the students are always in the care of a responsible guardian acting in the place of their parents.

The unique nature of our program not only allows boarding students to experience the reality of living in a family environment but also ensures that they will have a more personal residential experience that can be tailored to their individual needs.

To ensure the safety and security of students and their property, as well as the residence and its furnishings, students are not allowed to enter the boarding houses except when chaperoned by a House Parent, the Director of Residential Life, or another Ross employee. Since House Parents have other jobs and cannot be available to return to the boarding house after the start of the school day, it is imperative that students take any belongings required for the school day or for traveling after the school day when leaving the boarding house in the morning.



## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

The House Parents serve as the first and most immediate contact for students and are often seen as their “Ross parents.” House Parents and students have the additional benefit of 24-hour access to administrative support. The administrative structure includes the Director of Residential Life and the Administrator on Duty (AOD). The AOD program assures that a Ross School administrator is always available in case of an emergency.

Boarding students have leadership opportunities in the houses in the form of house prefects. Boarding student leaders are elected and hold various responsibilities.

## **HOUSING & ROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

Room assignments for returning students are based on requests made at the end of the previous year. All attempts are made to meet requests, but it should be noted that social and academic standings are taken into consideration, and requests are not guaranteed. The Office of Residential Life makes room assignments for new students. While it is not always possible, particularly given the need to group younger and older students, we attempt to house students in rooms of mixed cultures and languages to facilitate cultural curiosity, understanding, and appreciation. The School tries to keep students who share a native language separated, creating the need to converse in the common language of English. This helps our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students develop their English language proficiency.

Room change requests are approved only in extreme cases. The School makes every effort to help students resolve differences before approving a room change request. The School also reserves the right to reassign rooms or remove a student from a particular house when deemed necessary at the discretion of the School.

## **STUDENT MAILING ADDRESSES**

All letters and packages for boarding students should be addressed to the student and sent to the boarding house address assigned to the student.

Please address all letters and packages as follows:

Student Name

Boarding House Street Address

Town Name, NY, Zip Code

It takes at least two weeks for uniform items to be embroidered with the Ross logo, so all such items must be ordered before the beginning of the school year.

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

All Ross School students must be covered by a comprehensive injury and sickness plan that is accepted by local providers and practitioners. Ross international students will be enrolled in a specialized plan provided by [Clifford Allen Associates](#) that is used in over 225 independent secondary schools.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Throughout the year, activities for boarding students are organized by the Office of Residential Life and, on occasion, student leaders. Examples include trips to New York City, shuttle runs to several local areas for shopping, movies,



and events, trips to pick apples, bowling, and ice skating, to name a few. Transportation and event costs are covered by the Office of Residential Life in most cases.

## **RESPECT FOR SHARED SPACES**

### **Footwear**

Outside footwear must be removed upon entering boarding houses. Slippers and indoor shoes may be worn in the houses.

### **House Chores**

Although common areas are professionally cleaned each week, students are also expected to participate in household chores. If a student does not comply with Ross School standards of cleanliness and safety, the House Parent, in concert with the Division Head and the Director of Residential Life, is responsible for determining the appropriate consequences. Students leaving for the weekend are expected to clean their rooms properly before departure. Students will not be permitted weekend leave if their room does not pass inspection.

## **CURFEW**

The curfew times for all students are as follows:

School nights: 9:30 pm for ALL students

Weekend nights: 10:30 pm for Grades 7–8, 11 pm for Grades 9–12

Students must be present in their own boarding house by the times listed above. Breaking curfew rules is a serious offense. Students must stay in their own boarding house from curfew time until 9 am on non-academic mornings unless a school obligation or special case mandates later arrival or departure.

## **VISITATION POLICY**

### **Guests**

Ross day and boarding students are allowed to visit boarding house common areas while following Orah protocols (see below for Orah procedures). Visitors may not enter student bedrooms. Visitors must have a boarding student acting as the responsible host. Visitors may not enter student bedrooms. Visitors must have a boarding student acting as a responsible host.

If there is an unapproved visitor in a boarding house, the student who allowed the visitor entry will be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including, and not limited to, detention, suspension, or immediate expulsion with or without a disciplinary hearing at the discretion of the relevant Division Head and the Head of School.

### **Visiting Hours**

- > Monday–Thursday: 6:30–7 pm; 8:30–9:30 pm for ALL grades
- > Friday: 4:30–10:30 pm for Grades 7–8 and 4:30–11 pm for Grades 9–12
- > Saturday: 10 am–10:30 pm for Grades 7–8 and 10 am–11 pm for Grades 9–12
- > Sunday: 10 am–7 pm for ALL grades
- > Monday Holidays: Same as Sunday above

### **Other Important Points**

- > Guests who are not Ross students, employees, immediate family members of Ross personnel, or those contracted by Ross are not permitted entry to the boarding houses without explicit permission from the



House Parent(s).

- > Immediate family members of boarding students may not enter boarding houses without giving prior notice to Residential Life staff.
- > Guests are not allowed on house property without an on-duty coverage staff in the vicinity.
- > Houses are places to socialize, but not for any kind of physical intimacy.
- > If there is an unapproved visitor in a boarding house, the student who allowed the visitor entry and/or the visitor will be subject to disciplinary consequences up to, including, and not limited to detention, suspension, or immediate expulsion with or without a disciplinary hearing at the discretion of the Director of Residential Life, relevant Division Head, and the Head of School.

### **Overnight Guests**

Boarding students may have one day student or close relative on the weekends as an overnight guest with permission obtained by 8 pm of the day of the overnight from the Director of Residential Life, the House Parent(s), the boarder's roommate, and the parent(s) of the guest. The guest must have the same gender identity as the host student or the majority gender of the house; exceptions are subject to approval. Ross cannot accommodate high school graduates, parents, or other adult friends or relatives. Hosting overnight guests on school nights is not permitted. Guests must adhere to the School's standards of behavior, and it is the responsibility of the boarding student host to apprise them of all pertinent school and house rules. An overnight guest may enter the bedroom of the host. Guests are responsible for their own food, transportation, and any other costs.

### **STUDY HOURS**

#### **Monday–Thursday, 7–8:30 pm**

In keeping with the academic mission of Ross School, boarding houses are required to maintain quiet hours during the academic year. Study hours are a quiet and productive time held Monday through Thursday evenings, with the exception of holidays. Study hours begin promptly at 7 pm, and all students must be in their designated study location ready to study.

The following activities are prohibited during study hours without prior approval from the House Parent on duty. Permission may be granted at the discretion of the House Parent if the student is in good academic standing and has fulfilled all responsibilities. Students with permission to participate in any of the following activities must be doing so individually and not be a distraction to any other students. These activities include but are not limited to:

- > Playing video games
- > Watching videos, television, or movies
- > Talking on the phone or video calling
- > Sleeping
- > Showering
- > Making food
- > Being in an unauthorized study location
- > Hosting visitors

### **LIGHTS OUT**

On school nights, students must be in bed with the lights out at 10 pm for Grades 7–8 and 10:30 pm for Grades 9–12. On weekends, lights-out time is at 11:30 pm. Students are expected to stay in their rooms after the lights-out time.



## **ORAH**

Orah is a web-based and iOS app/software tool that the Ross boarding community uses for permissions and essential communication between parents, boarders, host families, and Residential Life staff. Proper use by students and parents helps ensure safety and accountability when students leave campus for school events, free time, and other activities.

All boarding roll calls, leave requests, pastoral notes, trips, and events are run through Orah. In addition to students using the Orah app on cell phones, boarding houses have iPad kiosks where students can check in and out of their houses. There are also NFC chips at houses and on campus, which allow students to check in easily with cell phones.

Prior to new student arrivals, parents and students are sent a web link via email with all the necessary information to use Orah.

### **Events Sign-Up**

Students will have the chance to sign up for day and evening trips to local town centers, movies, beaches, restaurants, school events, and many other options. Such events are on a first-come, first-served basis using Orah. Students do not also need to create an Orah pass.

Students who have signed up for an event must ensure that they arrive on time at the point of departure; failure to do so may result in the loss of weekend activity sign-up privileges, and students may be charged for any trip-associated expenses unable to be refunded.

### **Locations**

It is the boarding students' responsibility to "tap in" using their cell phones and the Orah NFC tiles located on campus and in boarding houses. Immediately upon arrival at school or when entering any of the boarding houses, students must "tap in" to an NFC tile. At the Upper School, there are three checkpoints with the tiles, and each house has one tile.

Failure to comply constitutes a safety hazard and could result in disciplinary measures.

### **Leave Passes on Orah**

For all off-campus leaves:

- > An Orah pass must be submitted and fully approved prior to leaving campus for any reason.
- > Leave requests must be accurate to the best of the student's knowledge.
- > Students should plan to have their phones charged and with them at all times.
- > It is the student's responsibility to notify the House Parent on duty of any unavoidable delay in returning to campus. Such notification does not, however, constitute special permission or an excused late return.
- > Uber or other rideshare programs and riding in cars driven by non-Ross staff are only for students with explicit parental permission
- > Upon return to school, boarders must check in by tapping in at an NFC tile or by seeing a House Parent on duty.

### **Free Time Orah Leaves**

When boarding students plan to depart school for personal reasons, parents or students are asked to create Orah leave passes. There are various leave pass types available to meet different needs, circumstances, and timings. Nearly every pass requires parent and House Parent approval. Ross School reserves the right to deny off-campus



leave requests in the interest of student safety, community events, or other reasons.

Boarding students are expected to communicate honestly with the Residential Life team about what their plans are, who they are with, and where they are going. Students may not email permission to travel by using a parent email or by pretending to be the parent. Deception on an Orah leave request, whether willful or by omission, is a serious breach of trust regarding an important Residential Life expectation and will lead to disciplinary consequences, which may include the loss of off-campus privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion with or without a hearing.

Students are expected to observe the Student Conduct Policy at all times, and the School may discipline students for violations of the Student Conduct Policy, at its discretion, when misbehavior occurs during off-campus travel.

### **Weekdays on Orah**

On school days from 3–5:15 pm, students with proper permissions may apply for a leave pass to go to local areas. Students must return to the café for dinner roll call by 5:15 pm. In rare cases, students may also apply for an after-school leave with a return of no later than 7 pm to the boarding house.

### **Weekends on Orah**

There are many boarding student comings and goings from Friday to Sunday every weekend. It is imperative that parents and students create passes for the weekend ahead of time to give the Residential Life staff time to review and support student plans. Students are asked to submit passes at least 48 hours in advance. Timings of leaves must not interfere with curfew or other required boarding programming.

### **Hosted and Overnight Leaves on Orah**

Students must include the following information for all hosted and overnight passes:

- > Adult (over 25 years old) hostname
- > Adult host phone number and email address
- > Address of hosted location

The adult listed must be present at the location where the boarding student has been invited to visit. House Parents will confirm the information in a variety of ways.

Parents are encouraged to make direct contact with the host parent whenever they are allowing their child to take overnight leave with another family. Please ensure you are aware of where your child is going.

All parents and on-duty Residential Life staff need to approve and remain vigilant during such leaves. House Parents reserve the right to question a host arrangement and can disallow or cancel weekend travel—including to local homes—at any time and for any reason. All students and families should take particular care to become familiar with the Ross School Code of Conduct. Families should also understand that, with regard to drugs and alcohol, they may be liable for both civil and criminal penalties for situations arising from hosting boarding and day students in their homes.

If a Ross family hosts a boarding student during school breaks, the agreement to host is made solely between the Ross host family and the boarding student's parent or guardian. Ross School is not responsible for the boarding and supervision of boarding students while the School is closed during school vacations. When hosting a boarding student during a school vacation, the Ross host family assumes total responsibility for the boarding student's safety,



health, and well-being. After a vacation has begun, any issues regarding boarding students or any changes made to original plans must be communicated to the student's parent or guardian.

### **Sports Passes**

A pass must be submitted when Ross sporting events cause students to miss boarding program obligations. Most of the time, this occurs after school on weekdays. Students need to create passes to let on duty House Parents know whether or not they will attend dinner roll call, need a packed dinner, or have special transportation needs. Students who do not create such passes properly may need to purchase their own dinner or transportation.

### **Roll Calls**

Using Orah, House Parents will run Roll Calls at certain times of the day. These times may include dinner, study hours, and nightly checks.

Students who are late will be recorded, and frequent infractions will incur consequences.

### **SCHOOL VACATIONS**

All boarding houses close during the following school vacations: Thanksgiving Recess, Winter Recess, Spring Recess, and Summer Break. Boarding houses close at various times depending on the school vacation (times are listed on the school calendar), and students must vacate the houses before that time. It is the responsibility of the boarding student's family to make plans for their child during these vacations.

Boarding students must submit their travel plans through Orah and to their House Parents at least three weeks prior to a school vacation. Required information includes departure and arrival times, detailed transportation information (including flight numbers), lodging or host information, including address and cell phone number, and car service information if applicable.

The student's parent/guardian must give permission for the travel and confirm the plans in Orah. After travel forms are received and approved, the Office of Residential Life will confirm transportation with boarding students and families. All students are charged a fee for vacation-related School-arranged transportation.

Boarding students are expected to leave on time and return on time according to the dates posted on the school calendar. Students leaving prior to the start of any break from classes will miss important academic work, which may have negative consequences for their evaluations. Flights on the last day of classes should not depart before 8 pm, but students may fly out the following day at any time. Returning flights should arrive the day before classes begin, according to the school calendar. Students who depart early or return late from any vacation must complete and submit the Planned Absence Notification Form (available on Blackbaud) at least three days before they leave campus, and parents/guardians must send an email to [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) with absent dates and reason for the absence.

No school trips are offered during the Thanksgiving, Winter, February, and Spring Recesses.

Ross School does not condone students of any age staying in a hotel, apartment, private home, or other unsupervised location during school vacations. The School urges parents to make plans well in advance and cautions parents against allowing students to make their own arrangements without parental involvement. The student's family is solely responsible for ensuring that the student is supervised while school is closed during school vacations. Any



misrepresentation or falsification by a student on the Vacation Travel Form is dishonest and will be treated as such in accordance with the Ross School Code of Conduct. Dishonesty can result in disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion.

## **ROSS SCHOOL FAMILIES HOSTING BOARDING STUDENTS**

### **Weekends**

Ross families who host a Ross School boarding student during the weekend are responsible for supporting and abiding by the Ross School expectations for student conduct. The boarding student's parent/guardian must give permission for all weekend travel via Orah or other communication means. Additionally, the weekend host must confirm the plans both in writing and by either phone or video chat by Friday at noon before the student will be traveling. After the weekend begins, any issues regarding boarding students or changes made to original plans must be reported to the AOD or Director of Residential Life.

Boarding students are not permitted to attend unchaperoned events. Therefore, host families should never allow unchaperoned get-togethers that include boarding students and should never agree to host a boarding student if an adult will not be present. Failure to abide by these expectations is a violation of Ross School rules and may result in disciplinary action for both the host Ross student and the boarding student.

Residential Life staff reserve the right to question a host arrangement and, as noted above, can disallow or cancel weekend travel—including to local homes—at any time and for any reason. All students and families should take particular care to become familiar with the Ross School Code of Conduct. Families should also understand that, with regard to drugs and alcohol, they may be liable for both civil and criminal penalties for situations arising from hosting boarding and day students in their homes.

### **School Vacations**

The agreement to host a boarding student during school vacations is made solely between the Ross host family and the boarding student's parent or guardian. Ross School is not responsible for the boarding and supervision of boarding students while school is closed during school vacations. When hosting a boarding student during a school vacation, the Ross host family assumes total responsibility for the boarding student's safety, health, and well-being.

After a vacation has begun, any issues regarding boarding students or any changes made to original plans must be communicated to the student's parent or guardian.

## **CLEANLINESS AND SAFETY**

### **House Inspections**

All student rooms are inspected on a weekly basis (at minimum) by a House Parent for neatness, organization, and safety. Although common areas are professionally cleaned each week, students are also expected to participate in household chores. If a student does not comply with Ross School standards of cleanliness and safety, the House Parent, in concert with the Division Head and the Director of Residential Life, is responsible for determining the appropriate consequences. Students leaving for the weekend are expected to clean their rooms properly before departure. Students will not be permitted weekend leave if their room does not pass the official weekly inspection.



## **Fire Prevention and Drills**

House Parents and students are responsible for ensuring that their house complies with all fire code regulations. The Director of Residential Life and school maintenance personnel will also conduct periodic inspections to determine that each house is in compliance with these codes, including the following:

- > Heat-producing appliances such as hot plates, microwave ovens, electric kettles, sun lamps, toasters, irons, and so on are never allowed in students' rooms.
- > Refrigerators and mini-fridges are never allowed in students' rooms.
- > Any use of open flame or flame-producing light such as candles, incense, or lanterns are never allowed in students' rooms.
- > Tapestries or wall hangings attached to or suspended from ceilings are prohibited. Ceilings must be free of any fabric or paper.
- > Furniture, sheets, blankets, or tapestries that prevent clear access or view to and from the door cannot subdivide rooms.
- > Smoking is never allowed under any circumstances at Ross School, in Ross houses, or on any Ross-affiliated trips or activities. Lighters, matches, cigarettes, and other implements related to smoking, including e-cigarettes, are also not allowed. Students found smoking will be subject to discipline in accordance with the Conduct section of this handbook, which may include an expulsion hearing.

Residents of each house will be shown an approved exit plan in the event of fire. Students will also know the location of all fire extinguishers and be instructed in their appropriate use. In-house fire drills will be conducted each semester.

## **CASH AND VALUABLES IN BOARDING HOUSES**

All students are responsible for the safekeeping of their valuables. Ross School does not take responsibility for any items gone missing from boarding houses. Students are allowed a maximum of \$400 cash in their boarding houses and are encouraged to open bank accounts in town where parents can securely wire money for incidentals. The School will not replace any cash reported missing by students. Students are 100 percent responsible for either depositing cash into their bank accounts or opening a school account with the Business Office. The school has an ATM available in the Center for Well-Being for students to withdraw cash as needed.

As food is provided to students Monday through Sunday, the School encourages parents to allow for no more than \$200 per week in allowance for incidentals. This can be used for students to go into town by Uber, eat dinner with friends on the weekends, or see a movie. The School strongly encourages parents to limit access to monetary funds of \$800/month to prevent students from engaging in online shopping sprees and to teach students the value of money and responsible fiscal behavior.

## **STUDENT BIRTHDAYS**

Student birthdays will be recognized by the Ross Café with a prepared dessert. If families wish to do additional celebrations, please contact the House Parents.

## **MANAGING HEALTH NEEDS**

### **Medicine**

Medicine must be kept by authorized school personnel and not kept in student rooms, with rare exceptions.



### **Sick Days**

On school days, students who are ill must report directly to the Nurse's office and, if necessary, spend the day in the Nurse's office. The Nurse will make appointments with a doctor for students who need further attention. Ill students are not allowed to stay in boarding houses during the school day, as there are no Ross coverage staff available to monitor students.

On weekends and holidays, students who are ill will stay at home. If required, the AOD will assist in finding someone to stay with the sick student during that time period.

Students who are sick during the week will be gated over the weekend to recover their health.

### **SCHOOL ABSENCES**

For leaves that involve any aspect of the academic schedule:

1. The student must submit a completed Planned Absence Form (available on Blackbaud) to the school office;
2. A parent must send an email to [attendanceus@ross.org](mailto:attendanceus@ross.org) with details about the reason and dates of the absence from school;
3. A student or parent must create an Orah pass (see the Orah section below). Only after steps 1 and 2 are completed is an Orah pass approved.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **School days**

Boarding students are driven to and from the school campus every academic day. The morning departure from the boarding houses is at 6:50 am, and the after-school bus departs campus at approximately 6 pm Monday through Thursday and 4 pm on Friday. Students are responsible for being on time, must have all the supplies they need for school, and should be dressed to follow the Ross School dress code.

#### **Weekends**

Weekend activity transport varies according to activity and student sign-ups. Ross shuttles are often available to local areas and/or house parents may transport students to and from school-sponsored activities and events. Some activities may be required.

#### **Snow Days**

On the days that school is canceled because of snow, House Parents and students will remain in the houses where food will be provided by House Parents. Students may not travel into town.

#### **Airport Transportation**

Residential Life staff can assist in arranging car service transportation for a student, but the family is solely responsible for car service and taxi transportation costs.

*No boarding students may possess a vehicle on or off campus.*

### **TECHNOLOGY**

#### **Internet Access and Computer Use**

Boarding students are expected to abide by all Technology Use policies at all times (see Section 6). In particular, students are prohibited from using the School's or their personal computers to access inappropriate content, use



other people's accounts without permission, or violate copyright law by using unlicensed software or pirating audio or visual materials. Failure to follow the Technology Use policies will result in disciplinary action, which can include loss of laptop, network, and/or email privileges; serious or repeated violations could lead to loss of other privileges, suspension, or expulsion.

### **Gaming**

Gaming is strictly forbidden in the boarding houses during study hall hours and after Lights Out without explicit permission.

### **Cell Phones**

All boarding students are expected to maintain a cellular phone in working order with an active US domestic number and data plan at all times, while using the device responsibly and respectfully. Ross School reserves the right to limit the use of digital devices if such use is deemed to be inappropriate and/or negatively impacting a student's daily life and functions.

Student cellular phones must have the Orah Student app and Google Chat app downloaded and operable. Boarding students are required to carry a working and charged U.S. cell phone with them outside of school hours. Students are required to complete the Student Cell Phone form in Blackbaud to ensure the school is able to contact them. House Parents will input student telephone numbers directly into their House Parent phones and ensure that all students have their phone numbers.

### **Google Chat**

Google Chat is the main communication tool House Parents use to connect with boarding students. Students are expected to use Google Chat regularly and respond when Residential Life staff ask questions on the platform.

## **DAMAGES**

Students are responsible for maintaining the condition of all furniture and furnishings present upon their arrival in their room and house. Furnishings from common areas (and other School property) are not to be moved into student rooms. Students are not permitted to purchase additional furniture for their rooms or the house. If there is excessive damage to a boarding house or its furnishings during the course of a year, fines will be assessed to the students who reside in the house. If the damage can be traced to a particular student or students, they will be fined. If the damage cannot be traced in this way, then all students in the house will share equally in paying the fine.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

**The following items are not allowed in Ross boarding houses.**

- > Personal toaster ovens, hot plates, microwaves, irons, immersion heaters, space heaters, fan heaters, popcorn poppers, and any sort of cooking appliance without approval
- > Extension cords without surge protection
- > Hair straighteners and high-wattage hair dryers
- > Liquor bottles, beer cans, beer signs, alcohol or tobacco advertisements
- > Pets, such as lizards, rodents, snakes, cats, birds, fish, etc.
- > Holiday lights of any kind
- > Powerful stereo systems
- > Any kind of hanging tapestry
- > Magazine pages, photographs, and other paper products as wall decorations
- > Personal refrigerators



**The discovery of the following items in a Ross boarding house could result in expulsion:**

- > Candles, incense, lighters, fireworks, matches, or anything that produces a flame
- > Firearms, including air rifles and BB guns. This includes “toy” or “replica” firearms that might reasonably be interpreted as a real gun
- > Knives of any kind
- > Alcoholic beverages of any kind
- > Cigarettes or vapes of any type
- > Any drugs, illicit or otherwise, including prescription and non-prescription medicine

**DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE HOUSES**

The House Parent is responsible for initial disciplinary actions within the house. Students are asked to account for their choices and consider how they might learn from the experience, make amends, and reestablish trust. Recurring problems or more serious violations of Ross’s Code of Conduct will be handled in conjunction with the relevant Division Head and the Director of Residential Life. Ross School retains the right to determine what level of discipline is appropriate under the circumstances presented.

Disciplinary responses may include:

- > Loss of privileges
- > Detention
- > Campus leave restrictions or “gating”
- > Referral to the Head of Upper School
- > Parent notification/meeting
- > Individualized behavioral contract

**MEALS**

**Ross School Café**

On school days, boarding students eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the Ross School Café. Dinner on Fridays and brunch and dinner on Saturdays and Sundays are provided by the Ross School Café and served at the boarding houses, where students and house parents eat together as a family. Professional chefs prepare meals using regional, organic, seasonal, and sustainable foods. There are always vegetarian options available. Students experience a variety of foods and are often involved in the process of planning dinner and weekend menus. Houses often opt to order Saturday and Sunday dinners from local restaurants that offer a variety of healthy options.

**Cooking**

Students may use the stove or the oven only after a House Parent has trained the group on appropriate use and an adult is present. It is the student’s responsibility to clean the kitchen thoroughly every time they use it. Students who fail to clean up after themselves will lose their cooking privileges. Using the stove and oven is not allowed after 8 pm.

**Food Delivery**

Students may have food delivered to the boarding houses as long as it arrives before curfew time. House Parents can refuse a request to order food if a student is not in compliance with house rules (e.g. if a student’s homework is not complete or their room is messy).

**Food deliveries are never allowed on the Ross School campus for any students.** If food is delivered to any buildings on the upper campus, school employees will confiscate the delivery and report the delivery to the relevant Division Head.



### **Food and Drinks in the Boarding Houses**

Food and drinks, except for water, should only be consumed in common areas of the houses and are not allowed in student bedrooms.

### **OUTDOOR SPACES**

Residential houses are located in wooded areas. In this type of environment, ticks will be present, particularly in the spring and early summer months. All occupants of these homes should take the following standard precautions to prevent illnesses caused by ticks:

- > Wear closed-toe shoes when in grassy or wooded areas and tuck pants into socks.
- > Do a thorough body check after returning from an outing where exposure to ticks may have occurred.
- > Take a shower after returning from an outing as a precautionary measure.

### **LAUNDRY**

Each house has one or more washing machines and dryers. Students are responsible for doing their personal laundry, including bed linens and towels, and for providing their own laundry detergent. Students are expected to keep the laundry area clean and to remove clean clothing promptly. Ironing is only permitted in a designated area of the house and requires permission for use to ensure safety.

### **HOUSEKEEPING**

Each house is professionally cleaned at least once per week. Residents should prepare their house prior to each cleaning.

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES AND ADVISING**

#### **New Students: Obtaining a Student Visa**

Students should apply for their student visa well in advance of their date of arrival in the United States. The summer period is very busy at U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide, and it is important for students to have their visas in time to arrive and begin orientation in September. Appointments are now mandatory for all student visas, and some U.S. embassies and consulates require that appointments be made at least four to eight weeks in advance.

While the visa requirements vary from country to country, at a minimum, students will need the following:

- > Form I-20 (for F-1 students) issued by Ross School.
- > Proof of sufficient funds for tuition and living expenses for one year.

Students should not enter the United States on a visitor's visa (B-1 or B-2) and expect to change their status in the United States. This is extremely difficult.

Students should visit the U.S. Department of State's website ([www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov)) to locate the nearest embassy or consulate and for information on waiting times for student visa appointments.

Ross School will hold all travel documents for boarding students in a secure location while students are on campus.



### **New International Student Arrival Guidelines**

All new international students are required to arrive no later than the start date indicated on the student's Form I-20. This date coincides with the first day of International Student Orientation, in which participation is required.

According to immigration regulations, international students may arrive in the United States no more than thirty (30) days prior to the start date listed in section #5 of their Form I-20. Ross School recommends that new international students arrive in the New York area with their families one to three days before the mandatory International Student Orientation. Any student arriving alone in the United States should plan to arrive early on the morning of the scheduled orientation.

### **SEVIS and SEVIS Fee**

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a national database that allows the U.S. government to track and monitor various events during a student's program of study. Ross School is required to provide information through SEVIS, such as the local address, enrollment status (enrolled or not enrolled), and dates of study for students in F-1 status.

F-1 students must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before applying for a visa. The current rates, as well as additional details on SEVIS and the SEVIS fee, can be found on the SEVIS website at [www.ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901). Payment of the SEVIS fee can be made over the Internet (preferred option) or by mail. Credit card payments of the SEVIS fee cannot be accepted for the following countries: Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, and Cameroon.

### **Visa Delay or Visa Denial**

The majority of Ross students will be successful in obtaining their student visas. Despite this, a small number of students may have their visa applications denied. If a visa is denied, the student may reapply for the visa within a 12-month period without having to pay the SEVIS fee again. Students are asked to try at least twice to obtain approval for a visa before the School can consider giving a tuition deposit refund from Ross. The most common reasons for visa denial are failure to prove sufficient ties to one's home country and failure to provide sufficient evidence of financial support.

If a student's visa is denied, the student is asked to send an email message to Ross School at [enrollment@ross.org](mailto:enrollment@ross.org) and provide the following information:

- > Date and location of the visa interview.
- > Reason for the denial (the visa officer must verbally inform the student of the reason for denying the visa).
- > A security check that will not be completed in time to start classes.

### **Students from Canada or Bermuda**

Students from Canada or Bermuda are exempt from having to apply for a student visa. However, students still have to pay the [SEVIS fee](#) and provide proof of payment (receipt) along with Form I-20 to an immigration inspector at the port of entry when entering the United States.

### **Current Students: Maintaining Current Status**

In order to maintain his or her current visa status, the student should adhere to the following guidelines:

- > Keep your passport valid for a period of no less than six months in the future.
- > Ensure that you are authorized to attend Ross School according to your I-20 status.



- > Refrain from off-campus employment without written approval from your Designated School Official (DSO).
- > Attend classes and remain in good academic standing.
- > Provide a current home address and telephone number in your home country and report any new address and phone number to the Office of Residential Life within 10 days of whenever you or your family moves.

### **Required Immigration Reporting**

All changes, including a new address, new name, changes on I-20, and others, must be reported to the Admissions Office. For financial and name changes, students and their families will have to provide documentation demonstrating the change.

Students must always report changes in the following types of information to the Admissions Office:

- > *Changes to the student's current home country address.* If the student's permanent address in his or her home country changes, the student must inform the Admissions Office of the new address in writing within 10 days.
- > *Name changes* (for example, passport corrections, marriage, etc.).
- > *Changes in the student's financial situation.* This includes changes in sponsorship or loss of financial aid.
- > *Other changes.* Inform the Admissions Office and the Division Head of any intent to withdraw from the School, transfer, change to another immigration status, or make other changes that affect the student's F-1 status, as these may require SEVIS notification. The Director of Residential Life and the Admissions Office also need students' families' current phone numbers at all times in case they need to contact the student's family regarding an urgent issue.

### **Visa Renewal**

Students who need a new entry visa in their passport must contact the Admissions Office three to four weeks before leaving the United States. In addition, the student should contact the U.S. embassy or consulate in his or her home country for more information about changes in regulations before the student leaves the United States. Visit the U.S. Department of State's website ([www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov)) to locate the embassy or consulate near the student and for information on waiting times for student visa appointments.

Please note that the student may not renew his or her visa in the United States and that the student does not have to renew the visa if the student has a valid I-20 and remains in the United States.

### **How to Renew**

Students may renew their visas anywhere [outside of the United States](#), but it is recommended that they renew their visas in their home country. Students may not return to the United States until their visa renewal is approved. To download visa application forms, please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study.html>.

The [Automatic Visa Revalidation](#) program allows a student to leave the United States to visit certain countries for less than 30 days and to reenter the United States on his or her expired visa if the student did not apply for a visa renewal while out of the United States. This does **not** renew the student's visa; it is only valid for a single trip.



### **Program Extension**

The expiration date of the student's Form I-20, shown in item #5 on the student's form, is the date that the student's program of study in the United States ends. Students who need more time to complete their program of study must report to the Residential Life Office before their current program end date. Please note that it is impossible to extend a student's program of study if his or her Form I-20 has expired.

### **Expulsion and Withdrawal**

Students who withdraw from Ross School should go to the Admissions Office with the acceptance letter from their new school to request a transfer of Form I-20.

If disciplinary or academic actions leading to expulsion are taken against a student by the School, the student is in violation of his or her F-1 status and no longer in a valid non-immigration status. Ross School will allow the student to transfer to a different school and will transfer the student's Form I-20 to the new school within 14 business days of expulsion. After 14 days, the student's Form I-20 will be terminated, and the student will no longer be allowed to stay in the United States for more than 14 days. The student's parents have to send an official notice of withdrawal to the school in order for the student's Form I-20 to be eligible for the 14-day transfer period. If the student is expelled from the school, the student's Form I-20 will be terminated 14 days after the day of expulsion.

### **PACKING LIST**

All students will have limited closet/dresser space in their boarding house, so please use proper judgment when packing. Students traveling home during school vacations such as Fall and Spring breaks can change their wardrobe at those times. Students do not have to bring all clothing for both warm and cold weather all at once.

Shopping is available nearby in local towns. Additionally, Ross School organizes numerous trips to local malls and to New York City, where students are able to purchase any items they need. It is very rare for students to return home at the end of the school year without a few new items in their suitcases.

### **Bedding/Towels**

Students need to provide their own bath towels, twin sheets, a pillow, and any additional bedding items.

### **Clothing**

[Click here for Ross School's Uniform and Dress Code policy.](#) We encourage students to limit the amount of other clothing they bring with them to Ross School. Please use the recommended packing list below as a guideline for your wardrobe outside of school. Every house has a washing machine and dryer for students to do laundry as necessary.

### **Recommended**

- > 2 Pairs of jeans (or other pants)
- > 5 Casual shirts
- > 2 Sweaters or sweatshirts
- > 1 Light jacket (for Fall and Spring)
- > 1 Waterproof jacket or umbrella for rainy days
- > 1 Warm winter coat
- > 1 Week's worth of socks and underwear



- > Athletic shoes for Wellness
- > Boots for inclement weather
- > House slippers
- > Swimsuit (for beach trips in the Fall and Spring)
- > Black pants or skirt and white shirt for students who plan to participate in chorus or band

**Desk Supplies, Electronics, Laundry**

- > Students will have an opportunity to visit local stores before the start of school to purchase all necessary school supplies, including notebooks, pens, calculators, etc.
- > We recommend students bring a battery-operated alarm clock, a hair dryer, and a U.S. cell phone; however, all of these items are also available for purchase locally.
- > Students must purchase their own laundry detergent.



## Section 4: Conduct

### CORE VALUES

Ross School is a carefully constructed learning environment designed to serve as a holistic space in which students and faculty come to appreciate the contributions of past cultures to their own and to understand the radical changes entailed by a global information society. Sustaining this learning environment in a way that improves upon it is a fundamental part of reconciling these two experiences and a central challenge to all members of the Ross School community.

To meet this challenge, students, faculty, and staff alike are asked to conduct themselves in this learning environment in such a way as to leave it in better condition than they encounter it, whether by contributing to the School's intellectual journey or by preserving the comfort and beauty of the physical space that nurtures that journey.

These goals are reflected in the eight Core Values that we ask all members of the Ross community to embody:

- > Compassion
- > Cooperation
- > Courage
- > Gratitude
- > Integrity
- > Mindfulness
- > Respect
- > Responsibility

These Core Values serve as the basis for the School's Student Conduct Policy outlined below.

### STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

In becoming members of the Ross community, students and parents agree to uphold the Core Values and to support others in their efforts to do the same. Students are encouraged to consider that their relationship with the School and the people in the Ross School community will be lifelong. In this same spirit, whenever our students engage with the world beyond our campus or on social media, they are expected to represent Ross School admirably and to set a positive example for others.

Ross School, therefore, has an interest in the conduct of its students both on and off campus. This Student Conduct Policy applies to student conduct on school grounds (all campuses) and at school boarding houses (together, "School Campus"), during school trips, and at School-sponsored events or activities (together, "School Events"). Additionally, the School reserves the right to apply this Student Conduct Policy at its discretion, at any time, to student behavior that takes place off of the School Campus and outside of School Events. Any behavior on or off campus that harms or potentially harms the individual, others, School property, or the School's reputation is cause for concern and will lead to an investigation, which may result in an intervention and disciplinary action. The School administration, the Head of Upper School, or their delegate(s), follow up on all information related to possible violations of the Ross Core Values.



Behaviors that breach Ross School Core Values include but are not limited to the following:

- > Failure to adhere to any school policy, procedure, instruction, or behavioral expectation.
- > Violation of local, state, or federal laws, no matter where the offense occurs.
- > Behaviors deemed by the School administration to create a dangerous environment, including bringing to school any object used as a weapon or a facsimile of a weapon.
- > Physical assault or act of physical aggression.
- > Disrespect of individuals, a group, the environment, or property.
- > Dishonesty or lying.
- > Academic malpractice, as described below.
- > Stealing, appropriating, or destroying the property of others or the School.
- > Violating the School's technology use policies in any way.
- > Drug or alcohol possession, use, or distribution.
- > Harassment, intimidation, coercion, bullying, or retaliation.
- > Acting in a way that jeopardizes the welfare or impugns the good name of the School.

The above list is not all-inclusive. Students may be disciplined for other misconduct of a commonsense nature at the discretion of the School.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

The School administration, the Head of Upper School, or their delegate, follows up on all information related to possible violations of Core Values. An investigation will be conducted, and individuals involved in the investigation process are expected to provide their full cooperation.

When it is deemed appropriate by the School, the School may conduct a disciplinary hearing as part of the investigation process. Disciplinary hearings are conducted by the Head of Upper School. The student, the student's advisor, the School Counselor, and a House Parent (where applicable) may be invited to the hearing. The Division Head will describe the infraction and other relevant information. The student will be provided with an opportunity to share their version of the incident and other adults may be invited to provide character references and other applicable information. The student, House Parent (where applicable), and student's advisor will leave the room, and the remaining school officials will discuss the facts to determine an outcome and consequences, if applicable. At the conclusion of the hearing, the student will be notified of the findings and consequences, if applicable.

Parents are invited to be present at disciplinary hearings when such a hearing involves expulsion; however, they are not permitted to participate in the hearing. Outside lawyers or representatives may not be involved in a student disciplinary hearing.

The School will endeavor to maintain confidentiality to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances at the discretion of the School. The School will contact the parents of a student involved when the initial investigation warrants concern that an infraction has occurred or that a student's well-being or decision-making abilities may be in question.

### **Disciplinary Responses**

Consequences for infractions that violate Ross School Core Values may include but are not limited to discussions with School administrators, meetings with students and parents, warnings and admonitions, detentions after school, weekend detentions, service to the School, service to the community, loss of specific privileges, probation, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion from school.



In the circumstances it determines appropriate, the School may report incidents of student misbehavior to the police. The School may also require counseling or drug and alcohol testing.

In all instances, the School reserves the right to take immediate action, including expulsion, without a hearing.

## **ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE**

Academic integrity is at the heart of the Ross School learning community. Faculty, students, and parents are responsible for maintaining an environment where intellectual inquiry and honesty are held in the highest esteem. Instances of academic malpractice are serious offenses and will result in disciplinary action. Academic malpractice can occur in any class, and our rules against it apply equally to all assignments, including tests, paintings, essays, and oral presentations. Such malpractice includes but is not limited to the following violations:

- > Copying another student's work.
- > Providing answers to another student.
- > Collaborating on assignments each student is supposed to complete alone.
- > Using language, ideas, images, or information from a print or online source without citing it or when using outside sources is not allowed.
- > Misrepresenting language, ideas, images, or information created by another person or thing—such as a tutor, peer, website, or app—as one's own work.
- > Submitting work already awarded credit in a different class without express permission.
- > Falsifying academic records, including test results, assignments, grades, portfolio work, or transcripts.
- > Knowingly providing false information (or materials) on an application to another institution.

The advent of artificial intelligence poses new challenges and opportunities in academic settings. Specific to the use of artificial intelligence, this policy forbids the following:

- > The unauthorized use of AI tools to complete assignments that are intended to assess a student's personal understanding and capabilities. (As noted elsewhere, unless explicitly allowed students are not permitted to use AI.)
- > Presenting AI-generated content, whether partially or entirely, as one's own original work without proper acknowledgment.
- > Employing AI to fabricate or alter academic data or records.

Students who have not directly engaged in plagiarism or misrepresentation may still face disciplinary actions if they intentionally assist others in committing academic malpractice. Assignments found in violation of these guidelines generally receive no credit and are ineligible for resubmission. Additional disciplinary actions are determined through a formal review by school administrators, following the protocols detailed in our Student Handbook. In severe or repeated instances of policy violation, an expulsion hearing may be convened, potentially resulting in the student being required to leave the Ross School.

Generally, disciplinary responses to violations of school rules regarding academic malpractice are as follows:

- > *First offense:* The incident is reported to the appropriate Division Head, followed by a meeting with the reporting teacher and the Division Head, and will result in a failing mark (below 70) on the assignment or assessment without the opportunity to make it up.
- > *Second offense:* Student will undergo a disciplinary hearing, as well as receiving a failing grade (below 70) on the assignment. The disciplinary hearing may result in any disciplinary consequence, up to and including expulsion.



The School may take any disciplinary action, including expulsion, for academic malpractice violations without following the progressive discipline set forth above.

### **WALKING ON THE PATH**

The School is committed to student safety at all times. To this end, students are required to walk on the “path.” Any students discovered walking on Goodfriend Drive are subject to disciplinary consequences at the discretion of the Division Head.

### **STUDENT HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY**

The School is committed to maintaining an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and where all individuals feel safe. The School does not tolerate harassment, bullying, hazing, or sexual harassment of any kind (collectively, “harassment/bullying”). This policy applies to all campuses of the School, all School-sponsored and affiliated trips and events, transportation provided by the School, and certain conduct that occurs off of School property. There are times when it is appropriate and necessary for the School to respond to incidents that occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Therefore, the School reserves the right to discipline those in the school community who engage in harassment/bullying of other school community members at any location and at any time if such harassment causes a substantial disruption to the School community.

This policy applies to harassment/bullying between students and between adults (faculty, administrators, staff, parents, etc.) and students. No student shall be subjected to harassment/bullying by employees, other students, or other adults.

#### **Prohibition of Student-Related Harassment/Bullying**

Harassment/bullying, whether verbal, physical, visual, or environmental, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by the School. The purpose of this policy against harassment/bullying is to educate students about what may constitute harassment/bullying, to notify students that the School will not condone harassment/bullying, and to explain the procedure for reporting harassing/bullying conduct.

#### **Definition of Harassment/Bullying**

Harassment/bullying is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation, or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional, or physical well-being; (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for their physical safety; (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off School property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse’s effect might reach school property. Acts of harassment/bullying shall include, but not be limited to, those acts based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, learning differences, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, quips, or negative stereotyping that relate to any of the categories above. This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute harassment/bullying.

Harassment/bullying includes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples of the type of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include demands for sexual activity; sexual flirtations, advances, or



propositions; sexual innuendoes or suggestive jokes; comments of a sexual nature to describe an individual or an individual's body; unwelcome physical contact such as touching, pinching, or brushing the body; any type of coerced sexual activity including sexual abuse; displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; obscene gestures or materials; spreading rumors of a sexual nature; leering; making sexual gestures simulating sex acts; or sexual contact. This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute sexual harassment/bullying. Sexual harassment can occur between individuals of different genders or individuals of the same gender.

### **Procedures for Reporting Harassment/Bullying**

The School requires all members of the school community (students, faculty, staff, parents, etc.) to report all incidents of harassment/bullying, regardless of who the offender may be. The School will take prompt, reasonable action to prevent, investigate, and remedy harassment/bullying.

The School has designated certain faculty members as "point persons" who share responsibility for receiving, responding to, and investigating harassment/bullying complaints. Ross School's point persons include the Head of Upper School, Director of Residential Life, Director of Student Support Services, Domain Deans, Classroom Teachers, and Advisors.

### **Reporting Harassment/Bullying by Students**

Any student who believes that they have been or is being harassed/bullied by a student or who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by a fellow student should speak to the offender directly, if comfortable doing so, and request that the harassment/bullying stop. If the student is uncomfortable speaking directly to the person, or if the harassment/bullying does not stop, the student should report the incident to a point person. In instances of sexual harassment, students must always immediately report the incident to a point person.

Please note that although the School believes that many disagreements among students can be successfully resolved by both parties focusing on the School's Core Values, there may be harassment/bullying instances whereby it is best to report the incident to a point person immediately. Students should always feel free to report to the point person instead of speaking to the offender directly.

A parent who believes that a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by another student or any parent who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by a student should report the incident to a point person. A school employee who believes a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by another student or who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by a student must report the incident to a point person.

### **Reporting Harassment/Bullying by Employees**

Any student who believes that he/she/they has been or is being harassed/bullied by an employee or that he/she/they has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by an employee should immediately report the incident to a point person. Any parent who believes that a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by an employee or has witnessed harassment/bullying by an employee should report to a point person. Any school employee who believes that a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by another school employee or who witnesses such an incident must report to a point person.

Romantic or sexual relationships between employees (teachers, administrators, or staff members) and students are expressly prohibited. Such relationships may be considered sexual abuse and should be reported as indicated in the protocol for reporting child abuse of students by employees. (Please see the "Policy on Reporting Child Abuse of Students by School Employees" section of this handbook.)



**Reporting Harassment/Bullying by Others**

Any student who believes that they have been or is being harassed/bullied by a non-employee individual they come into contact with (e.g., a parent, visitor to the school, outside contractor, volunteer) at school, at any School-sponsored trip or event, or on transportation provided by the School should report the incident to a point person. Any parent who believes a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by a non-employee individual the student comes into contact with at school, at any School-sponsored trip or event, or transportation provided by the School, or any parent who has witnessed such an incident, should also report it to a point person. Any school employee who believes a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by a non-employee individual the student comes into contact with at school, at any School-sponsored trip or event, or transportation provided by the School, or any parent who has witnessed such an incident, must report it to a point person.

**Investigations**

The School is committed to taking all reasonable measures promptly to prevent and correct harassing/bullying behavior. Upon receipt of any complaint of harassment/bullying, the School will promptly investigate the complaint. The investigation may include interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and others. It may also include other methods, such as recommending an outside investigator. School employees and students are under a duty to cooperate with an investigation. The School will try to be as discreet as possible during an investigation, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible given the facts and circumstances of the complaint and the need to do a fair and thorough investigation.

The School will not retaliate against anyone who, in good faith, reports a violation under this policy or who participates in the investigation of a complaint. Any person who engages in such retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion or termination.

**Disciplinary Action for Violating This Policy**

If the School determines that the Student Harassment/Bullying Policy has been violated, the violator will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include a verbal or written reprimand, referral to appropriate counseling, suspension, or expulsion (in the case of a student) or discharge (in the case of a school employee). If the offender is not a Ross School student or employee, the School will follow up with other remedial action to ensure that the harassment/bullying ceases.

Any employee, other adults, or students who fail to report when they believe a student is being harassed/bullied, when they have witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying pursuant to this policy, or when they have been told by a student that the student has been or is being bullied, or any employee, other adult, or student who fails to cooperate in an investigation of an allegation pursuant to this policy, may be subject to discipline.

The School recognizes that false accusations of harassment/bullying can cause serious harm to innocent persons. If an investigation results in a finding that the complainant knowingly and falsely accused another person of harassment/bullying, the complainant will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

**Record Keeping**

The School will maintain records of complaints of harassment/bullying, as well as records of subsequent investigations of such matters. These records will be kept confidential to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances.



### **FALSE IDENTIFICATION (FAKE ID)**

A student discovered in possession of a false identification document (ID) will meet with the Division Head, who will immediately confiscate the ID and notify the parents. Consequences for the student's actions will be based on the individual circumstances and any prior disciplinary action.

### **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO**

The possession, use, or distribution of or other involvement with illegal drugs (including misuse or distribution of prescription drugs), drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), alcohol, as well as tobacco/nicotine products which the School recognizes as health hazards, is inconsistent with Ross School Core Values, detrimental to the entire school community, and prohibited for all persons on School campuses at any time. Distribution refers to the sale or provision of any kind, including carrying drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), alcohol, and tobacco/nicotine products from a seller/giver to a user or donating or sharing drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), alcohol, and tobacco/nicotine products from a personal supply.

The School reserves the right to search a student's locker, backpack, purse, or other belongings if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated the School's rules concerning possession of illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials. A search will be conducted by the Head of Upper School or their delegate in the presence of another adult witness. The extent or scope of the search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Students are reminded that lockers remain the property of Ross School.

**A first incident of distribution involving drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), tobacco/nicotine products, or alcohol will result in an expulsion hearing.**

A first incident of possession, use, or other involvement with illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), alcohol, or tobacco/nicotine products will result in suspension and may, at the School's discretion, result in random drug and alcohol testing and counseling. As always, the School reserves the right to expel a student on a first violation of this policy.

A second incident of any other kind involving drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), tobacco/nicotine products, or alcohol will result in an expulsion hearing.

The School's concern with drug, tobacco, and alcohol use extends to behavior outside school. Such behavior affects students' academic progress and emotional well-being and can also impact the school community as a whole.

When evidence of the use of drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), tobacco/nicotine products, or alcohol outside of school comes to the attention of the School, the School may investigate it and may require counseling, treatment, or discipline as it would for in-school use. The proselytizing or facilitating of the use of drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), tobacco/nicotine products, or alcohol by others is also problematic and prohibited.

### **Amnesty**

In the case of a student who is not involved in an incident but admits to the use of drugs, drug paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes and vaporizers), tobacco/nicotine products, or alcohol to any member of our school staff, the assumption will be that the student is seeking help, and the primary aim of the School will be to aid that student. The School will contact the family and may require counseling and drug and alcohol testing at the School's discretion.



## **WEAPONS**

The possession of any type of weapon, including but not limited to guns, knives, bombs, or other implements that could cause serious bodily harm, will generally result in immediate out-of-school suspension until a disciplinary hearing is held to determine the consequences. The possession of replicas or fake weapons that can create fear or intimidate others will result in immediate out-of-school suspension until a disciplinary hearing is held to determine the consequences. As always, the School reserves the right to immediately expel the student and contact law enforcement.

## **DISCLOSING DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

The student may be expected to report disciplinary violations to colleges and other secondary schools to which the student may apply. In this case, the School will assist the student in writing the appropriate explanatory letter. The policy of the School is to report all such cases to colleges, other secondary schools, or educational programs to which the student has applied when, in the judgment of the School, it would be unethical or unprofessional not to do so or in response to a request from the institution in question.

## **OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR**

As members of the Ross School community, Ross parents are expected to uphold Ross School Core Values at all times. As set forth in the School's Enrollment Agreement, a student may be suspended or terminated for poor behavior by a parent, guardian, or other individual closely associated with the student.

Ross School strongly expects students and their families to respect state and federal laws regarding alcohol and illegal drug use when students are off campus and to be especially cognizant of their liabilities under social host laws, which pertain to those people who serve alcohol in their own homes to guests under the legal drinking age.

Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco should never be available at events involving Ross students.



## Section 5: Ross School Uniform and Dress Code Policy

### PHILOSOPHY

At Ross School, all students wear a school uniform in Grades N–8 as part of their participation in an environment of equality and simplicity. Starting in Grade 9, Ross School empowers students to have greater choice in what they wear on a day-to-day basis. Our full uniform policy can be found [here](#).

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

- > All students must be neat and clean, with clothing in good repair at all times. No unhemmed, cut-off clothing is permitted. Shirts must cover the stomach and shoulders. Note: this policy includes dress-down days.
- > Outerwear: An “official” Ross School fleece, hoodie, or zip-up sweatshirt or a solid navy or white hoodie, fleece, or zip-up sweatshirt without the Ross logo. Other than these items, students are not permitted to wear outer garments in school buildings.
- > Footwear should have non-marking soles.
- > Students in Grades N-8 must wear the Ross School uniform on all field trips unless otherwise notified.
- > Students are required to bring their own comfortable, climate-appropriate tops and bottoms that allow for a full range of motion and various degrees of intensity during physical activity for all Wellness classes and athletic practices. Examples of appropriate workout clothing include cotton t-shirts and sweatpants, workout shorts, leggings, or moisture-wicking sports tops and functional bottoms such as jogging pants. Students are expected to make positive choices in the selection of their attire at all times to ensure that any writing, graphic, or design on the item of clothing is appropriate for a school environment. Students must also wear appropriate athletic shoes as required by the course, sport, and teacher/coach. Following Wellness class, students must return to wearing their uniform unless the academic day has ended.

### GRADES N–5

Recommended, but please feel free to choose the assortment of uniform options your student prefers:

- > 2 pairs of khaki or navy pants (skirts are also available)
- > 2 pairs of khaki or navy shorts (skirts are also available)
- > 4 short-sleeved white or navy polo shirts with the Ross logo
- > 2 long-sleeved white or navy polo shirts with the Ross logo
- > 2 navy sweaters, cardigans, or uniform-approved sweatshirts with the Ross logo

Additional Information:

- > Winter jackets can be any the student prefers, but if wearing a jacket in class, it must be a Ross fleece, sweatshirt, or vest.
- > Wellness guidelines: comfortable clothing (does not need to be Ross branded) and sneakers.
- > No shoes with black soles.

### Where to Purchase

Ross School uniforms may be purchased from Lands’ End and the Ross School Online Adidas store. The Adidas store items are all uniform-approved, and the store is run by and supports our Parents Association. We recommend ordering your uniform items early to ensure they arrive on time.



### **Land's End**

Uniforms from Lands' End can be purchased at [landsend.com/school](https://landsend.com/school) or by calling 800-469-2222. Be sure to use our preferred school number, 900042672.

### **Ross School Online Store: Additional Uniform Options and Spirit Wear (All Grade Levels & Ross Families)**

The [Ross X Adidas store](#) is a PA fundraiser for sports and wellness initiatives on campus. The store is open for the first two weeks of each month. The store then closes so the merchandise can be branded with the Ross logo and shipped to your home. The online store is not open continuously. Orders take approximately five weeks to reach your home from the date the store closes. Thank you for supporting this PA fundraiser for sports initiatives.

### **GRADES 6–8**

Ross School students should dress in a manner that reflects the school's culture of respect, responsibility, school pride, and seriousness of purpose. All students must be neat and clean, with clothing in good repair at all times. If students are not dressed appropriately, they will be asked to change.

Ross School uniforms may be purchased from Lands' End and the Ross School Online Adidas store. The Adidas store items are all uniform-approved, and the store is run by and supports our Parents Association. We recommend ordering your items early to ensure they arrive on time.

### **Land's End**

Uniforms from Lands' End can be purchased at [landsend.com/school](https://landsend.com/school) or by calling 800-469-2222. Be sure to use our preferred school number, 900042672.

### **Ross X Adidas School Online Store**

The [Ross X Adidas store](#) is a PA fundraiser for sports and wellness initiatives on campus. The store is open for the first two weeks of each month and published in the weekly Announcements. The store then closes so the merchandise can be branded with the Ross logo and shipped to your home. The online store is not open continuously. Orders take approximately five weeks to reach your home from the date the store closes. Thank you for supporting this PA fundraiser for sports initiatives.

### **GRADES 6–8 DRESS CODE**

Items from either the [Ross X Adidas store](#), the [Ross Land's End store](#), or any of the various Ross shirts or hoodies (from Field Academy, RSAA, RSTA, sports, etc.) are encouraged.

### **Bottoms:** Pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses

> Acceptable Colors: Navy blue or beige/khaki

#### **Notes:**

- > *Pants/skirts must be well-fitted and free from excessive adornments or messages and of an appropriate length (no more than 3 inches above the knee).*
- > *Jeans, cargo pants, pajama pants, and sweatpants are not permitted (except on dress-down days).*
- > *Tights, leotards, leggings, bike pants, or underwear worn as outer garments are not permitted.*
- > *Clothing must cover undergarments.*



**Tops**

> Students must wear Ross-branded shirts. These may be purchased from Land's End, the Adidas store, or the on-campus Spiral Store. Students may also wear Ross-branded shirts that are given out for various programs (e.g., Field Academy) or school events (e.g., field day).

*Note: Shirts must be well-fitted and cover the shoulders and torso. All tops must cover undergarments.*

**Sweatshirts & Hoodies**

> Only Ross-branded sweatshirts and hoodies are allowed

**Sweaters and Fleeces**

> Should be solid (no images or text) in navy, white, or gray

**Sweatpants**

> Sweatpants are not allowed

**Footwear**

> Types: Closed-toe and backed shoes or sneakers

*Note: Flip-flops, sandals, open-toed shoes, Crocs, and/or bare feet are not permitted.*

**Leggings/Stockings**

> Should be solid and in good condition

> May not be worn as outer garments

Please note that as fashion is constantly changing, it is not possible to list every item of clothing that is or is not appropriate. If the School deems an outfit to be inappropriate, the student may be asked to change.

**ITEMS NOT PERMISSIBLE ON CAMPUS**

The following items are not permissible on campus:

> Hats and other headwear that do not allow the face to be visible to staff, and which interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Note: Sweatshirt hoods should be down when in class or meetings.

> Any article that conveys a sexually suggestive remark, a pro-alcohol message, or a tobacco and/or drug-related message. Any article or apparel that displays obscene words, pictures, or designs, or is offensive to any individual, gender, nationality, race, neurodiversity, or religious group.

> Any item that may be considered disruptive to the educational process.

**DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

It is important for students to understand that repeated problems with adherence to the dress code cease to be "dress code" issues and instead violate Ross Core Values. They represent a lack of cooperation and respect for the community. When a student is out of the dress code, consequences will be administered, beginning with detentions. After the fifth dress code violation, the student will earn a suspension. Repeated suspensions for dress code will result in an expulsion hearing.

**QUESTIONS**

Any questions about the Ross Dress Code should be directed to the Upper School Office (631-907-5185).



## GRADES 9–PG

Ross School students should dress in a manner that reflects the school's culture of respect, responsibility, school pride, and seriousness of purpose. All students must be neat and clean, with clothing in good repair at all times. If students are not dressed appropriately, they will be asked to change.

Ross School uniforms may be purchased from Lands' End and the Ross School Online Adidas store. The Adidas store items are all uniform-approved, and the store is run by and supports our Parents Association. We recommend ordering your items early to ensure they arrive on time.

### Land's End

Ross-branded items can be purchased from Lands' End at [landsend.com/school](https://landsend.com/school) or by calling 800-469-2222. Be sure to use our preferred school number, 900042672.

### Ross X Adidas School Online Store

The [Ross X Adidas store](#) is a PA fundraiser for sports and wellness initiatives on campus. The store is open for the first two weeks of each month and published in the weekly Announcements. The store then closes so the merchandise can be branded with the Ross logo and shipped to your home. The online store is not open continuously. Orders take approximately five weeks to reach your home from the date the store closes. Thank you for supporting this PA fundraiser for sports initiatives.

## GRADES 9–PG DRESS CODE

Items from either the [Ross X Adidas store](#), the [Ross Land's End store](#), or any of the various Ross shirts or hoodies (from Field Academy, RSAA, RSTA, sports, etc.) are encouraged.

### Bottoms: Pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses

> Acceptable Colors: Navy blue, white, beige/khaki, or black

#### Notes:

- > *Pants/skirts must be well-fitted and free from excessive adornments or messages and of an appropriate length (no more than 3 inches above the knee).*
- > *Jeans, cargo pants, pajama pants, and non-Ross-branded sweatpants are not permitted (except on dress-down days).*
- > *Tights, leotards, leggings, bike pants, or underwear worn as outer garments are not permitted.*
- > *Clothing must cover undergarments*

### Tops

> All Ross-branded shirts are allowed. These may be purchased from Land's End, the Adidas store, or the on-campus Spiral Store. Students may also wear Ross-branded shirts that are given out for various programs (e.g., Field Academy) or school events (e.g., field day).

> If not wearing a Ross-branded top, then students may wear solid (no images or text) collared button-downs, polos, or turtlenecks in navy, white, or gray

*Note: Shirts must be well-fitted and cover the shoulders and torso. All tops must cover undergarments.*

### Sweatshirts & Hoodies

> All Ross-branded sweatshirts and hoodies are allowed

> If not wearing a Ross-branded sweatshirt or hoodie, then students may wear a solid (no images or text) hoodie/sweatshirt in navy or white



**Sweaters and Fleece**

- > Must be solid (no images or text) in navy, white, or gray

**Sweatpants**

- > Only Ross-branded sweatpants are allowed

**Footwear**

- > Types: Closed-toe and backed shoes or sneakers

*Note: Flip-flops, sandals, open-toed shoes, Crocs, and/or bare feet are not permitted.*

**Leggings/Stockings**

- > Should be solid and in good condition
- > May not be worn as outer garments

Please note that as fashion is constantly changing, it is not possible to list every item of clothing that is or is not appropriate. If the School deems an outfit to be inappropriate, the student may be asked to change.

**ITEMS NOT PERMISSIBLE ON CAMPUS**

The following items are not permissible on campus:

- > Hats and other headwear that do not allow the face to be visible to staff, and which interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Note: Sweatshirt hoods should be down when in class or in meetings.
- > Any article that conveys a sexually suggestive remark, a pro-alcohol message, or a tobacco and/or drug-related message. Any article or apparel that displays obscene words, pictures, or designs, or is offensive to any individual, gender, nationality, race, neurodiversity, or religious group.
- > Any item that may be considered disruptive to the educational process.

**DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

It is important for students to understand that repeated problems with adherence to the dress code cease to be “dress code” issues and instead violate Ross Core Values. They represent a lack of cooperation and respect for the community. When a student is out of the dress code, consequences will be administered, beginning with detentions. After the fifth dress code violation, the student will earn a suspension. Repeated suspensions for dress code will result in an expulsion hearing.

**QUESTIONS**

Any questions about the Ross Dress Code should be directed to the Upper School Office (631-907-5185).



## Section 6: Technology Use Policies

### PHILOSOPHY

Technology plays an important role in our daily life within the Ross community. The Information Technology (IT) staff is dedicated to procuring appropriate, state-of-the-art technology and protecting the School's investment in these technologies by ensuring they are well maintained. Each student using technology on campus likewise has a responsibility to assist the IT staff in the upkeep of our technology investment. Technology at Ross is to be used for educational purposes that serve the School's mission. With that aim, each student will abide by the following technology policies.

### CONDUCT

The Ross Core Values extend to the digital world. The use of technology must comply with all of the School's policies and procedures set out in this handbook or elsewhere and communicated verbally. Students must follow the guidelines herein when using technology, as well as general rules of common sense and common courtesy.

- > Students may not use technology to harass or bully others, to steal or borrow intellectual work, to access or store inappropriate materials, to disrespect teachers by "multitasking" during class (emailing, chatting, doing homework, etc.), or to break any other school rule or procedure.
- > Playing games, chatting, and watching entertainment videos are not allowed during the school day (unless associated with a class and explicitly permitted by a teacher).
- > Students may not access or use other people's accounts, computers, or folders, nor borrow computers or computer accessories, without express permission from the owner.
- > Students may not plagiarize. Students must properly cite materials taken from the Internet. Details are provided in this handbook's section on Conduct.
- > Students may not break copyright law by illegally downloading, copying, sharing, and/or distributing licensed software, music, games, movies, videos, or any other copyrighted materials. Students engaging in these practices place themselves, their families, and the School in jeopardy of legal action. Those found guilty of copyright infringement may face serious civil and criminal penalties, including monetary damages of as much as \$150,000 per infringing file and up to five years in jail, and may have to expend significant time and money on legal fees and other costs associated with the defense of claims of this sort.
- > Students may not share or steal passwords. Regardless of the circumstances, individual passwords must never be shared or revealed to anyone else. Any student sharing their password with another student or enabling another student to operate a computer under his or her own user ID and password will be held accountable for the actions the other party takes while using his or her account. Students who compromise their accounts inadvertently should change their password immediately. Students who do not know how to do this should ask a teacher immediately.
- > Students may not access inappropriate material. At no time is it permissible for a student to use the equipment for the purpose of accessing "adult" or pornographic materials. Students involved in viewing, printing, or distributing this material will have a disciplinary hearing, and all student account privileges will be revoked for a period to be set during the hearing. Egregious cases may result in expulsion from the School. Non-school-related activities such as net-based games, video and music streaming, and file sharing can waste the School's Internet resources, effectively shutting down access, and therefore are not permitted during the school day.
- > Students cannot use any instant messaging program during a class without the express permission of that teacher. Students cannot use instant messaging programs during the course of the school day. Doing so may result in their laptop being confiscated and loss of privileges. Students in Grades 5–8 may not use the Internet without faculty/adult supervision.



## **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

Every student is responsible for knowing these policies and abiding by them. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action, which may include the following:

- > Loss of network privileges for a period of time at the discretion of the School.
- > Disciplinary hearing, loss of privileges, suspension, or expulsion.

## **EMAIL USAGE**

Occasional email use not related to academic studies is allowed but should not interfere with or conflict with Ross academic use and should be kept to a minimum. Mail conferences and other ad-hoc mail groups are available for students to exchange information, share ideas, or post student notices. Email accounts should not be relied on as a method for storing files. Copies of a message can be kept permanently by exporting the message as a document that can then be stored in a personal folder.

Misuse of the email system is a serious matter that will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to revoking the use of these services, account termination, and/or expulsion. Examples of misuse include but are not limited to the following:

- > Sending messages containing obscene, profane, abusive, or offensive material. This includes, for example, accessing erotic materials via email. It also includes messages, jokes, or forms that violate our harassment policy or create an intimidating or hostile work/academic environment.
- > Using Ross communications systems to set up or run personal businesses or send chain letters.
- > Forwarding confidential Ross messages to locations or entities outside the institution. Such messages should be distributed to appropriate personnel only.
- > Broadcasting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious, or other non-Ross-related matters.
- > Global mailings, which are not acceptable at any time and may result in the temporary or permanent termination of the account.

Email accounts for students who withdraw or are expelled from Ross School are removed from the system on the day of the student's exit.

## **REPORTING SECURITY PROBLEMS**

The following are considered security problems or breaches and should immediately be reported to a member of the IT staff:

- > Sensitive Ross information is lost, suspected of being lost, or disclosed to unauthorized parties.
- > Unauthorized use of Ross systems has taken place or is suspected of taking place. Similarly, passwords or other system access control mechanisms are suspected of being lost, stolen, or disclosed.
- > All unusual system behavior, such as missing files, frequent system crashes, or misrouted messages.
- > Students who are "testing the doors" (probing) security mechanisms at Ross or other Internet sites. If students probe security, alarms will be triggered, resources will be needlessly spent tracking the activity, and disciplinary action may result for the student.

## **WAIVER OF PRIVACY RIGHTS/MONITORING**

Consistent with generally accepted computer practices, the IT staff collects statistical data about electronic and digital communications. For example, call-detail reporting information collected by telephone switching systems indicates the numbers dialed, the duration of calls, the time of day when calls are placed, and so on. Using such information, IT monitors the use of electronic communications to ensure the ongoing availability and reliability of these systems.



Ross School provides the School's systems to its students, faculty, and staff members to facilitate the performance of Ross work. At any time and without prior notice, the administration reserves the right to examine email, file directories, and other information stored on Ross computers and all information created, stored, sent, or received through the Ross network or Internet connections. This examination ensures compliance with internal policies, supports the performance of internal investigations, and assists with the management of information systems.

**Students have no right to privacy in the School's technology resources or their personal technology using the Ross network or Internet connection.**

### **USE OF GOOGLE DRIVE STORAGE**

Students are encouraged to keep all of their academic files in their Google Drive storage. This system is backed up, redundant, and secure, thus ensuring student work is better protected from unexpected data loss. Students may not store video games, videos of sporting events, TV shows, music, pictures, or any other multimedia files that are not directly related to their academic studies.

### **USE OF PRINTERS AND COPY MACHINES**

Printers and copiers should be used for academic purposes only. Excessive printing wastes School resources, so students should send print jobs to appropriate printers. Color printing costs are significantly higher than black-and-white printing and should only be used when color is truly necessary and teacher permission has been obtained.

### **BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE PLAN**

The school requires students to supply their own laptops to use at school, which must meet the minimum specifications [detailed here](#). Other devices, such as phones, tablets, and smartwatches, should not be used at school without the express permission of the classroom teacher, relevant Division Head, or the Director of Technology. In the BYOD plan, a "device" refers to any personally owned device, including laptops, phones, etc. The responsibility to keep the device secure rests with the individual owner. The school is not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus. If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through the administrative office in a manner similar to other personal artifacts affected by such situations. The school may, in its sole discretion, search the contents of a device brought from home.

Students and parents must understand the following responsibilities for devices:

- > The technology devices students bring to school are their responsibility.
- > School personnel assume no responsibility for personal devices that are lost, damaged, or stolen. While we may aid students, the school does not assume responsibility for the general maintenance of devices or any data lost from devices due to repairs or otherwise.
- > Personal devices may be subject to investigation in accordance with school policy.
- > Students must keep their devices secure and not share or loan them to others.
- > Each student is responsible for their own device, including setup and maintenance.
- > No photos, audio recordings, or videos are permitted while on school property unless required for a class and authorized by a teacher. In this case, students must obtain permission from others before photographing, recording, or filming them.
- > Families should clearly label all devices with the student's name. Families should also set a password or passcode to secure entry into each device.



- > Students should understand that files may have to be saved on their Google Drive, Office 365 cloud, local laptop drive, a jump drive, or other media device.
- > Ross School's Technology Help Desk personnel can help students with general maintenance issues for their laptops but assumes no responsibility for carrying out said repairs. The purpose of the Helpdesk is simply to aid students and does not assume any responsibility for maintaining or repairing any devices.
- > The school is a certified Apple repair facility and can perform repairs to Apple laptops or can ship them to Apple for repair. The student and parents agree to pay all repair costs. The school does not assume any responsibility for laptops lost or damaged in shipping or left with the school for repair.
- > The school requires that students install the device management software utilized by Ross on their personal laptops. Students may use the software to install school-owned applications, eBooks, and printers. The school may use the software to investigate disciplinary incidents in accordance with school policy.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **Grades 6–8 Social Media Policy**

The use of social media platforms including, but not limited to Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, Vimeo, Discord, and other forms of online discourse is strictly prohibited during school hours, including class time, lunchtime, and study hall unless explicitly authorized for educational purposes by the teacher or school administration. Any use of social media during out-of-school hours must comply with the personal online activities policy below for Grades 9–12.

### **Grades 9–12 Social Media Policy**

The School respects the rights of students to engage in free and open communication through social media websites like Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, Vimeo, and other forms of online discourse (“personal online activities”). However, when these personal online activities contain content that could be detrimental to the School, students, faculty, or the school community, they are an appropriate focus of the School’s policy. Students are responsible for the content of their personal online activities, and the following guidelines should be followed:

- > Students should be mindful of privacy settings. Students should set privacy settings, but should also assume that their information on social media can be accessed by anyone on the Internet.
- > The content of personal online activities may not contain the following:
  - > Any material that in the sole discretion of the School is considered obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, illegal, or abusive to any person or entity associated with the School.
  - > Any material that is bullying (see above regarding cyberbullying).
  - > Any reference to confidential or privileged information or activities of School students, faculty, staff, administrators, or trustees.
  - > Any reference to confidential School information.
  - > Any reference to Ross School students, faculty, staff, administrators, or trustees, whether by name or implication, that would in any manner defame such individuals.

Any violation of the above-referenced guidelines will result in the student being required to attend a disciplinary hearing with the Head of Upper School, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or legal action.

Students represent the School at all times. All personal online activities should uphold the Ross Core Values.



## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

AI should augment research, enhance assignments, and facilitate learning in alignment with the curriculum goals. Unless explicitly permitted, students are not allowed to use AI. However, students may be encouraged to use specific AI to directly support their academic work and personal educational development.

When using AI, students are required to do so ethically, upholding academic integrity consistently. The misuse of AI in an academic course or setting can be a violation of the Ross School Academic Malpractice policy as written in this handbook.

If a project or assignment is completed with the help of AI, by permission of the teacher, students must clearly acknowledge and cite the contributions of AI, distinguishing between their own work and the material generated by AI.

Students must respect privacy and security guidelines when using AI, just as with other digital tools. This includes not using AI to access or share personal information about others without consent.

Students must not use AI to create, distribute, promote, or access inappropriate or prohibited content, adhering to the same guidelines set for other digital technologies under the school's conduct policies.

Students are encouraged to provide feedback on AI tools and participate in discussions about potential new AI technologies that could benefit their learning.



## Section 7: Transportation to and from School

### **BUSES TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Students are expected to be on time for their regularly scheduled buses to and from school. Once on the bus, students should conduct themselves as if they were in school and should follow all the requirements and provisions as outlined in this handbook.

### **BUS RULES**

These rules apply to all Ross School students riding public and private buses before, during, and after school. Violations of these rules may jeopardize the student's right to ride the bus or subject the student to other disciplinary action. Students must behave as follows:

- > Remain seated and face forward at all times.
- > Use seat belts when available.
- > Be courteous to all while riding the bus.
- > Do not engage in physical aggressiveness of any form, including but not limited to fighting, pushing, or tripping others on the bus.
- > Keep bodies and possessions inside the bus.
- > Do not call or gesture out of the windows.
- > Do not use loud or abusive language.
- > Deposit garbage in the appropriate place on the bus.
- > Do not throw objects while riding on the bus.

**Students may not go home on a bus that is different from their usual bus, even with parental permission.**

### **USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES BY STUDENTS**

The privilege of student driving allows students convenient, and sometimes necessary, transportation to school. However, driving is also a serious responsibility for students and their families. Parents and students should review Ross School's expectations together. The use of a vehicle is a privilege for a student, not a right. Approved parking spaces are reserved for seniors. Seniors who meet all New York State Department of Motor Vehicles requirements for a Class D Driver's License must see the Upper School office and complete the Student Parking Agreement before driving on campus. Students found driving illegally will not be allowed to leave campus after their arrival; parents/guardians will be responsible for removing the vehicle from the Ross campus. Driving, riding, and parking violations will result in disciplinary proceedings such as a disciplinary hearing, and consequences may include but are not limited to revocation of the driving privilege, suspension, or expulsion. No boarding students may have possession of a vehicle on or off campus.

### **Permissions**

Due to limited parking areas and New York State laws, only students with a New York State Class D valid driver's license may drive to school. The combination of a junior driver's license (Class DJ or MJ) and a "blue card" (MV-285) is not acceptable; students must convert to a Class D license. Students may drive only vehicles registered under their family's name or their own names. Forms may be picked up from the Upper School office.



**Parking**

Each senior who wishes to park on the Ross campus must park in designated parking areas. Students may only park in the athletic lot(s). During the school day (7:45 am–3:05 pm), students are not permitted to return to their cars. Students should not plan to store books or other belongings in their vehicles if they will be needed during the school day. Students are not permitted to park off campus for reasons of safety, accountability, and liability.

**Daytime Use of Vehicles**

Students are expected to park their vehicles in the designated lot(s). Students dismissed early may drive off campus to leave the school for the day with written permission from their parent/guardian that has been approved by the Division Head. Students may not drive from school to practices or other school-sponsored events. Seniors will be allowed to leave campus with permission and under certain situations that include but are not limited to Senior Project work and other off-campus functions. Proper permission from parents/guardians and school administration must always be on file with the Division Head.

**Passengers**

No student may transport another student in his or her car during school hours. Properly licensed students may drive passengers to and from school only during regular school arrival and dismissal times. In addition, no student may ever drive another student's car.



## Section 8: Curriculum and Assessment

### CORE COURSES AND ELECTIVES

The Ross School curriculum is designed to provide a well-rounded learning experience that integrates across the School's academic domains. Students are required to take a "core" of required courses each year, and students in Grades 9–PG can choose additional courses from a wide variety of electives. When choosing electives, students must be mindful of the Ross School graduation requirements.

### GRADES 9–PG COURSE SELECTION AND CHANGES

Students request courses each spring for the following academic year. Prior to completing and submitting course requests, students should discuss course options with their advisors, teachers, and parents, and beginning at the end of Grade 10, their college counselor. Parents and advisors are able to view student Course Requests in Blackbaud.

Add/Drop periods take place during the first week of Semester I and then prior to the start of Semester II. For all semester-only elective courses, students can change to a different course at this time. For yearlong courses, students can do this only in the Semester I Add/Drop.

After the Add/Drop period has ended, the following policies apply:

- > *Semester-long courses*: Students can drop the course during week 2 and move to a Study Support class with no withdrawal grade on their transcripts. After week 2, students can move to a Study Support class and receive a withdrawal grade of Withdrawal Pass (WP) or Withdrawal Fail (WF).
- > *Yearlong courses*: Through week 5 of Semester I, students can drop a yearlong course and replace it with a Study Support class for the balance of the term with no withdrawal grade on their transcripts. After week 5, students can move from a yearlong course to a Study Support class and receive a withdrawal grade of Withdrawal Pass (WP) or Withdrawal Fail (WF) on their transcripts for the course. Students who drop a yearlong course in the second or third term will receive a withdrawal grade on their transcript. Students may move from a yearlong course to a different Semester II elective only during the Add/Drop period for Semester II. Beyond the first week of those periods, they must move to a Study Support class.

Students enrolled in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program may make changes in course levels only in concert with and upon the approval of the Dean of ESOL. Changes within the ESOL Prep level program are based on performance; changes out of the ESOL program into the core program take place at the end of Semester I. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis with approval by the Dean of ESOL and the Head of Upper School.

### HOMEWORK

Ross School supplements classroom instruction with meaningful homework designed to help students practice skills, reinforce and apply concepts introduced in class, study challenging and interesting topics independently, and develop responsibility for their own work. Parents may assist students with their homework but should recognize the value of students taking ownership of their learning. Teachers assess homework promptly so that students receive regular feedback on their efforts. The following amount of homework is recommended for each grade:

- > Grades 7–8: Up to 90 minutes/night.
- > Grades 9–PG: Up to 120 minutes/night.



Homework cannot be measured by the time required for completion because different students will need different amounts of time to complete the same assignment. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly if their children have any difficulties with homework assignments. When homework is submitted late or is not submitted, the teacher will assess a reasonable consequence, including but not limited to lower scores and study detentions. All homework policies are outlined on the Course Overviews distributed by the teacher at the beginning of the course. If a student falls behind in his or her work, the parents can expect to be contacted by the teacher, who, if necessary, will follow up with a formal plan for supporting the student as they complete the work.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Ross School arranges for both School-sponsored trips and extracurricular School-endorsed trips. On both types of trips, all Ross School policies, including behavioral expectations, apply. Permission slips and applicable fees must be submitted prior to a trip in order for a child to participate.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

Student assessment at Ross School allows teachers to monitor and report students' acquisition of knowledge, their progress with discipline-specific skills and habits of mind, and their ability to apply their learning in a variety of situations. We do not compare students to one another. Instead, we assess student work based on goals that reflect Ross curricular objectives, New York State standards, Common Core standards, and other national and international standards. Goals are made explicit to students in all grades so that everyone understands what is expected and how work is assessed. Assessments are both formal and informal and vary widely depending on the age group.

Students experience regular tests and quizzes in addition to various essays, projects, and performance-based assessments through which they demonstrate their understanding and abilities. Some courses have end-of-year exams to evaluate whether key content and skills were mastered. Students in Grades 9–PG have the opportunity to undergo the standard college testing program, including the PSAT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests, ACT, TOEFL, and AP tests.

## **LEARNING EVALUATIONS AND TRANSCRIPTS**

Learning Evaluations are made available to families at the end of each semester on Blackbaud. These evaluations include marks for course-specific outcomes for every course in which a student is enrolled. Outcomes reflect the main learning expectations for a course and are addressed explicitly by assignments and assessments throughout a term. Learning Evaluations also include narrative comments. Students in Grades 9–PG receive a final mark at the end of each course (whether a semester or year-long course); these final marks are reflected on each student's individual transcript.

## **MARKING SYSTEM**

Dialogue among parents, teachers, and students regarding assessment is encouraged. Teachers make every effort to provide clear expectations for assignments and detailed feedback on student work and to deliver this in a timely manner. If a student or parent has any questions about a course or assignment grade or any other aspect of course performance, they should discuss the concern directly with the teacher. In September 2017, Ross School adopted a numeric grading system based on 100 points. The passing grade at Ross is 70.



## PROGRESS AND PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

In addition to Learning Evaluations, families are kept up to date regarding student progress by way of the Progress tab in Blackbaud and informal communication from teachers and advisors whenever necessary. Family-Teacher conferences occur in the Fall and Family-Advisor conferences occur twice per year in the Upper School.

## STUDENTS WITH LEARNING CHALLENGES

Students with learning challenges or those needing accommodations are admitted under the same standards as all students and are expected to meet the same criteria to graduate. However, the School recognizes that some students may require reasonable modifications to meet those criteria. Reasonable accommodations are individual matters and must be worked out with the School's Student Support Services Team and within the constraints of the School's resources.

The Ross School academic program for students needing accommodations is based on setting individualized goals corresponding to the specific needs of each student. The process begins with a review of all school records and previous evaluations prior to the admission evaluation. The Admissions staff will consult with the Director of Student Support Services to determine if services are available for the student to achieve academic success at Ross School. In order to qualify for any reasonable accommodations, the School must have specific educational testing that supports that request. Student Support Services will review all diagnostic evaluations as part of its work with individual students and collaborate with teachers, individual students, and parents to implement needed learning support, accommodations, and/or modifications. Learning Specialists provide learning support, accommodations, and strategies in all academic areas, in consultation with classroom teachers and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as well as other state and applicable laws.

For more specific information on the Ross School Accommodations Policy for Learning Differences and Other Disabilities, please see Appendix A.

## GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Students are evaluated on a regular basis in all their classes. Students progressing at a passing level (70 and above) in all their courses are free to participate in courses and activities as desired and as available within their schedules. Students who, for whatever reason, are not performing well in their courses should be notified by their teacher, who also notifies the student's advisor and parents about the academic issue and will update them about progress or if the problem persists.

The following table describes the support provided for each student based on his or her academic performance and the consequences of that performance.

Student Performance	Support and Consequences
Student performing well in all courses and requirements	Student is free to participate in courses and activities as desired and allowed.



Grade under 70 in one course in any semester	Student placed on academic warning and works with advisor in coordination with the Director of Student Support Services and/or Head of Upper School to develop a plan of action for improvement. Weekly check-ins with the advisor are implemented.
Grade under 70 in two or more courses in any one semester	Student placed on academic warning, and a learning intervention takes place involving the Director of Student Support Services, and/or Head of Upper School along with advisor and parents to devise an academic plan of action that could result in an academic contract, changes to course and activity schedule, and/or increased learning support services or requirements. Weekly progress reports from all courses are completed.
Grade under 70 for a second time in the same course in the same academic year, as noted on mid-semester Progress Grade	Student placed on academic probation. An academic intervention conference is held with the Director of Student Support Services and/or Head of Upper School, along with advisor, teachers, parents, and the student. The goal of this conference is to develop an academic action plan to address areas of ongoing concern and to reduce the scope of extracurricular activity for the student so as to provide both the additional time and support needed for improved academic performance. Daily and weekly check-ins are scheduled to monitor progress. Failure to comply with the outlined program of action could result in either required enrollment in a comparable summer course or enrollment in a course the following year, as determined by Administration.
Grade under 70 in two or more courses in the same academic year, as noted on the mid-semester Progress Grade	Student placed on academic probation. An academic intervention conference is held with the Director of Student Support Services and/or Head of Upper School, along with advisor, teachers, parents, and the student. The goal of this conference is to develop an academic action plan to address areas of ongoing concern and to reduce the scope of extracurricular activity for the student so as to provide both the additional time and support needed for improved academic performance. Daily and weekly check-ins are scheduled to monitor progress. Failure to comply with the outlined program of action could result in the repetition of either the course and/or the grade level in the following academic year. The student may also be at risk for outplacement.

#### **EXTENSIONS FOR COURSEWORK**

When extenuating circumstances exist (e.g., death in the family, extended illness of the student), an extension may be granted by the teacher, with the approval of the Head of Upper School, in conjunction with the Director of Student Support Services, allowing a student to complete assignments, projects, tests, or other work after the end of the semester. Exceptions will only be made when absolutely necessary and shall not be made for students who have no extenuating circumstances for not turning the work in on time.



## **ACADEMIC LEAVE AND DISTANCE LEARNING**

Students who wish to attend school outside of Ross for part of a year will be considered on an individual basis. Families exploring outside programs should contact the Head of Upper School as far in advance as possible. Students attending another academic program during the academic leave will have their transcript from that institution attached to the Ross School transcript. Work completed at other institutions will apply toward graduation requirements as appropriate.

## **BOOKS**

Student textbooks, library books, and workbooks are the sole property of Ross School unless students are notified otherwise and must be returned at the end of the school year, upon request, or according to library policy. In certain courses, students are given books to use and retain as their personal property; the cost of these materials is reflected in the school's book fee. Students who lose a library book or textbook will be billed.

## **GRADUATION**

In order to graduate from Ross School, students must successfully complete all core courses. In addition to successfully completing core courses, each student must complete a set of graduation requirements. Work completed in other schools and experiences from outside school is also eligible for application toward Ross School graduation requirements.

### **Graduation Requirements**

For each year in attendance for Grades 9–12, students must successfully complete the following courses:

- > Cultural History
- > Integrated English and Literature

Over the course of Grades 9–12, students must successfully complete the following:

- > Three years of Science
- > Three years of Mathematics
- > Three years of World Language Study: Mandarin or Spanish, or four years of English, depending on students' native language. Students wishing to pursue three years of an alternative language must pursue approval from the Head of Upper School
- > An in-depth Senior Project (completed in Grade 12)
- > Participation in one season of an athletic team sport (may be fulfilled by prior schoolwork)
- > 60 hours of Community Service
- > 1 Term of Eastern Wellness

Prior to Semester II of Grade 11, students must successfully complete the following:

- > 1 Term of Health 1 (completed in Grade 9)
- > 1 Term of Health 2 (completed in Grade 10)
- > 1 Term of Media
- > 1 Term of Visual Arts
- > 1 Term of Performing arts or participation in one music, drama, or dance performance in or outside of school (may be fulfilled by prior schoolwork)

\* New students who enter Ross School as Juniors or Seniors with two or more years of successful study of another language may continue to study this language as their primary language if Ross School is able to provide instruction.



## Section 9: Student Services

### **ADVISORY**

The Ross School advisory program seeks to provide a caring and supportive environment where academic excellence, social skills, self-esteem, and respect for others are emphasized. Advisory sessions provide our students with opportunities to develop the tools they need to negotiate complex social and emotional issues encountered in daily life with peers and adults at school and beyond. Advisory sessions focus on a wide and diverse range of themes relevant to student life, such as preparation for college, academic integrity, cultural tolerance, and self-confidence and efficacy. Advising offers a venue for students to explore the available social and academic support activities that foster the qualities inherent in the Core Values embraced by the School.

Advisors and advisees meet on a regular basis each week. Attendance is mandatory for all students. For each student, the advisor is the primary point of contact for issues related to academic achievement, completion of graduation requirements, conduct issues, and any additional areas in which the student may need guidance. Advisors maintain regular communications with their advisees' teachers and families in order to facilitate success for their advisees. Parents are encouraged to contact the advisor whenever the advisor can be of help.

### **COLLEGE COUNSELING**

The College Counseling Office provides Ross students in Grades 9–PG with advice and counseling related to their college and vocational choices. This advice and counseling is given during individual and group meetings with students throughout the year. The content of the offered elective coursework includes SAT/ACT/TOEFL preparation for sophomores, juniors, and seniors and activities for all students related to the following areas: career interests; how assessment results relate to possible career paths; the exploration of college majors and colleges, online and in print; essay writing, resume writing, and student profile report writing; college application forms; and vocational interests and avocations. College Counselors communicate with parents and guardians regarding student progress and educate, guide, advise, and counsel parents about the application process. Meetings take place during the school day or after school hours. College Counselors also arrange for numerous college recruiters to visit Ross each year so that students may learn more about college choices.

### **Transcripts for University and College Applications**

In order to maintain a complete transcript for students' postsecondary plans, all students entering Ross above Grade 9 must submit an official end-of-year transcript to the College Counseling Office for each year they were not enrolled at Ross (Grades 9–12) by July 1 of the year they were accepted.

### **Applications**

The College Counselor will review a student's complete applications (including all essays) to verify all information and to complete the student's graduation requirement of postsecondary planning. Students must supply the counselor with their application usernames and passwords.

### **Testing**

Each student will develop an individual testing strategy per university in consultation with the Office of College Counseling. Students are strongly encouraged to have their official test scores sent to Ross School to share with their counselor. This enables the counselor to resolve any difficulties with universities and to ensure that the student is



applying to appropriate universities. According to their individual plans, students must submit their official test scores directly to universities. Ross School cannot send the scores.

### **Naviance/Family Connection**

It is the responsibility of each student to complete all information as directed in Naviance/Family Connection. It is also the responsibility of the student to update all university admissions decisions and scholarship awards in Naviance as part of their graduation requirement of postsecondary planning.

### **Agents and Educational Consultants**

The College Counseling Office will work with an outside consultant should the student's family decide to hire one. However, it is crucial for the integrity of the student's admissions process that the student discloses to the School the contact information of the outside consultant in order for the College Counseling Office and an outside consultant to work together as a team to support the student.

### **Honesty Statement**

A student's postsecondary planning process is a graduation requirement. When students apply to a program or university, they are representing both themselves and Ross School. Should the School discover that any part of the student's application (essays, testing, transcripts, etc.) is fraudulent in any manner, it will be treated as an egregious case of academic dishonesty and may result in an expulsion hearing.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM**

Ross School has a team of professionals known as the Student Support Services Team, who meet on a weekly basis to discuss and create a course of action to help students with academic, behavioral, or social/emotional difficulties.

The team members consist of an administrator, a nurse, school/mental health counselors, social workers, learning specialists, and other specialists as needed. These professionals work both independently and cooperatively to enhance learning opportunities and the social, emotional, and physical well-being of all students.

Upon a referral by a staff member, parent, or student, the team discusses all aspects of the issues involved and may recommend teacher consultation, parent contact, classroom intervention (including strategies to meet the individual needs of the student), team member intervention, further evaluation, or referral to appropriate outside professionals.

In special circumstances, an additional learning specialist or tutor may be brought in to work closely with an individual student throughout the school day. When such a program is implemented, the additional specialist is a School employee supervised by the School. The family is asked to pay a fee to cover costs associated with the program.

## **TUTORING AND LESSONS**

Occasionally, the School may ask that students work with tutors, and at other times, a family may choose to seek out tutoring or lessons for a variety of reasons. Tutoring may take place on campus and in boarding houses after 4:30 pm. Students with an approved 504 or IEP may have only one tutor during the academic day, and they can only be scheduled in a learning strategies period. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and approved by the relevant division head. There are numerous Ross School teachers who tutor and provide lessons outside of school, and the School also has contact information for other tutors/teachers in the area. Ross teachers are not allowed to



tutor students currently enrolled in their courses. Ross School does not screen tutors/teachers who are not employed by the School and cannot guarantee their level of expertise or effectiveness, even if their contact information is provided to a family by a school employee. The School cannot be responsible for any problems that may arise in conjunction with tutors/teachers who are not employed by Ross School. It is recommended that parents do their own thorough research and check references carefully before hiring anyone to work with their children.



## Section 10: Interscholastic Athletics

Interscholastic athletics are offered to students in Grades 7–12. Ross School competes as a part of Section XI, the Suffolk County component of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Please refer to [www.sectionxi.org](http://www.sectionxi.org) for valuable information, including rules and regulations, the most up-to-date sports schedules, and directions to games. Questions regarding interscholastic athletics should be directed to your child's coach or the Athletic Director.

### **SPORTS FOR GRADES 7–8**

Students at Ross are eligible to be a part of an athletic team beginning in Grade 7. The purpose of Grades 7–8 athletics is to emphasize the importance of learning basic skills of the sport, learn the value of physical activity, prepare for future competition, and learn how to win and lose gracefully. At this level, no one is cut from a team, and students should expect to receive equal playing time if they are working to their full potential at every practice. Students in Grades 7–8 are expected to attend all practices and games. Ross Junior Varsity teams follow the Section XI guidelines for each sport.

### **SPORTS FOR GRADES 9–12**

In Grade 9–12 athletics, for both Junior Varsity and Varsity teams, the focus moves more toward being competitive. At this level, playing time is determined by each student-athlete's inherent ability, commitment to the team, and quality of work ethic. Playing time is determined by the coaching staff, and there is no guaranteed playing time for any student at the Varsity level. Only Varsity teams compete in playoffs. Postgraduate students are not eligible to compete in interscholastic athletics.

Attendance is expected at all practices and games. Students may be required to sign a Participation and Sportsmanship contract at the beginning of the season that adheres to the Ross Core Values and outlines the responsibility of being a student-athlete. If a session must be missed, the student is expected to contact the coach ahead of time or submit a note from a parent or doctor. Students should arrive on time or early for practice and in proper clothing and equipment.

### **EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM**

Students are required to supply their own protective equipment, including but not limited to proper footwear, cleats, shin guards, and mouth guards. Team coaches will discuss the required equipment at the beginning of each season.

All athletes will be provided with a clean uniform before the first game. Students who forget their uniform on game day will not be given another one. At the conclusion of the season, this uniform must be returned clean. Failure to return a uniform will result in a bill for the replacement fee.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Students must meet the following criteria to be eligible to participate on interscholastic teams.

#### **Medical**

For all levels, each student is required by the state to have a valid physical with a School-approved physician within 12 months of the start of any given season.



If the student has had a physical more than 30 days before the start of any given season, a health update form must be completed by the student and parent and must be on record in the Nurse's Office. Any student missing this form or a current physical will be unable to practice or compete with their team. Information about the physical can be obtained in the Nurse's Office.

### **Parental Consent**

All athletes must have written consent from a parent/guardian.

### **Scholastic Achievement**

Athletes must display acceptable achievement, attitude, and effort according to their ability. Student-athletes at academic risk may be required to forgo participating in practices and games until academic performance improves. The Athletic Director, coaches, and faculty maintain an open line of communication in order to best support the needs of the whole student.

### **Personal Characteristics**

Athletes are regarded as potential leaders. Therefore, all athletes must be good school and community citizens in the eyes of the coach and the School administration.

### **International Students**

International students are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics if they meet the following criteria:

- > They have not graduated from the school system in their home country.
- > They have not reached the age of 19 prior to July 1.
- > They have not participated in the sport at a level equal to or greater than our high school sports program.
- > They meet all other NYSPHSAA eligibility criteria.
- > There is no evidence of enrollment for professional athletic purposes.

### **SPECTATORS**

Parents and friends are strongly encouraged to attend all games, both home and away. While attending games, spectators are asked to remain on the opposite side of the field or court from the players. No spectators should be sitting on the team bench. Parents who wish to observe a practice must call the Athletic Director to schedule an appointment, just as they would to observe a class.



## Section 11: Health and Wellness, Safety, and Security

### HEALTH

#### Examinations and Immunizations

New York State education law requires a medical examination for all new entrants, students transferring from another school, and students entering Grades Pre-K, K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. A Student Health Appraisal Form for your student's doctor to complete can be accessed via Blackbaud and August Schools.

All students attending Ross School must meet the immunization requirements set forth by New York State law.

#### Medical Attention

Under the supervision of the School Nurse, trained personnel on both campuses provide medical services for students. When teachers refer a student for medical attention, the reason for the referral should be noted on the student's pass. All students must go to their classes before going for medical attention.

Students with flu and other illnesses should stay home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours (no fever without the use of fever-controlling medicines, and they feel well for 24 hours). Please remind students to protect others by covering their mouths when coughing or sneezing.

#### Medications

In accordance with New York State law, students who require internal medications, including over-the-counter medications, during school hours must bring the following to the Nurse's Office:

- > A note from the parent giving permission to administer the medicine.
- > A note from the doctor indicating the purpose, route, dosage, frequency, and other pertinent information.
- > A completed Medication Authorization Form, available from the Nurse's Office or August Schools.

The medication must be brought to school by an adult in the original container/package with the student's name affixed outside. **All prescription medications must be labeled in English.** Students are not allowed to have homeopathic, prescribed, or over-the-counter medications from outside the United States in their possession; these will be confiscated by House Parents and other Ross staff. Medication will remain in the Nurse's Office during the school day. The School Nurse will arrange for boarding students to be seen by a physician in order to continue prescribed or certain over-the-counter medications that can be provided by a local pharmacy. The Medication Authorization Form should be completed for any prescribed or over-the-counter medication that may be required on a regular basis.

### WELLNESS AND NUTRITION

#### Physical Activity and Wellness

Ross School values physical activity and wellness as vital factors in a child's education, positive state of health, and well-being. All Upper School students are required to take a physical Wellness course or be on a sports team each semester. All Upper School students are also required to participate in school-wide Community Wellness activities. As a requirement for graduation, Ross High School students must participate on an athletic team at least once in Grades 9–12, as well as engage in at least one Eastern Wellness course.



### **Nutrition and Meals During the School Day**

Ross School understands the importance of a healthy diet for children and adults. Students may not bring candy, gum, or soda to school. Healthy lunches are encouraged, and we are happy to provide guidance for parents who request it. Students in Grades 7–PG are expected to have lunch in the Ross Café daily and may not bring lunch from home. They should not sign out for lunch except for special circumstances.

**Food deliveries are never allowed on the Ross School campus.** If food is delivered to any buildings on the upper campus, school employees will confiscate the delivery and report the delivery to the relevant Division Head.

A student under a doctor's care who requires a specialized or additional meal will be guided and supported by the School Nurse, Director of Student Support Services, Executive Chef, and the student's advisor. In this situation, the first person who should be notified is the School Nurse.

### **Celebrations, Treats, and Rewards**

Occasional holiday and other celebrations take place for all students through after-school activities coordinated by the student government and through the Café. In support of the School's focus on healthy eating, overly sweet treats should not be included in the numerous opportunities for in-class and advisory festivities to celebrate special accomplishments and special occasions. In addition, Upper School students are asked not to celebrate birthdays with sweet treats on campus. Exceptions must be approved by the Head of Upper School and will only be permitted during lunch and dinner.

Ross School does not permit the use of foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will never withhold food or beverages as a punishment.

### **Birthday Parties and Other Celebrations Outside of School**

The School kindly requests that students and their families make every effort to be inclusive when it comes to birthday parties and other celebrations. For smaller parties, details should be privately communicated. Whenever a party includes "most" of the children in a class or grade, families are strongly encouraged to invite everyone in the class or grade. Ross School does not distribute invitations for parties held outside of school.

### **Nutrition, Snacks, and Meals Outside the School Day**

Snacks and meals at Ross School after the end of the academic day must adhere to the overall Wellness philosophy described here and below. Examples of events that would fall under these guidelines are student government-supported events (dances, etc.), performances, and field trips.

### **Healthy Snack Guidelines**

- > Dried fruits and seeds are encouraged. Peanuts are never permitted due to severe student allergies. Ross School is a peanut-sensitive campus. The School does not use peanuts nor permit students to bring any foods to school that contain peanuts. The School cannot guarantee parents of students with peanut allergies that students will never come into contact with peanuts while at school.
- > Healthy snacks are low in added sugars and unhealthy fats and free of trans fats.
- > Soda is never a healthy snack and is not permitted on campus at any time.
- > Fresh fruit and vegetables and water are highly recommended at all times.
- > Chips, pretzels, and other salty snack items should be in individual-sized bags that state they contain one portion or are packed in a small resealable bag.
- > Whole-grain items are preferred over processed-grain items.



- > Candy items are not permitted.
- > Cookies should be limited to two cookies per student unless they are over two ounces, in which case one cookie per student is recommended.
- > Cereal and granola bars should be wrapped for individual consumption and should not have more than 35% of calories from sugar (check label).
- > Frozen desserts should be low-fat and consumed in moderation.
- > Cakes and other pastries should be free of artificial ingredients and consumed in moderation.

### **Fundraisers**

Fundraising efforts by students must reflect the Ross School Wellness philosophy. Fundraising activities promoting physical activity will be given priority in approval and support. All activities must be approved by the Head of Upper School before notices are posted.

- > Requests for fundraising activities promoting physical activity and/or non-food sales must be submitted to the Division Head one month prior to the desired date.
- > Bake sales are approved on a limited basis and must be presented to the Division Head one month prior to the requested date. All bake sales must follow the Bake Sale Guidelines.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Ross School is committed to providing equal opportunity to all students, faculty, and staff members without regard to race, national origin, religion, age, neurodiversity, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected status under applicable federal, state, or local law.

### **Discrimination, Abuse, and Harassment**

The School is a diverse community that values the inherent dignity of each person. This is reflected in the Ross School mission statement, which welcomes students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds, confident that they will find the Ross environment welcoming and free of discriminatory conduct.

At Ross School, it is unacceptable and a violation of our policy to discriminate against, abuse, or harass any person because of his or her race, color, sex, gender, weight, religion, national origin, ethnic group, disability, or sexual orientation. This includes sexual harassment. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for the School to fulfill its educational mission.

Any student or adult who is the victim of or otherwise suspects any kind of discrimination, abuse, or harassment should report it immediately to the Director of Student Support Services or the Head of Upper School. Students, in particular, are encouraged to speak to any trusted adult at any time if they are the victim of or a witness to any kind of discrimination, abuse, or harassment. It is the responsibility of every member of the Ross community to help maintain a safe, respectful learning environment.

### **Policy on Reporting Child Abuse of Students by School Employees**

Students have the right to feel safe and respected and to work and learn in an environment free from abuse. This policy applies to all campuses of the School, all School-sponsored and -affiliated trips and events, transportation to or from school or a School-affiliated event, and the use of communication devices, whether owned by the School, a student, or an employee. For purposes of this policy, "Employees" include all individuals employed by the School, including but not limited to teachers, administrators, and staff. "Other Adults" include volunteers, employees of a contracted service provider, parents and legal guardians of Ross School students, and visitors to the school. The



School prohibits all forms of abuse as defined herein. This policy also applies to abuse by an Employee or Other Adult on campus or at a School-sponsored event of a minor who is not an enrolled student at Ross School. With respect to interaction between a School employee and students, this policy applies at all times in all locations.

### **Definition of Abuse**

Abuse shall mean any of the following acts committed by an Employee or Other Adult against a Ross School student: (a) intentionally or recklessly inflicting physical injury, serious physical injury, or death; (b) intentionally or recklessly engaging in conduct which creates a substantial risk of such physical injury, serious physical injury, or death; (c) sexual abuse; sexual abuse includes sexual intercourse, oral-genital contact, oral-anal contact, genital anal contact, touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of the body for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire of either party or intimate kissing; prohibited touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of the body includes touching of the actor by the victim, as well as the touching of the victim by the actor, whether directly or through clothing; or (d) disseminating pornographic or indecent materials to a student or engaging a student in the production of pornographic or indecent materials.

Any sexual or romantic conduct between a School employee, volunteer, or employee of a contracted service provider and a current Ross School student, even if the student is 17 or older and even if consented to or welcomed by the student, is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal of the adult involved.

### **Procedures for Reporting**

The School requires all Employees, Other Adults, and students who have actual knowledge of or who have reasonable cause to suspect an incident(s) of abuse to report such knowledge or reasonable suspicion, regardless of who the offender may be. Reports should be made to the Head of Upper School or to the Director of Student Support Services.

The School will attempt to protect the privacy of the individuals involved during any investigation, restricting related information on a "need-to-know" basis. Although the School cannot guarantee confidentiality, the School will not reveal the name of a person who reports abuse without that person's permission, whenever possible. The School will not retaliate against any person who submits a complaint under this policy in good faith, who assists in providing information about a complaint, or who participates in an investigation pursuant to this policy.

Nothing herein is intended to prohibit or discourage any student, Employee, or Other Adult from reporting outside the School to law enforcement in the event they believe a crime has been committed.

The School recognizes that false accusations of abuse can cause serious harm to innocent persons. Although the School encourages complaints made in good faith, if an investigation reveals that an Employee or Other Adult knowingly or maliciously accused another person falsely of abuse, the School will take all appropriate action.

### **Parent Notification**

Whenever a report of abuse against a student by an Employee has been made, the parent of the student must be promptly notified of the report. The School will keep the parent regularly informed of the progress of any internal investigation and will provide the parent with a written copy of the findings and recommendations of the investigative body. The School will promptly notify the parent if the appropriate law enforcement authority has been notified of the report.



**Investigations**

Following consultation between the student and the Head of Upper School or the Director of Student Support Services, the School will determine whether further investigation is required. If the allegation appears substantiated, the alleged offender may be placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of any internal or external investigation. The terms of such leave shall be determined by the School. The investigation may include interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and others. The alleged offender may be asked to respond to the allegations in writing.

**Law Enforcement Notification**

If the School's investigation determines that the alleged abuse occurs, and if there is reason to suspect that the alleged abuse against the student constitutes a criminal act, the Head of Upper School or Chair of the Board of Trustees shall immediately report this determination to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Whenever law enforcement has been notified, the victim's parent must also be notified as required by the parent notification procedure above.

**Discipline**

If it is determined that the School's policy prohibiting abuse has been violated, the School will take disciplinary action against the offender. Such action may include but is not limited to probation, suspension, or termination of employment.

**Record Keeping**

The School will maintain records of complaints of abuse and any subsequent investigation. Access to these files is strictly limited.

**Mandated Reporting**

If there is an allegation of abuse by a parent or legal guardian with respect to their own child, the School's Mandated Reporting Policy will supersede this policy and apply.

**Sexual Intimacy**

The School recognizes that sexuality is a normal part of human behavior but believes that secondary school students are not prepared to deal with the possible consequences of intimate sexual activity. Differences in maturity, health risks, and the possibility of unwanted pregnancy or exploitation are important considerations.

Responses to inappropriate sexual conduct, therefore, may include notification of parents and, if necessary, disciplinary action for inappropriate sexual behavior. The School has equal expectations for students regardless of their sexual orientation. Students need to be aware that the age of consent in New York State is 17.

In cases of discrimination, abuse, or harassment, including sexual harassment, an investigation is prompt, and immediate corrective action is taken. Appropriate disciplinary measures are applied to perpetrators and may include expulsion.

**Informed Choice in Ross School Presentations, Performances, Installations, and Exhibitions**

Ross School promotes the opportunity to hear diverse points of view on issues important to the community. We, as a community, also recognize that in order to preserve these opportunities, we must consider them in relation to the other values we hold as a community and an institution.



**Fire and Emergency Drills**

During drills, students are expected to move quickly, silently, and in an orderly fashion under the direction of faculty to assigned assembly points. Exit directions are posted in each classroom. Fire doors should not be opened; they automatically close when the alarm sounds. Silence is vital in the event directions have to be given by a teacher or administrator. Attendance will be taken once the classes have arrived at the assembly points. Students must stay with their teachers.

**Lockers and Personal Property**

Students, faculty, and staff are reminded that they are collectively responsible for their personal property, as well as that of the School. The School does not take responsibility for valuables left unsecured on the campus or in boarding houses, and everyone should think carefully about what to bring on campus. Computers and other valuables should be stored in lockers when not in use.

Beginning in Grade 7, lockers are available to students to protect their personal property and valuables, but lockers remain the property of Ross School and are not the private property of students. The Head of Upper School or their delegate may, in their sole discretion, open and search a student's locker at any time to ensure compliance with school rules, for maintenance purposes, or for any other reason the School deems appropriate.

Periodically, students will be asked to clean their lockers and school personnel will inspect for cleanliness. Valuables should not be kept in lockers if the lockers are not secure or in proper working order. Food should not be stored in lockers, as it attracts unwanted pests.

**Lost and Found**

Misplaced clothing items can be found in the Center for Well-Being. Personal items such as wallets, cell phones, cameras, keys, and other valuables are turned in to either the Security Office (ground floor of the Center for Well-Being) or the Upper School office. Unclaimed clothing will be donated to charitable organizations at midyear and the end of the year.

If a student believes a personal item has been stolen or lost while on school grounds, the student should report the incident immediately to both Security and the Division Head. Ross School cannot guarantee the recovery of the lost or stolen item(s) but will investigate the loss and return the item(s) if recovered.

**Posting of Signs and Announcements**

Students will have designated areas available to them for posting materials and information that do not violate guidelines mentioned elsewhere in the regulations. Signs, posters, and announcements may not be taped to windows, doors, or walls. There are designated bulletin boards in the lobby of each building for posting such materials. However, all signs, posters, and announcements must be approved by the administration before being posted publicly at Ross School.



## Section 12: Tuition Payment

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Ross School community expects all families to pay tuition to the School in accordance with the Enrollment Contract they have signed. We are fortunate to be able to offer financial aid based on need due to the generosity of the Founder of the School and other donors who support the vision of the School. The Admissions and Business Offices have worked together to offer different methods of payment for tuition and fees. We ask that everyone work to support the School by making payments in a timely fashion. If there are any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Business Office.

### **NONPAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES**

All past-due balances must be paid in order for a student to enroll and attend school beginning in September. A student with a past-due balance in the current year will not receive an Enrollment Contract for the coming year until the past-due balance is paid. A student with a past-due balance before school opens will not be permitted to start classes in the coming year until the past-due balance is paid. A student with a past-due balance during the school year will not be graded at the end of each semester and at the end of the year. All tuition, fees, and other financial obligations must be paid up to date for students to be graded and receive their Learning Evaluations and transcripts, and for families to attend parent/teacher conferences. In addition, a student with a past-due balance may not participate in or attend Field Academy travel courses. In accordance with the terms of the Enrollment Contract, Ross School reserves the right to suspend or terminate services to a student who has a past-due balance. Transcripts will not be released for students with outstanding balances.

### **GRADUATION AND OUTSTANDING BALANCES**

Ross School will not allow a student to take part in graduation ceremonies or other senior activities or receive a diploma unless all outstanding balances (tuition, laptop fees, school fees, library fines, etc.) are paid in full.

### **ACADEMIC LEAVE, DISTANCE LEARNING, AND TUITION**

Students who wish to attend school outside of Ross for part of a year will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis, and tuition and fees may be adjusted accordingly, depending on several factors. Families exploring outside programs should contact the Head of Upper School as far in advance as possible.



# Appendix A: Accommodation Policy for Learning Differences and Other Disabilities

Ross School aims to support students with disabilities while maintaining the School's high standards. The School offers reasonable accommodations to students with learning and other disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, as well as other applicable state and local laws.

## **WHAT IS A DISABILITY?**

The School's Accommodation Policy applies only if a student has a limitation that is a "disability" as defined below and is in compliance with the ADA. The School may not accommodate certain learning differences, medical conditions, and other restrictions or impairments that do not meet the definition of a disability. The School evaluates each student's situation and all requests for accommodation on a case-by-case basis, using a deliberative and collaborative process that is responsive to the unique experiences of each student.

Disabilities can be either physical or mental impairments. To be disabled for purposes of the policy, all of the following criteria must be met: (a) the student must have a physical or mental impairment; (b) the impairment must substantially limit one or more major life activities of the student; and (c) the student must be otherwise qualified to meet school standards with or without reasonable accommodation.

Physical impairments include physiological disorders and conditions, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss. The physical impairment must affect one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs (e.g., vocal cords, soft palate, or tongue), respiratory, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hematic, immune, circulatory, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine systems.

Mental impairments include mental or psychological disorders, such as emotional or mental illness and organic brain syndrome. Examples of emotional or mental illnesses include major depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders (including panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder), schizophrenia, and personality disorders. Depending on a student's needs, the School reserves the right to decide if they can provide the correct accommodations and supports to enable the child to be successful in the academic program offered at the school. Specific learning differences or disorders, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, sometimes meet the definition of disability. Stress, in itself, is not automatically a mental impairment.

## **MAKING AN ACCOMMODATION REQUEST**

Students, parents, and caregivers should direct requests for accommodations for disabilities to the Student Support Services Team. This team may request the input of others, such as the student's teachers, Head of Upper School, and the School Nurse. No person or entity other than the Student Support Services Team is authorized to grant accommodation requests.

Please note that while classroom teachers have great insight and may recognize student difficulties, they are not qualified to recommend evaluations to individual students or parents.

## **Providing Proper Proof of the Need for Accommodation**

For the Student Support Services Team to consider any request for a disability accommodation, it must receive from the requesting student, parent, or caregiver appropriate medical and/or psychological documentation of the disability,



as well as current, medically certified proof of the need for the requested accommodation. Depending upon the circumstances, the Student Support Services Team may require the parents or caregivers to provide additional information regarding the purported disability.

The Student Support Services Team often requires students to undergo testing to establish the existence and extent of a disability. For example, the team generally requires a specialized learning disability evaluation for learning disabilities, as well as hearing tests, physical agility tests, and vision examinations in certain circumstances. The School will consider reports and evaluations regarding student disabilities and accommodations only from medical professionals with the appropriate level of expertise who have actually performed the evaluation or examination. Reports and evaluations submitted to the School must be on letterhead, typed, dated, and signed. Such reports should address only issues relevant to the specified disability or request.

### **Obtaining an Evaluation**

The School requires a psycho-educational assessment before a student may obtain accommodations for a learning disability. Professionals conducting such assessments and rendering diagnoses must have appropriate credentials. The School requires a re-evaluation of all elementary and secondary school students with diagnosed specific learning disabilities every three years. Certain psychological disabilities, which change over time, may require more frequent updated documentation or reevaluation.

Note that a referral by the School to an outside evaluator does not imply an endorsement of that evaluator by the School or any agreement by the School to be bound by the recommendations, policies, or procedures of the evaluator.

### **Assessment Report**

A comprehensive assessment battery and resulting diagnostic report should include a diagnostic interview and assessment of aptitude and academic achievement. The evaluator should provide a summary of the following:

- > A description of the presenting problem(s).
- > Developmental history.
- > Relevant medical history, including ruling out a medical basis for the present symptoms.
- > Academic history, including results of prior standardized testing; reports of classroom performance and behaviors, including transcripts, study habits, and attitudes; notable trends in academic performance; and post-psychological and educational evaluations.
- > Relevant family history, including the primary language of the home and the student's current level of fluency in English.
- > Relevant psychosocial history.
- > Psychological, psychiatric, and/or medical assessments that would rule out alternative or coexisting emotional, behavioral, neurological, and/or personality disorders that may impact the individual's learning, along with a history of relevant medication and current use.
- > Individual subtest scores and percentiles.

Individual "learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems," and "test difficulties or anxieties," in and of themselves, do not constitute learning disabilities that require accommodation. Evaluations must rule out alternative explanations for problems in learning, such as emotional or motivational problems that may be interfering with learning but do not constitute a disability. In addition, the psycho-educational (or neuropsychological) evaluation for the diagnosis of a specific learning disability (including ADHD) must provide clear and specific evidence that a learning disability does or does not exist.



## **DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION**

Once the Student Support Services Team receives documentation of a student's disability and his or her ability to meet School standards and expectations with or without reasonable accommodation, it will assess whether the requested accommodation is appropriate. Deciding what accommodations are reasonable and necessary is an interactive, cooperative process among the School, the student, and the student's parents. The School does not guarantee that it will implement a parent's, physician's, or outside evaluator's recommendations. The Student Support Services Team will, however, discuss possible accommodations with the student and his or her family to attempt to reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

The Student Support Services Team considers many factors when deciding whether and to what extent the School should accommodate student disabilities. These include the appropriateness of the requested accommodation, available alternatives, whether the requested accommodation unduly burdens the School, whether the requested accommodation fundamentally alters the School's mission or program, and whether the requested accommodation presents a direct threat to the health and safety of the student or others within the school community.

The Student Support Services Team will inform the student, parent, or other caregiver of its decision regarding the requested accommodation. If the team denies a request for an accommodation, or if it offers an alternative accommodation, it will explain its reasoning. Given the deliberative and interactive nature of the accommodations process, making decisions regarding accommodations can be time-consuming. The School, therefore, urges students and parents to request accommodations as soon as possible so that there is sufficient time to assess the student's needs, evaluate the School's ability to meet these needs, and, when applicable, institute the accommodation. While the School does not obtain accommodations for standardized tests, it will facilitate the process by sending documentation to the appropriate agency.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

Once a student receives accommodation for a disability, it is the student's and parents' responsibility to follow up with the Student Support Services Team about changes to the student's disability status or need for accommodation. In particular, parents are responsible for promptly submitting the materials necessary to conduct a learning disabilities re-evaluation at the appropriate time for the individual student. The Student Support Services Team reviews accommodations annually and will notify parents if the accommodations granted are not being utilized.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Director of Student Support Services.





**ROSS SCHOOL**

18 GOODFRIEND DRIVE  
EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK 11937  
TEL: 631-907-5000  
FAX: 631-907-5565