

# **MVMS Student Handbook**

## **2023-2024**

### **Mt. Vernon Middle School**

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We have received and reviewed the 2023-2024 Mt. Vernon Middle School discipline policy, Student Athlete Guidelines and "Network and Internet Access Agreement for Students."

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Student's Name Grade

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Parent/Guardian Date

**The rules you are about to read in this code of conduct are in addition to the school corporation's broad, discretionary authority to maintain safety, order and discipline on school property and within the school corporation's jurisdiction. These rules support, but do not limit the school corporation's authority as provided by Indiana law.**

Please detach the bottom portion, sign, and return to school. Thank you!  
A copy of the MVMS Student Handbook is available online at <http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us>

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to Mt. Vernon Middle School, home of the Marauders. The administration, faculty, and staff hope that the time you spend here is valuable and enjoyable. We feel we have an excellent school facility that will give you a positive place to study and learn. We also feel we have an outstanding staff of caring adults who want to help you to be successful. However, the most important link in the learning chain is YOU, the student. To learn as much as you possibly can you must apply yourself to your studies and strive to do your personal best everyday.

This handbook contains the answers to many of the questions often asked by students and parents. Please take the time to read through this carefully. If you have questions or concerns about the content, please do not hesitate to ask.

## **Mt. Vernon Middle School**

### **Home of the Marauders**

#### **Our Mission**

*Mt. Vernon Middle School will engage, educate, and empower today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities.*

#### **Our Core Convictions**

- A school community committed to positive student growth and development.
- A relevant and challenging curriculum.
- A safe and orderly environment that promotes learning.

# The Marauder Way

## The Marauder Way



**"The Marauder Way"** is the core behaviors that are expected of every student, every day, in every setting at Mt. Vernon Middle School – including the school bus. Both staff and student input were considered in the development of **"The Marauder Way"**. They are posted in every classroom, the hallways, the media center and the commons area as a constant reminder of what is expected.

They are discussed during announcements and during class. Students who demonstrate behaviors consistent with **"The Marauder Way"** will receive rewards periodically throughout the school year. The goal of **"The Marauder Way"** is to decrease the number of incidents requiring disciplinary action, increase attendance and academic success, while acknowledging students who make good choices. It is the conviction of Mt. Vernon Middle School staff that **"The Marauder Way"** is criteria that can help students be successful at Mt. Vernon Middle School.

## Time Schedule

The MVMS school day for students begins at 8:40 a.m. Dismissal is at 3:45 p.m. The specific class time schedule will be on the student schedules and /or posted on our school website. The Mt. Vernon Middle School website is <http://mvms.mvcsc.k12.in.us/>

## Incentives

Mt. Vernon Middle School rewards students for a job well done, both academically and behaviorally. Students who follow **"The Marauder Way"** on a daily basis will have the opportunity to be involved in one or more of the following incentives provided by the staff of MVMS:

**Flying Aces:** Flying Aces is an incentive program for those students who reach the All "A" or "A/B" Honor Roll. Students make paper airplanes for every A they receive during a grading period. Prizes are awarded for each paper airplane that lands in designated areas of the gymnasium floor.

**Marauder Gold:** A Positive Behavior Intervention System conducted by the counseling department to promote MVMS expectations and positive student behavior.

### **Student of the Month:**

Each month Team Teachers nominate students to be recognized as student of the month. Students recognized for this award will receive a MVMS t-shirt, certificate, and a congratulatory letter mailed to the students' parents.

**Positive Behavior Referral:** Staff members can submit a positive referral for a student doing good deeds.

## **Cheating & Plagiarism**

Cheating and/or Plagiarism is not acceptable behavior at Mt. Vernon Middle School, regardless of any form that it takes. Students caught cheating on a test, homework assignment, class project, report/essay may receive a zero for that assignment and the parent/guardian will be notified of the offense. Students may receive an appropriate disciplinary consequence. Repeated violations may result in further disciplinary consequences.

## **Cafeteria**

The lunch menu for students is located on our website at: [www.mvcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us). Please read ahead to understand your lunch choices.

General Procedures— Students will line up to purchase food in an orderly manner—no pushing, shoving, or yelling. Students are encouraged to use their Student ID cards for touchless account access. Once students are finished with their meals, they are to return their lunch tray to the dish room, throw all trash away, and make sure their tables are clean and litter free. All items purchased must be in clear view of the cashier. The cashier, kitchen staff, or school administration will ask students to empty their purses, jackets or pockets if there is suspicion of a concealed item. Students who steal from the lunch line will be subject to school discipline and may be prosecuted for theft. Students are not permitted to use other student's accounts to pay for their food. No charging for school lunches is allowed.

Parents/guardians are expected to check their student's account balance regularly via Skyward Family Access. Payments can be made with cash/check in person, by mail, or electronically. Students are not permitted to use other student's accounts to pay for their food. Students will not be allowed to charge ala carte items or extras. To view the full charge policy please visit MVCSC's website.

Mt. Vernon participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Families who qualify for meal assistance must submit an application. Applications are available online on Skyward Family Access or a paper copy is available. A new application must be submitted every year.

## **Communication**

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices are not needed for any class or activity at Mt. Vernon Middle School (unless permitted by the teacher). This includes cell phones, earbuds, Air Pods, Beats/headphones, any audio player device, etc. If these items are brought to school, they are to be kept in the student's locker at all times. If they are found being used by the student, or the student is receiving calls and/or messaging through these devices or the phone is a distraction while at school, they will be confiscated and may be returned to the student at the end of the school day. Multiple offenses will/could result in disciplinary consequences including but not limited to suspension with pending expulsion. Lost or stolen electronic devices are not the responsibility of the school.

Cell Phone Usage: The use of a cell phone during the school day is not permitted at Mt. Vernon Middle School. There is absolutely no reason for students to text, receive phone calls, or take pictures with their cell phones at school. Inappropriate actions such as the ones listed below often occur with cell phones and may result in disciplinary action at school in addition to reporting to the proper authorities

### ***Important Notice to Students and Parents Regarding Cell Phone Content and Display***

The Child Abuse/Neglect Law requires school personnel to report to law enforcement or child protective services whenever there is a reason to believe that any person/student is involved with “child exploitation” or “child pornography” as defined by Indiana Criminal Statutes.

- It is “child exploitation,” a Class C felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4(b), for any person/student (1) to exhibit, photograph, or create a digitized image of any incident that includes “sexual conduct” by a child under the age of 18; or (2) to disseminate, exhibit to another person, or offer to so disseminate or exhibit, matter that depicts or describes “sexual conduct” by a child under the age of 18.
- It is “child pornography,” a Class D felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4(c), for any person/student to possess a photograph, motion picture, digitized image, or any pictorial representation that depicts or describes “sexual conduct” by a child who the person knows is less than 16 years of age or who appears less than age 16.
- “Sexual conduct” is defined by I.C. 35-42-4-4(a) to include sexual intercourse, exhibition of the uncovered genitals intended to satisfy or arouse the sexual desires of any person, or any fondling or touching of a child by another person or of another person by a child intended to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of the child or other person.
- The Indiana Sex Offender Registration Statute at I.C. 11-8-8-7 and the Sex Offender Registry Offense Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-11, as of May 2009, requires persons convicted of or adjudicated as a juvenile delinquent of violating the Child Exploitation Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-4(b) to register as a sex offender.
- Because student cell phones have been found in a number of Indiana school districts to have contained evidence of “sexual conduct” as defined above, it is important for parents and students to be aware of the legal consequences should this occur in our school district.

### **Wireless Communication Devices**

Students may possess wireless communication devices in school, on school property, during after school activities (e.g. extra-curricular activities) and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours the WCDs are powered completely off (i.e., not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and concealed and secured in hall lockers (but not locker room lockers) or vehicles, or stored out of sight.

A "wireless communication device" is a device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. The following devices are examples of WCDs: cellular and wireless telephones, Smartphones, Smartwatches, Wi-Fi-enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound, video or still images, text, or other information. Students may not use WCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet websites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.

"Students may use WCDs while riding to and from school on a school bus or other vehicle provided by the Board or on a school bus or Board-provided vehicle during school-sponsored activities, at the discretion of the bus driver, classroom teacher and/or sponsor/advisor/coach. Distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated."

Also, during after school activities when directed by the administrator or sponsor, WCDs shall be powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight.

The requirement that WCDs must be powered completely off will not apply in the following circumstances when the student obtains prior approval from the building principal:

- A. The student is a member of a volunteer fire company/department, ambulance or rescue squad, verified by a letter from the head of the agency.
- B. The student has a special health circumstance verified by a written statement from a licensed physician.

The student is using the WCD for an educational or instructional purpose (e.g. taking notes, recording a class lecture, writing papers) with the teacher's permission and supervision. However, the use of any communication functionality of the WCD is expressly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, wireless Internet access, peer-to-peer (ad-hoc) networking, or any other method of communication with other devices or networks. In no circumstances shall the device be allowed to connect to the Corporation's network. The preceding prohibitions do not apply to Board-owned and issued laptops, PDAs or authorized assistive technology devices.

Students are prohibited from using WCDs to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person in the school or while attending a school-related activity, without express prior notice and explicit consent for the capture, recording or transmission of such words or images. Using a WCD to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted, unless authorized by the building principal. Students who violate this provision and/or use a WCD to violate the privacy rights of another person shall have their WCD confiscated and held until the end of the school year.

WCDs, including but not limited to those with cameras, may not be possessed, activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, shower facilities, restrooms, classrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The building principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where possession of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.

No expectation of confidentiality will exist in the use of WCDs on school premises/property.

Students are prohibited from using a WCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. See Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior.

Students are also prohibited from using a WCD to capture and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using their WCDs to receive such information.

Possession of a WCD by a student is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. The building principal may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g. child pornography). Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the WCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed. Any WCD confiscated by Corporation staff will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the building's central office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian. WCDs in Corporation custody will not be searched or otherwise tampered with unless school officials reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of the law or other school rules. Any search will be conducted in accordance with Policy [5771](#) – Search and Seizure. If multiple offenses occur, a student may lose his/her privilege to bring a WCD to school for a designated length of time or on a permanent basis.

A person who discovers a student in possession of or using a WCD in violation of this policy is required to report the violation to the building principal.

Students are personally responsible for the care and security of their WCDs. The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to WCDs brought onto its property, or the unauthorized use of such devices.



**Parents/Guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.**

**\*Students may use school phones to contact parents/guardians during the school day.**

### **Social Network/Digital Platforms**

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation (MVCSC) acknowledges that students of social media recommended age are not restricted from using any online social network sites or digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, snapchat, and other similar sites while away from school and off school grounds, provided said use is not related to any school activity or event. MVCSC students using social network sites and digital platforms should understand that they are responsible for any and all content they make public via online social networks or digital platforms, and all such material is expected to comply with state, local, and federal laws, rules, regulations, and procedures. All such activities that are deemed detrimental to MVCSC students, teachers, administrators and their families may be subject to disciplinary action by MVCSC within such laws, rules, regulations and procedures. MVCSC will prosecute to the fullest extent permitted by law.

MVCSC further acknowledges a student's right to free expression within the confines of the law. In recognition of a student's rights to freely express themselves, MVCSC suggests students conform to the following guidelines in using social networking sites and other digital platforms. (Students must learn to assume responsibility for their actions as well as accept the consequences of said actions) :

- Students are expected to conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior at all times;
- Students shall not infringe upon the rights of others through personal attacks, use derogatory or demeaning language, or threats;
- Students shall respect the person, property, and rights of others in accordance with school policy and the law;
- Students should not use obscenities, defamatory statements, disruptive tactics, nor advocate violations of the law, rules, regulations, school policies or procedures, and;
- In no event should a student's actions or expression of opinions substantially impact the educational process of MVCSC or its students.
- Students comply with social media recommended ages.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** MVCSC students and parents should know that anything posted online enters the public record. Law enforcement agencies, future employers, and college admissions personnel, among others, have used social networking sites as a means of gathering information.

## **Student Education Technology Acceptable Use and Safety**

### **Network Access**

Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and other resources. The Corporation expects faculty to blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. Access to Internet resources will be structured in ways that point students to those resources evaluated prior to use. However, students may be able to move beyond those resources to others not previewed by staff. Safety filters are in place to prevent access to sites deemed inappropriate; however, students may have the opportunity to move to sites that are deemed safe, yet inappropriate for classroom activities.

Students utilizing Corporation provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access

are responsible for good behavior on-line just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

The purpose of Corporation provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research education. To remain eligible as users, student use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Mt. Vernon Community Schools. Access is a privilege, not a right. Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

The intent of this agreement is to ensure that all students will comply with all Network and Internet acceptable use policies approved by the Corporation.

In exchange for the use of the Network resources, including all corporation systems, either at school or away from school, the student understands and agrees to the following:

1. The use of the Network is a privilege, which may be revoked by the Corporation at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited to: 1) altering system software, 2) placing unauthorized information, computer viruses, or harmful programs on or through the computer, and/or network. Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation reserves the right to log computer use, monitor file server space, remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student for other disciplinary action.
2. The Corporation reserves all rights to any material stored in files and will remove any material which the Corporation, at its sole discretion, believes may be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable. Students will not use their Corporation-approved computer account to obtain, view, download, or otherwise gain access to, distribute, or transmit such materials.
3. All information, services, and features on Corporation resources are intended for the private use of its registered users and any use of them for commercial-for-profit or other unauthorized purposes (i.e. advertisements, political lobbying) is expressly forbidden.
4. The Corporation resources are intended for the exclusive use of their registered users. The student is responsible for use of his/her account, password, and privileges. Any problems arising from the use of the student's account are the responsibility of the account holder. Use of an account by someone other than the registered account holder is forbidden and may be grounds for loss of access privileges.
5. Any issue of the account will result in suspension of the account privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. Misuse shall include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Intentionally seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users;
  - b. Disrupting the operation of the Network, Internet, or any other computer system through abuse or vandalizing, damaging, or disabling the hardware or software;
  - c. Malicious use of the network through hate mail, harassment, profanity, vulgar statements, or discriminatory remarks;
  - d. Interfering with others use of the network or accessing the materials, information, or files of another without their prior approval;
  - e. Students shall not access social media for personal use from the Corporation's network, but shall be permitted to access social media for educational use in accordance with their teacher's approved plan for such use. Responding to unsolicited online contact is strictly prohibited for student safety.
  - f. Unauthorized installation, down-sizing, copying, or use of licensed or copyrighted software or plagiarizing material;
  - g. Misrepresenting others on the network or allowing anyone else to use an account other than the account holder;
  - h. Accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit

material;

- i. Violating any local, state, or federal statute.
6. Corporation and network resources are to be used exclusively for the support of the academic program, not for entertainment.
7. Students bringing data files into the Network agree to check the file with a virus-detection program before opening the file for use. Should the student deliberately or maliciously infect the Network with a virus or cause damage through other vandalism, the student will be liable for any and all repair costs to restore the Network to full operation and will be subject to additional disciplinary measures.
8. The student may only log on and use the Network under the immediate supervision of a staff member and only with the student's authorized user name and password.

Violation of Corporation policy and rules will result in appropriate suspension of computer access to be determined by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation staff. Additional disciplinary action will be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language and behavior. When or where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Network/Internet access it is providing. The Corporation will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions of services. The Corporation will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will make all reasonable attempts to prevent inappropriate access to a student's personal information through the Internet. The Corporation's intent is to make Internet access available for educational goals and objectives. However, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Even though the Corporation institutes technical methods or systems to regulate students' Internet access, these methods cannot guarantee compliance with the Corporation's acceptable use policy. Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation believes that the benefits to students of access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. The Corporation is committed to helping students use the Internet responsibly, but it is not possible to monitor student usage at all times. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information. Therefore, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will provide parents and guardians the option of requesting for their minor children alternative activities not requiring Internet usage.

## **Email**

In addition, as determined by age appropriateness, students will be provided with a school email account for educational purposes and use. This account will be a part of the Google Apps system which provides Mt. Vernon Schools the ability to manage the student's Google accounts. The accounts will have the Mt. Vernon domain (mvcsc.k12.in.us) for identification purposes. The Google Apps system will be used by students within the direction and coordination of their classroom teacher.

The following provisions apply to all student Users of the Email system:

- Users may not use the Email system for any illegal activity, including but not limited to, violation of copyright laws, "spam" or attempts to impair any system of the School District or others.
- Personal information about the user, including, but not limited to, student's name, addresses, and phone numbers shall not be transmitted outside the district network, without written permission from the student and his/her parents. Information about persons other than the user shall not be transmitted under any

circumstances.

- Email may not be used for private or commercial offerings or products or services for sale, or to solicit products or services.
- Users of the Email system shall not use Email in any way that would be considered damaging to another's reputation, abusive, obscene, sexually orientated, offensive, threatening, harassing, illegal, or contrary to school policy.
- Users shall not attempt to read, delete, copy, or modify the Email of any other user.
- Users shall not deliberately interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive Email.
- Users shall not use the Email system in a way that is contradictory with directions of teachers, other staff, and generally accepted network protocol.
- Users shall report illegal or unauthorized use of the Email or on-line systems to the supervising teacher or the authorized Technology Department personnel.
- Users shall not respond to unsolicited Email messages from any source without the permission of their supervising teacher.
- Users shall not receive or respond to Email or on-line information that consists of obscene, suggestive, illegal, offensive, pornographic or objectionable content. If any such material is received it shall be reported immediately to the supervising teacher or authorized Technology personnel.

## Corporation Issued Devices

The policies and information within this document apply to all Corporation issued devices, this includes Chromebooks, iPads, or other devices issued by Mt. Vernon Schools and used by students including any other device considered by the Administration to fall under these guidelines. Teachers may set additional requirements for Corporation issued devices.

### Receiving the Corporation Issued Device:

Corporation issued devices will be distributed each fall during the first part of school. These devices will be assigned to students and tracked via the Corporation asset management system. The device will be supplied with a durable case. These cases are not to be removed, replaced, or defaced in any manner. Removal or loss of a Corporation issued device case may incur a charge and disciplinary action.

### Returning the Corporation Issued Device:

The Corporation issued device and charger may possibly be collected at the end of each school year. If a student is enrolled in summer school with the Corporation, the student will be supplied a device for use during the summer school session. Students will retain the originally assigned device and charger during the school year while enrolled at MVCSC. Any student who transfers out of MVCSC will be required to return the device and charger within 30 days of withdrawal. If a device and/or charger are not returned, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for payment in full. If payment is not received the parent/guardian will be turned over to a collection agency after due notice.

### Device While At Home:

All students are required to take their device home each night throughout the school year for charging. **DEVICES MUST BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL EACH DAY IN A FULLY CHARGED CONDITION.** Students need to charge their device each evening and bring them ready for use daily. The battery will last throughout the day. Devices at home will continue to have content filtering as they do in the classroom. Parents may leverage the Lightspeed

Parent Portal to monitor or restrict access.

## Identification of Corporation Issued Devices

### Device Identification:

The Corporation issued device will be labeled in the manner specified by the school. Devices can be identified in the following ways.

- Record of service tag number and student name label
- Individual's account username or device name

Under no circumstances are students to modify, remove, or destroy service tag labels. Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device if the service tag is modified, removed, or destroyed.

### Device Accidental Damage

As the Corporation replaces aging Mt. Vernon issued devices in accordance with the Technology Department's device refresh cycle starting the 2023-2024 school year; newly purchased **Chromebooks** will have an accidental protection plan automatically.

### Device Refresh Cycle (subject to change)

2023-2024: Grades 5,6,7 and 8

2024-2025: Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

2025-2026: Grades K, 1, 2, 3 and 4

Under this accidental device protection plan, the device is protected against accidental damage or loss due to an act of nature not exceeding **two** times per school year. This protection plan does not cover loss of the student device and/or its accessories, cosmetic damage, or damages caused by intentional misuse and abuse. The Corporation will assess the device damage and repair or replace the device if the damage is determined to be accidental and within the protection guidelines. Repeated or excessive damage to a device may result in forfeiture of the protection plan and parents/guardians will be charged accordingly for the damages incurred.

In accordance with the Technology Department's device refresh cycle, existing devices not yet slated for replacement will not have accidental protection available due to the age of the device. These devices will be monitored and great efforts will be made to determine normal wear and tear versus accidental damage. The Technology Department reserves the right to determine what constitutes damage. In the event of accidental damage of these older devices that prevents adequate access (damaged screen, broken keyboard, etc.) students will be issued a replacement device at a cost of \$25 as opposed to being charged the full repair fee.

In cases of theft, the Corporation will require that a police report be submitted. Fraudulent reporting of theft will be turned over to the police for prosecution. A student making a false report will also be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by the school discipline code.

Corporation issued devices should not be disassembled or any attempt to repair by anyone other than school authorized vendors. **Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device that has been damaged due to intentional misuse or abuse regardless of Device Protection Plan.**

**Devices Undergoing Repair:** The Corporation acknowledges that accidental damage may occur through the use of the device. In the case of accidental damage or hardware failure, the Corporation will supply a loaner device, if needed, while the device is out for repair. The loaner will be labeled specifically to note it is a temporary loaner.

The Corporation has contracted Secured Tech Solutions as our authorized device repair company. A parent/guardian will be charged for device damage that is a result of misuse or abusive handling in accordance with Secured Tech Solutions parts and labor fees if applicable.

### **Device Care**

Students are not to apply stickers or markings of any kind to the Corporation issued device or case. Cases should never be removed or replaced nor should anything be placed between the case and the device. Students should take care not to use the device in any manner that may damage it including; co-location with water or other liquids and placement of the device in any manner that it can be stepped on or kicked. Care must be taken when carrying the device to different locations as the device should always be closed. Violation of these may result in disciplinary action and or charges for the device.

### **Counseling Program**

Each student is given an opportunity to talk with someone regarding his/her interests, problems, future educational plans, or aims in life. This might be the counselor, assistant principal, or principal. Members of the faculty are glad to talk with and encourage all students to learn about and understand themselves, how to make wise choices and friends, how to take part in school activities, and how to make the most of their educational opportunities. In addition, groups meet to discuss issues such as the death of a family member, divorce, anger issues, and classroom difficulties.

### **Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") ensures that personally identifiable information of students in school records are kept confidential. The law specifies, however, that certain non-sensitive "Directory Information" may be released for any purpose at the discretion of the school corporation, with general notification of such intent. Please consider this notice as a general notification for this school year.

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation board considers students' directory information as: the student's name, address, telephone number, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight(if a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, date of graduation, awards received, honor roll listing, and any scholarships received.

This directory information will not be disclosed to commercial entities for commercial purposes. This exception does not include news media and local broadcasting, which are not deemed commercial entities for purposes of disclosure of directory information.

In accordance with applicable state and federal law, United States armed forces recruiters also have a right to a student's name, address and phone number unless the student's parent/guardian/adult student specifically requests in writing that this information is not released to the armed forces recruiters.

This "Directory Information" is used for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to: yearbook or student newspaper, student-run television or radio programs, television/radio stations in partnership with the corporation, printed programs for extracurricular activities, news releases to the local media, corporation or education foundation publications, and interviews with local news media. It can also be used on the corporation or education foundation website, corporation or education foundation videos, podcasts, the school corporation's or education foundation's social media channels, broadcast on TV or radio and their stations' websites, or for print in newspaper publications and their websites. In the case of high school students, information can be released to colleges.

Please know that you have the right to request that the school not disclose any or all directory information. Please consider this decision very carefully as this information is typically used in news stories about our students' achievements and classroom activities, honor roll lists, the yearbook, and school directories, and corporation/school newsletters and websites. Should you deny permission for the release of information, any future requests for such information will be refused for the duration of the school year.

The parent/guardian/adult child may request that the student's directory information not be released upon written notification to the Corporation within ten (10) days after receipt of the annual public notice. Otherwise, the directory information of the student or former student may be released without further permission.

## **Emergency Alert System**

In case of emergency or other situations warranting parental notification, the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has an automated system for notifying patrons of these events. The alert system will automatically call the main contact numbers listed in Skyward. Therefore, it is critically important for parents to log on to Skyward and update their contact information as it changes. Emergency and school closing information can also be obtained from the MVCSC website at [www.mvcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us).

## **Emergency Drills**

In compliance with 511 IAC 6.1-2-2.5, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has developed and implemented **Comprehensive Safety and Crisis Intervention Plans** at the district level and for each individual school. Mt. Vernon Middle School has established procedures for dealing with a wide range of crises and emergency events. Routine drills and practice sessions will be conducted periodically to ensure our preparedness. Drills and practice sessions are intended to teach students proper behavior and appropriate responses in emergency situations. Students are expected to listen closely to adults and to follow their directions quickly during all emergency drills.

## **Grading Period**

Report Cards will be issued via Skyward on a nine-week basis. Parents, please check your child's progress throughout the grading period on **Skyward Family Access**. Mid-term is at the end of the fourth week of the grading period. Please refer to the school calendar for grading period dates. Your **Skyward Family Access** account numbers do not change from year to year. To obtain your account numbers please call the office.

## **Grading System**

The MVCSC School Board adopted the recommendation by the student assessment task force from 2012-2013. Changes were made in the way grades are determined, and beginning at the start of the 2013-2014 school year, the following grading scale was put into effect:

### **Letter Grade Percent 4 Point**

A+ 100	4.0
A 95-99	4.0
A- 90-94	3.7
B+ 87-89	3.3
B 83-86	3.0
B- 80-82	2.7

C+ 77-79	2.3
C 73-76	2.0
C- 70-72	1.7
D+ 67-69	1.3
D 63-66	1.0
D- 60-62	0.7
F 59 and below	0

**Skyward Family Access** will reflect student grades as percentages during the nine week grading period. At the end of the nine week grading period, all posted grades will be reflected as a letter grade

**Extra Credit** - The use of extra credit will be used at the teacher's discretion. However, any extra credit used will be academically based, appropriate to the course content and applied for all students. All other forms of extra credit will not be permitted.

### **Hall Passes**

It is important that students be in the classroom during course instruction time unless given permission to be in the hallway. All hall passes must have a teacher/staff member's signature and the time which they were dismissed. Students without passes may be assigned disciplinary consequences for not following school procedures.

### **Homework Beliefs**

We, as the MVMS Staff, have developed shared values on homework that guide us as we seek what is best for students within the academic process. Homework should be purposeful and not busy work. It should help reinforce what is being taught in the classroom and give students the opportunity to practice. Homework should be directly connected to classroom instruction. We acknowledge that students do not all have an equal playing field outside of school when it comes to homework support. On average, a typical student should have no more than 60-80 minutes of homework total per day in middle school. Student success on homework should have a strong correlation to student success on tests and quizzes. Homework should be engaging, should serve to help motivate students to learn, and is an important part of learning. Homework should be used to enhance a student's learning.

Since grades reflect a student's learning, it is safe to say that students with differing abilities will need to put in different amounts of effort to achieve mastery of the standards. Because of this, students should receive some credit when homework is received within a reasonable amount of time at the Teacher's discretion. Homework can be used to assess prior knowledge. Homework should be assigned when teachers are confident that all students have enough knowledge to work on their own with limited to no support from their teacher(s). Homework should never cause a grade to reflect something other than a student's learning. Homework can be accepted late for some credit within a reasonable time frame - all at the Teacher's professional judgment and discretion. If a student does not hand in an assignment, the grade is a zero.

### **Honor Roll**

Following each grading period, an Honor Roll list will be compiled of the names of those students who have accomplished outstanding grades during the grading period. The Honor Roll Program recognizes students for the following accomplishments:

“A” Honor Roll—All A's; no grade lower than 90%  
Honor Roll—All A's and B's; no grade lower than an 80%



## Health Services

The health room is located in the main office complex. The school nurse is not in the school every day; but she can be reached at any time during the school day through the health room assistant or other school personnel. The health room assistant will be in the health room every day.

The health room assistant will notify parent/guardian if it is determined that a student needs to go home. **Students are not allowed to text or call a parent to let them know that they are sick or want to go home from school.** Students may be subject to disciplinary action for an electronic device violation.

For information regarding our Corporation's student health services, visit our **Health Services Handbook** at <https://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/healthservices>. By agreeing to the student handbook, students and parent/guardians also agree to the policies listed in the Health Services Handbook. Items addressed include: immunizations, parent notification, student exclusion for illness, picking up ill or injured students, contagious illnesses, emergency medical authorization and contacts, allergies, latex precautions, food related activities, snacks, and special occasion, medication administration, emergency medications, sending medication to school, medication changes/discontinuation, release of medications, medication disposal, and student accidents. For additional questions please contact the Corporation Nurse.

A student needing to see the health room assistant, or wishing to lie down due to illness, must first obtain a pass from his/her classroom teacher and then report to the health room. No student may be in the health room for more than one period. At the time, he/she must either report back to the class or the health room assistant will call a parent/guardian to determine if the student needs to go home. If a student feels ill, he/she should not miss a class by going to the restroom and then notifying the office or teacher later. Instead, he/she must report to his/her teacher and then to the health room assistant so the student will not be counted absent or tardy.

## Lost and Found

An area is provided for the placing of lost and found articles. Articles not claimed at the end of each semester will be removed and sent to a charity organization.

## Lockers

Students may be assigned a locker for student use. To prevent loss or theft, students should not share locker combinations with other students. Students are not permitted to put their own locks on these lockers.

School facilities, such as lockers and desks, are school property provided for student use subject to the right of the superintendent and his/her designee to enter the facility as needed and inspect all items in the facility. Students shall not have an expectation of privacy in any facility provided by the school.

Searches, pursuant to School Board Policy C550, shall also be permitted in all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board as defined by IC 20-8.1-5.1-8

Lockers are a privilege, not a right; therefore, the locker privilege may be taken away if the use of the locker violates rules and expectations set forth by the school.

## **Media Center**

The media center is located in the middle of the academic wing of the school building. An orientation at the beginning of each school year familiarizes students with the media center rules and circulation policy. Teachers and students have access to books, magazines, computers, multimedia materials, and equipment. Student's visit the media center with a class, group, or individually to check out books, complete research projects, study and read. Students are encouraged to use their student ID card for touchless checkout of materials. Additional Media Center information can be found on the school website [www.mvsc.k12.in.us](http://www.mvsc.k12.in.us).

## **Parent Conferences and Visitation**

If at any time parents wish to have a conference with a teacher or a group of teachers, they should contact the Teacher directly (school email is preferred) to arrange an appointment with the particular person or persons. Far more can be accomplished when records and grades are available. Therefore, parents should refrain from calling a teacher at his/her home to discuss school business or concerns. Whenever a parent wishes to visit while school is in session, he/she should first make arrangements with the MVMS Main Office. Students are not permitted to bring friends from other schools at any time. All visitors must sign in through the Lobby Guard system at the main office upon entering the school.

## **Parent Organizations**

Parents are encouraged to become active in the middle school's Parent Teacher Organization. The P.T.O. meets four times during the school year. The MVMS PTO is a parent volunteer organization established to assist the middle school teachers through donation of individual's time and resources.

The MVMS PTO Board is made up of the following people: the MVMS Principal, a Teacher Representative, Co-Presidents (2), Co-Vice-Presidents (2), Co-Secretaries (2), Co-Treasurers (2), Volunteer Coordinators (2), Hospitality Coordinators (2), Members-at-Large (3) and the Marauder Wear Coordinator (1).

The MVMS PTO is responsible for assisting in Back-to-School registration, the Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser, PTO sponsored dances and Marauder Wear Sales. The goal of these activities and the PTO is to generate monies to benefit MVMS teachers and students. All monies that are raised are given back to the school thru a process called the Ways & Means Teacher Grant Program.

All MVMS teachers are given the opportunity to complete a form requesting special items that would be beneficial in the classroom. Those teachers who complete the grant form present their request before the MVMS PTO board in the fall at the Ways and Means meeting. Depending on the MVMS PTO funds available, the board then evaluates how to best allocate the funds for the maximum benefit to the students and teachers.

## **Parent Participation Policy**

A parent/guardian/custodian of a dependent student shall be required to participate in any disciplinary action authorized under the Student Due Process code, IC 20-8.1-5.1, as well as the student discipline handbook of this Corporation, at the discretion of and upon proper notice by a school official. Parent participation includes, but is not limited to, meetings, conferences, hearings, supervising after-school study time, reviewing homework, and ensuring regular attendance and attendance after school if necessary. When a school official deems it necessary to require parent participation to resolve a behavioral problem of a student, the parent shall be notified by written or telephone contact by a school official in advance of the meeting, conference, or hearing.

Upon receipt of proper notice, any parent, guardian, or custodian who fails to comply with the requirements of a school

official to participate in the resolution of behavioral problems of a student whose conduct is repeatedly disruptive to the student's own educational progress or the progress of others may be referred to the Hancock County Office of Family and Children and the child may be considered to be a "child in need of services" in accordance with IC 31-6-4-2(a)(7). The parent, guardian, or custodian may also be referred to the Hancock County Probation Department or the Hancock County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

### **Policy Notification Statement on Nondiscrimination**

It is the policy of Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap in its educational programs or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act (IC 22-9-1), IC 20-8.1-2, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Educational Amendments), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent  
Mt. Vernon Community School  
1806 W. State Road #234  
Fortville, IN 46040

### **Restrooms**

Restroom facilities are available before and after school, during the breaks between classes, and at lunchtime. Students absolutely needing to use the restrooms during classes must have a permission pass from the teacher. It is expected that restrooms will be kept clean. Students may not remain in the restrooms during class time. If this occurs, disciplinary action for skipping class will occur.

### **Response to Instruction (RtI)**

MVCSC is committed to providing high quality instruction to all students; therefore, we utilize a general education initiative called **Response to Instruction**. **RtI** represents a systematic method for evaluating the needs of all students and for fostering positive student outcomes through carefully selected and implemented interventions. **RtI** is a framework that is to be used for every student in a school, from the low achieving to the high performing students, and everyone in between. This implies that high achieving students may be "at risk" by not reaching their full potential in a particular area.

Thus, "at risk" is not a terminology that is used solely with students who are considered to be low performers; rather it is a term that may be applicable to any student.

The IDOE (2009) defines all learners to include; low incidence students, high ability students, minority students, English language learners, children of poverty, students who may be disproportionately placed in special education, as well as those students who do not hold unique characteristics and perform at grade level in the regular classroom.

### **School Closing Information**

All families enrolled in the Emergency Alert System will receive a telephone message stating school closing, delay, or postponement information about all school activities. All school closing information will be provided to our officially designated radio and television stations. The stations are: WIBC (93.1 FM), WLHK (97.1 FM), WFMS (95.5 FM), WZPL (99.5 FM), WISH-TV (CBS), WRTV-TV (ABC), WTHR-TV (NBC), WXIN-TV (FOX), and HCTV.

## Seclusion and Restraint with Students

**Seclusion and restraint are to be used only:**

- 1) as a last resort safety procedure employed after another, less restrictive procedure has been implemented without success; and
- 2) when there is an imminent risk of injury to the student, other students, school employees, or visitors to the school.

**“Physical restraint”** means physical contact between a school employee and a student in which the student unwillingly participates and that involves the use of a manual hold to restrict freedom of movement of all or a part of a student’s body or to restrict normal access to the student’s body. **The term does not include:**

- 1) briefly holding a student without undue force in order to calm or comfort the student or to prevent unsafe behavior, such as running into traffic or engaging in a physical altercation;
- 2) physical escort; or
- 3) physical contact intended to gently assist or prompt a student in performing a task or to guide or assist a student from one (1) area to another.

**“Seclusion”** means the confinement of a student alone or in a room or area from which the student physically is prevented from leaving. The term does not include a supervised time-out or scheduled break, as described in a student’s individualized education program, in which an adult is continuously present in the room with the student.

A student will not be subject to seclusion or restraint unless the student’s behavior poses an imminent risk of injury to the student or others. However, significant violations of the law, including assaults on students and staff, will be reported to the police. As soon as possible after any use of seclusion or restraint, the student’s parent or guardian will be informed and provided with a detailed account of the incident, including the circumstances that led to the use of seclusion or restraint.

## Skyward Family Access

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has the **Skyward Family Access** online system. **Skyward Family Access** allows students’ families the ability to access important information about their student directly from a computer—anytime, anywhere. Parents and students can view grades, class schedules, and attendance records. PIN slips are mailed after the beginning of each school year. Lost PIN slips can be requested by calling each school’s main office. PIN numbers will not be given over the phone. PIN numbers do not change from year to year.

## Speech Program

Our school has a speech-language pathologist (SLP), through Hancock Madison Shelby Educational Services, who identifies and provides intervention services for students with speech and/or language impairments. The SLP works with students with difficulties in areas of articulation, voice, fluency/stuttering, language comprehension, and/or oral expression. The SLP also completes hearing screenings for all 7th graders, students new to our school district, and also any students referred by their teacher or parent. If you do not wish for your child’s hearing to be screened, please provide a written statement to the school nurse.

## Student Activities

All student activities must be sanctioned by the administration of the school and must be under the direct supervision of the administration and/or faculty of Mt. Vernon Middle School. The listed activities are school sanctioned activities at Mt. Vernon Middle School. In the past, MVMS has offered the following clubs (see below) and participation was a factor of student interest, parent support and staff participation. Club offerings for 2023-2024 will be determined on an

as needed basis culled from student interest. Financial obligations for some of these activities will be based on parental support.

Academic Bowl—Social	Jazz/Pep Band	Girls Soccer
Studies, Math, Language Arts,	Newspaper Club	Boys Basketball
and Science	Spell Bowl	Girls Basketball
Student Council	Gold Intensity Dance	Wrestling
Robo-Tech Club	Team Cheerleading	Boys Swimming & Diving
National Jr. Honor Society	Marauder Movement	Girls Swimming & Diving
FCCLA	Science Club	Baseball
Game Club	Talent Show	Softball
Geography Bee	Football	Co-Ed Golf
Spelling Bee	Volleyball	Boys Track & Field
Flag Corp/Color Guard	Boys Cross Country	Girls Track & Field
Art Club	Girls Cross Country	Boys Tennis
Chess Club	Boys Soccer	Girls Tennis

Students may be excluded from student activities at the discretion of the supervisor in charge. Eligibility for student activities shall be based on the extracurricular report system.

Student athlete guidelines are governed by the athletic department. Guidelines covering eligibility are addressed in the Student Athlete Guidelines section of this handbook.

### **Student Drop-Off & Pick Up**

MVMS Parents or Parent designees who bring their child to school or pick them up at the end of the day should not use the drive in front of the middle school when buses are present. Parents are expected to drop their 6th or 7th grade students off at the north side of the school building using the football parking lot. Students may then enter the building at Door #19 on the north side. Parents picking up their 6th or 7th grade child in the afternoon should park in the north lot in anticipation of student dismissal.

8th grade Parents who are dropping their student(s) off in the morning need to drop off at the West Lot by the Field House. Students may enter at Door #8. Parent pick-up for their 8th grader in the afternoon is also located via the West Lot. All younger siblings in 6th or 7th grade will follow the 8th grade sibling to the designated drop off and pick up locations.

### **Student Fundraising**

The School Board acknowledges that the solicitation of funds by or from students must be limited since compulsory attendance laws make the student a captive donor and may also disrupt the program of the school. For purposes of this policy, “student fundraising” shall include the solicitation and collection of money by or from students for any purpose and shall include the collection of money in exchange for tickets, papers, or any other goods or services for approved student activities.

The Board will permit student fundraising by students in school, on school property, or at any school-sponsored event when the profit from this is to be used for school purposes or for an activity connected with the schools. Fundraising by

approved school organizations, those whose funds are managed by the Corporation may be permitted in school by the principal. Such fundraising off school grounds may be permitted by the Superintendent. Fundraising by students on behalf of the school-related organization whose funds are not managed by the Corporation may not be permitted on the school grounds by the Superintendent.

In accordance with IC 4-32-9-34, no student under the age of eighteen (18) may play, participate in, or sell tickets for any of the following types of fundraising events: bingo games, charity game nights, raffles, door prizes, fundraising festivals, activities related to pull-tabs, punch boards, tip boards, and the like. All other fundraising shall be done in accordance with Board Policy F225.

## **Textbooks, Chromebooks, Workbooks, and Fees**

All classroom textbooks and chromebooks are the property of Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and on a rental plan. Fee statements for book rental, lab fees, chromebooks, and workbooks will be available by the first day of school and payment will be due by the end of September. You may pay by cash, check, or credit card in the school office or you may pay with credit card online through the corporation website above the Skyward link by the Parents Resources Tab. Payment options are available for those who cannot pay in full. Contact the school treasurer to discuss the payment options. Parents who fail to make full payment by the due date or make arrangements for a payment plan will be notified regarding their failure to comply.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has engaged Kinum ([www.kinum.com](http://www.kinum.com)) to assist us with the collection of book rental fees that we do not receive and for which payment plans have not been arranged. The measures Kinum may take include, but are not limited to; mailing of notification letters of overdue fees, action in small claims court and reporting to credit rating agencies.

The classroom teacher will issue textbooks to students on the first day of school. Lab fees are charged in those classes where school furnished supplies are used. Workbooks are consumable and, therefore, purchased outright by the student. Students are expected to maintain reasonable care and upkeep of their textbooks. Damaged or lost books should be reported to the main office immediately. Students will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost or damaged textbooks and chromebooks. Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation offers a protection plan for chromebooks. The protection plan must be paid in full prior to the coverage being effective. Students withdrawing during the school year must turn in all rental books and chromebooks to the main office before a refund can be determined.

Parents are financially responsible for book rental fees and student activity fees, and any other charges the school may assess for, but not limited to, lost books, cafeteria fees, library books, extracurricular activities, fund raising, and tuition. Parents are also responsible for all reasonable costs of the collection of their account, which may include, but not limited to; late fees, client collection fees, collection agency fees, reasonable attorney fees, and court costs on any outstanding balances.

## **Vehicle Idling Policy**

Indiana Indoor Air Quality rule IAC 33-4-3 requires every school to limit all public and private vehicle emissions that might be brought into school buildings. Limiting emissions will improve the health of students and staff through reduced exposure to these emissions. Therefore our school has signs posted to denote that idling is prohibited around the school. Drivers of vehicles are to turn off the engine to their vehicle if it is to be stopped more than five (5) minutes around the school. Any complaint of non-compliance needs to be filed with the Superintendent's office. Non-compliance will be reviewed and action taken as necessary.

# **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

## **Student/Teacher Expectation Plan (STEP)**

Mt. Vernon Middle School maintains high expectations of its students. All Staff Members of MVMS expect our students to follow school rules, to be self-disciplined, respectful, and well behaved. Students who fail to meet these expectations will receive consequences. The STEP Program is a comprehensive review of all a student's classes, in order to promote positive student behavior in all his/her classes. The below STEP consequences start over each nine week grading period.

A consequence is given to students who have repeated classroom infractions. Infractions could include, but, are not limited to: displaying disruptive behavior, causing a disruption to the learning environment, insubordination, disregarding classroom rules, failure to bring adequate materials to class, having gum or candy or an unauthorized beverages or food in class, lying or cheating or plagiarism, being disrespectful, or refusing to cooperate with school policy. The consequences are sequential and cumulative in nature of all a student's classes and are listed below. Students will receive STEP notices for each infraction and the consequences given for STEP 1 through STEP 5. These consequences are assigned by individual teachers; if a student has multiple infractions from several different teachers then a more serious consequence could be assigned. Teachers have the authority to assign before or after-school detentions.

STEP 1 = Student Conference with Teacher(s) \*Warning given by Teacher. Teacher(s) contact Parents.

STEP 2 = Student conference with either the Life Coach or Counselor. Life Coach and/or Counselor contact parents.

STEP 3 = The student is assigned 1 Before or After-School Detention by the Teacher. Teacher(s) contact parents.

STEP 4 = Administrator assigns disciplinary consequence. The student may be assigned consequences including before/after school detention, assigned to the Life Coach for a designated time, Saturday School, In-School Suspension, or Out-of-School Suspension. Administration contacts Parents.

STEP 5 = Administrator assigns disciplinary consequence. Administration contacts parents.

STEP 5 and beyond consequences may include parent conference, after school detention, assigned to the Life Coach for a designated time, Saturday School, In-School Suspension, Out-of-School, or Expulsion as determined by the MVMS Administration.

\*Major student offenses will result in automatic office referral and disciplinary action.

MVMS Life Coach Credit Recovery Interventions - Students with significant missing assignments may be referred to the MVMS Life Coach for homework credit recovery, support, and motivational interventions as deemed appropriate by the Teacher(s) and MVMS Life Coach. For example, a student with significant missing assignments may be referred to the MVMS Life Coach for a designated period of time to receive credit on assignments as deemed appropriate by the Teacher(s) and MVMS Life Coach. The Teacher or group of Teachers will notify the Parent(s) of the student being referred to the MVMS Life Coach.

# MVMS Discipline Guidelines

## Examples of Automatic Referrals to Office

- Fighting and/or (major horseplay)
- Inappropriate touching of others (Inappropriate sexual contact)
- Vulgar or profane language
- Vandalism - damaging school or private property
- Major Disrespect and Defiance with staff members
- Bullying, harassment, intimidation towards others
- Use or possession of tobacco, tobacco like, and drug/alcohol products and paraphernalia
- Skipping Class/Truancy
- Gambling
- Major violations of technology guidelines
- Possession of firearms and weapons
- Threats made to school, students, or staff
- Theft

## Examples of S.T.E.P. Process Offenses


- Making noise or other disturbances that impede learning.
- Repeated refusals to work and stay engaged in class (sleeping)
- Minor violations of technology guidelines
- Violation of proper dress code
- Lying, cheating, and/or plagiarism
- Minor hallway and restroom behavior
- Poor behavior for a sub
- Disregard to classroom rules and expectations
- Minor horseplay
- Food or drink in hallway, locker, classroom
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Step 4 - complete referral to office


## Daily Student Responsibilities


- Classroom supplies
- Complete all/or any missing assignments (homework policy)
- Make-up work (grade level consistency)
- Organization and time management
- No Food or Gum (habitual offenders step for Defiance)
- No personal hygiene items that disrupt classroom learning
- Follow all classroom rules and expectations
- Chromebook charged daily





# School Wide Expectations


Successful Marauders	Arrival / Dismissal Expectations
<u>READY</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be sure all your belongings are in your locker.</li> <li>✓ Be prepared with <u>all</u> materials for your class.</li> <li>✓ Remove all headgear upon entering the school.</li> <li>✓ Arrive on time.</li> <li>✓ Go directly to your destination.</li> <li>✓ Keep moving and walk directly to class.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be on time to class and the buses.</li> <li>✓ Arrive at school in compliance with school dress code.</li> <li>✓ Wipe your shoes when entering the building.</li> <li>✓ Be cautious of slick floors with snow or rain.</li> <li>✓ Think about and be prepared to make good choices when entering the building.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be polite to <b>EVERYONE</b>.</li> <li>✓ Cooperate with <b>EVERYONE</b>.</li> <li>✓ Respect others' personal space and property.</li> <li>✓ Keep your hands to yourself.</li> <li>✓ Keep your voice down.</li> </ul>


Successful Marauders	Cafeteria Expectations
<u>READY</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Follow the lunch room supervisor's instructions.</li> <li>✓ Bring your ID card.</li> <li>✓ Arrive on time.</li> <li>✓ Be seated after getting your food.</li> <li>✓ Raise your hand for permission to move.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All food stays on top of your tray when paying.</li> <li>✓ Clean up after yourself.</li> <li>✓ Stay seated at your table unless you have permission.</li> <li>✓ No throwing of food.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quietly wait your turn in line.</li> <li>✓ Do not cut others in line.</li> <li>✓ Keep your voice level low.</li> <li>✓ Throw away all your trash.</li> <li>✓ Sit at a table with respectful students.</li> </ul>


Successful Marauders	Bus Expectations
<u>READY</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be on time to your bus stop.</li> <li>✓ Be ready when your bus arrives.</li> <li>✓ Know how to exit the bus in an emergency.</li> <li>✓ Listen and follow all instructions from your driver.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Obey all safety and bus rules.</li> <li>✓ Keep the bus clean.</li> <li>✓ Report any unsafe or inappropriate behavior to the bus driver.</li> <li>✓ Stay in your seat at all times.</li> <li>✓ Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Keep your voice level low.</li> <li>✓ Keep hands, arms, head and all belongings inside the bus.</li> <li>✓ Be courteous to the bus driver and others.</li> <li>✓ Sit in your assigned seat.</li> <li>✓ Use appropriate language.</li> <li>✓ Report any unsafe or inappropriate behavior to the bus driver.</li> <li>✓ Stay in your seat at all times.</li> <li>✓ Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</li> </ul>

Successful Marauders	Classroom Expectations
<u>READY</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Arrive on time to class.</li> <li>✓ Have all materials needed to complete work.</li> <li>✓ Be ready to work.</li> <li>✓ Bring assignments to class.</li> <li>✓ Take an active and positive role in class.</li> <li>✓ Believe success is possible.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Know and follow all classroom rules.</li> <li>✓ Accept positive and negative consequences.</li> <li>✓ Charge your chromebook daily.</li> <li>✓ Turn in assignments that are due on time.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Follow and respond appropriately to your teacher and guest teacher.</li> <li>✓ Clean up your space.</li> <li>✓ Work quietly when others are working</li> <li>✓ Have positive communication at all times with your teacher and classmates.</li> <li>✓ Stay in your own space.</li> </ul>

Successful Marauders	Clinic / Nurse's Office Expectations
<u>READY</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Have a signed pass to the nurse.</li> <li>✓ Show the pass to the nurse.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wait quietly for your turn with the nurse.</li> <li>✓ Be honest with the nurse about your wellness.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Honor the health privacy of others.</li> <li>✓ Be concerned with only your medical condition.</li> <li>✓ Stay in the clinic area until directed to go back to class.</li> <li>✓ The nurse will determine whether you stay at school or go home.</li> </ul>

Successful Marauders	Hallway Expectations
<u>READY</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Please have a signed official pass.</li> <li>✓ Respond appropriately to adult directions.</li> <li>✓ Walk on the right side of the hallway.</li> <li>✓ Only use your locker.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Go directly to your destination.</li> <li>✓ Follow school rules.</li> <li>✓ Walk and talk, don't congregate.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use appropriate language and volume.</li> <li>✓ Respect other's personal space and property.</li> <li>✓ Walk</li> <li>✓ Keep your hands to yourself.</li> <li>✓ Be quiet while other students are learning.</li> </ul>

Successful Marauders	Parent / Visitors Expectations
<u>READY</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check in at the main office.</li> <li>✓ Have ID ready and available.</li> <li>✓ Have student information ready and available.</li> <li>✓ Have a question – please ask.</li> <li>✓ Make sure your students' demographic information is updated with correct information.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make sure the outside door latches on the way out of the building.</li> <li>✓ Check in at the main office / Sign in.</li> <li>✓ Pick up a “visitors” badge.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use appropriate language and actions.</li> <li>✓ Be considerate of the teacher's instructional time.</li> <li>✓ Contact the teacher before or after school to make an appointment – 24 hours in advance.</li> </ul>

Successful Marauders	Restroom Expectations
<u>READY</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Go to the restroom and return promptly.</li> <li>✓ Get in, get out.</li> <li>✓ No horseplay allowed.</li> <li>✓ Follow hallway expectations upon entering and exiting the restroom.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPONSIBLE</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Place all trash in the trash cans; do not throw your trash.</li> <li>✓ Use proper restroom hygiene / wash your hands.</li> <li>✓ Clean-up after yourself.</li> <li>✓ Take pride in school property / No vandalism.</li> <li>✓ Always flush when finished.</li> </ul>
<u>RESPECTFUL</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Have a positive response to adult directions.</li> <li>✓ Use appropriate language and volume.</li> <li>✓ Respect others' personal space and property.</li> <li>✓ Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</li> <li>✓ Be positive, kind, and respectful to others.</li> </ul>

## Student Dress Code and Appearance

Mt. Vernon Middle School students are expected to dress in clean, neat clothes **to, during, and from school**, which will not detract from the learning experience. Students are expected to adhere to health and safety standards in their mode of dress. No student, while at school or at any school function, whether or not on school premises, shall dress or appear in such fashions as to substantially interfere with a teacher's ability to conduct a class or activity or disrupt or detract from the learning experience, or draw undue attention from other students, or the faculty, or disrupt the normal school routine.

Failure to dress appropriately may result in a discipline referral being received. **Absences resulting from dress code violations are unexcused.** If there is **doubt about the appropriateness of a garment, it should not be worn.**

The following are examples of clothing or items that are **inappropriate** for the school environment:

1. Clothing with objectionable, offensive, obscene, or indecent language or drawings may not be worn. Clothing which is found to degrade, discriminate, and/or disrespect any individual or group is prohibited.
2. Clothing and accessories which advertise or promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex, and/or depict violence may not be worn. (i.e. Playboy Bunny, jewelry with drug paraphernalia, t-shirts advertising alcohol).
3. Oversized pants or pants with excessively large pockets are considered inappropriate for school purposes and present an opportunity to conceal contraband; therefore, they will not be allowed. Pants will be worn at the waistline, regardless of length of the shirt. Pants are expected to be worn with a belt if necessary to keep pants at an appropriate level. No holes that are considered inappropriate.
4. Shorts, Capri's, skirts, and dresses, including the peak of a slit on a slit skirt, must extend to mid thigh. All others are considered too short. Leggings (not tights) may be worn under shorter skirts.
5. All tops must cover the chest area. Garments with plunging or revealing necklines may not be worn.
6. Shoulders must be completely covered with fabric. Tank-tops, spaghetti straps, strapless tops, off-shoulder tops, halter tops may not be worn.
7. Clothing which reveals undergarments or the lack of undergarments will be considered inappropriate. Clothing revealing a bare midriff is not to be worn. Shirts, tops, and bottoms must be worn in such a manner as to not reveal bare skin or undergarments while performing normal school activities such as sitting, walking, raising one's hand/arm, etc.
8. Clothing which is torn, ripped, or altered in such a manner as to be revealing or a safety issue may not be worn. No pants may be worn that are torn, ripped or have holes above the knee.
9. Hats, hoods or other head coverings, such as bandanas, headbands, may not be worn inside the school building. Hats are to be kept in lockers during the day.
10. Coats may not be worn during school hours unless authorized by the main office.
11. Hooded sweatshirts are permitted to be worn during the school day. The hood shall not be worn on the student's head at any time. Wearing the hood will result in the student having the sweatshirt confiscated and a parent will be required to pick up the sweatshirt from the main office.

The above noted applies at school, on school grounds, and at school functions on or off school grounds. Repeated acts of inappropriate clothing at school will require a parent to bring properly fitting clothing to school, the student being given detention, Saturday school, In-school suspension, or a recommendation for Out-of-school suspension.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs**

Students under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs are not capable of achieving at a high level which all stakeholders expect of students at Mt. Vernon Middle School. Therefore, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has established a firm policy with regards to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Students either in possession, using, transmitting, selling, or under the influence of alcohol, tobacco/nicotine, THC at any level, and/or drugs, or substances represented to be alcohol, tobacco, or drugs will be subject to expulsion and arrest. This policy applies to students who are caught on school grounds before, during, or after school, and at school-sponsored activities on or off school property. For further clarification, see School Board Policy C450.

Recognizing that alcohol and drug usage may occur with some Mt. Vernon Middle School students, and that some students want to break their ties to alcohol and drug dependence, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will assist students who voluntarily seek help. The assistance provided may include school counseling and/or referrals to outside agencies. Confidentiality in these matters will be of the utmost importance. Students who voluntarily seek help will not be penalized by the school, provided school policies regarding possession or usage on school grounds are not violated (see School Board Policy C450). Students seeking help can do so by discussing the matter with a classroom teacher, a school guidance counselor, or the school administration.

Student use of tobacco violates several sound principles that the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation supports. First, it is against school and Corporation policies and Indiana Law. Second, smoking in the school building violates state and local fire ordinances. Third, the use of tobacco is contrary to health and safety practices taught in the classroom.

Students caught using and/or in possession of tobacco/nicotine and/or tobacco products will be subject to suspension and a citation from a law enforcement officer for underage possession of tobacco. Repeated violations will result in a recommendation for expulsion. This policy applies to students who are caught on school property before, during, or after school, and at school-sponsored activities on or off school property.



# UNDERSTANDING ABSENCES

EXCUSED VS. PARENT/GUARDIAN VERIFIED VS. UNEXCUSED

EXCUSED	PARENT/GUARDIAN VERIFIED	UNEXCUSED
 <p><b>EXCUSED</b></p> <p>Parent/Guardian Notifies School</p> <p>Excused Absence Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness verified with a physician's statement</li> <li>• Page for General Assembly</li> <li>• Election Day Worker</li> <li>• Court Witness</li> <li>• IN National Guard Active Duty</li> <li>• Civil Air Patrol</li> <li>• Educationally related non-classroom activity as defined in I.C.20-33-2-17.5</li> <li>• Professional appointments (medical, dental, legal) Student must return immediately with authorized statement.</li> <li>• Death in family</li> <li>• Observation of bona fide religious holiday</li> <li>• Maternity</li> <li>• Military connected families' absences related to deployment/return</li> <li>• Exhibiting/participating in state fair</li> <li>• School sends child home sick (if due to fever, the following day will also be excused)</li> <li>• Other good cause must be approved by Supt. or designee.</li> </ul> <p> <b>USAGE</b> These excused days do not count towards the 10 parent/guardian verified days</p> <p><b>REPERCUSSIONS</b> None but all absences are monitored</p>	 <p><b>PARENT/GUARDIAN VERIFIED</b></p> <p>A Parent/Guardian Verified absence is defined as a parent/guardian's choice to keep their child home for the child's own best interest. Up to 10 days are allowed. Examples can include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child is ill/not well for one or two days, but does not need to go to the doctor yet. (Three consecutive days requires an excused doctor's note.)</li> </ul> <p> <b>USAGE</b> MVCSC recognizes parents/guardians may use some/many of their 10 days for their child's absences at their discretion. Parents/guardians need to notify the school.</p> <p><b>REPERCUSSIONS</b> A student can have up to 10 Parent/Guardian Verified absences without penalty.</p> <p>Friendly reminder notification letters are sent to parents/guardians after using 5, 8 &amp; 10 Parent/Guardian Verified days.</p>	 <p><b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCE</b></p> <p>An Unexcused Absence is defined as any absence not covered under the definition of excused absence or an exception to compulsory attendance. An out-of-school suspension is not to be considered an unexcused absence. Examples could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any non-verified absence (parent/guardian does not notify school and child is absent).</li> <li>• The 11th absence (not included in the excused list) and beyond are considered unexcused absences.</li> </ul> <p> <b>USAGE</b> Students should have zero Unexcused &amp; Unverified Absences</p> <p><b>REPERCUSSIONS</b> All absences are monitored and disciplinary action may result. Excessive absences will result in MVCSC contacting the Dept. of Child Services and/or probation.</p>

**\*\*Please note that the policies of Mt. Vernon High School and the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation are subject to change due to the requirements dictated by the State of Indiana and/or the Indiana Department of Education**

# **Mt. Vernon Middle School**

## **2023-2024 Student Handbook**

### **Attendance Information**

One of the cornerstones of a successful education is the development of regular school attendance patterns. Every absence whether excused or not is a day lost in the classroom that can never be recovered. While make-up assignments may be completed, the dialogue between the teacher and the students can never be effectively duplicated.

The State of Indiana places education at the top of its priorities, and the Indiana Compulsory Attendance Law requires students to attend school regularly. MVCSC will use every reasonable measure to assist students in developing positive attendance habits. While the responsibility for a student being present in school rests with the student and his/her parents, the school will assist the parents and students in this responsibility. This cooperation between the student, parents, and the school is essential in providing the fundamental foundation of regular school attendance.

### **Reporting an Absence**

If a student is going to be absent from the school for the day, parents/guardians have the responsibility to notify the attendance secretary daily by 10:00 am with verification of the absence. Documentation of absences must be received within a day of the absence to be parent verified. An illness of three days or longer will require doctor verification for the entire absence to be excused. Students who have been absent due to illness should not return to school until they are “fever free” for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol.

Parents should keep phone numbers updated in Skyward. Parents will receive a notification from Skyward when an attendance record is entered.

**Contact the MVMS attendance secretary at 317-485-3160.**

### **Medical Appointments**

Parents are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, and clinical appointments for their students outside of school hours whenever possible. The following procedure will be followed for students who are excused for appointments.



The parent should call the attendance office (317-485-3160) and give their name, student name, and student grade level, the doctor's name, and the time and date of the appointment.

The student must obtain a pass to leave school and sign out in the attendance office when leaving. The student must sign in when returning to school from an appointment and present an appointment card or statement from the doctor's office.

Medical appointments are considered valid reasons for a student to miss school provided that only time needed for the appointment is used.

**In no case are students to be responsible for taking siblings to medical appointments.**

### **Leaving School Due to Illness**

**Students who leave school due to illness must check out through the Health Room.** Students who contact their parents and go home without checking out through the Health Room or Attendance Office may have their absences declared unexcused.

### **Returning to School**

Students are required to work with their classroom teachers to complete missed assignments and tests. Students will be allowed one day to complete missed work for every one day of absence, excluding pre-arranged absences. This policy may be modified due to extreme circumstances regarding the nature of the absence.

### **Pre-Arranged Absence Policy**

When a student is going to be out of school for a family trip, he/she must have a parent contact the school and turn in a completed Pre-Arranged Absence form to the school. Under normal circumstances the contact must be at least two days in advance of the absence. A one week notice is preferred. Final approval of the absence will be determined by the principal/designee. The student will be responsible for requesting make-up assignments. If no student or parent contact is made prior to the absence, the absence will be unexcused. All make-up work missed is due the day the student returns from the absence. All pre-arranged absences will count toward the 10 day absence limit.

No pre-arranged absences for a family trip will be granted during the last five days of any nine-week grading period, during state mandated testing, when a student has accumulated ten (10) or more absences in a school year, or when the requested day(s) would exceed that number. Any days in excess of this or the ten (10) days will be considered unexcused absences. The student must be accompanied on the trip by a parent/guardian or grandparent. Pre-arranged absence days may not be taken during snow make-up days, and any student who has an unexcused absence is not eligible for these days. A separate application must be filed for each student. If you have not received a response from the building principal or the principal's designee within five (5) days of filing this application, please contact the principal/designee. The principal's determination is final.

## College Visitation and Higher Education Days

The purpose of higher education days is to allow students to visit universities, colleges, technical schools, or other institutions of higher learning. Each junior and senior is allowed (2) higher education days per year. All other college visitation days will count toward the attendance limit.

No higher education days will be allowed the last week of a grading period. Students wishing to take a Higher education day should go to the attendance office for a HED day permission slip and a class release form. These forms must be completed and returned at least two days before the scheduled HED day. Acceptable verification is defined as any notice showing a signature of a member of the admission department (e.g. counselor, professor, tour guide). Special consideration for approval, modification, or denial of a HED day request may be made by the school administrator.

The two (2) higher education and college visit days will not count toward the 10 day absent limit as they are excused (and/or exempt) absences by state statute.

## Absences

All students absent from school will be classified as follows:

### Excused Absence

Excused absences do not count towards the 10 day absent limit. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Illness or injury verified with a physician's statement
- Serve as a page for General Assembly
- Election Day worker
- Court witness
- IN National Guard Active Duty
- Educationally related non-classroom activity as defined in IC 20-33-2-17.5
- Professional appointments (medical, dental, legal). Students must return immediately with authorized statement.
- Death in family
- Observation of bona fide religious holiday
- Maternity
- Military connected families' absences related to deployment/return
- Exhibiting and/or participating in the state fair
- Higher education or college visits (see above procedures)
- Other good cause must be approved by Superintendent or designee

### Parent/Guardian Verified Absence

A parent/guardian verified absence is defined as a parent/guardian's choice to keep their child home for the child's own best interest. Up to 10 days are allowed. Examples can include, but are not limited to:

- Child is ill/not well for one or two days, but does not need to go to the doctor yet (Three consecutive days requires an excused doctor's note).

### Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence is defined as any absence not covered under the definition of excused absence or an exception to compulsory attendance. An out-of-school suspension is not to be considered an unexcused absence.

- Any non-verified absence (parent/guardian does not notify school, and child is absent)
- The 11th absence (not included in the excused list) and beyond are considered unexcused absences.

Students who leave the building during the school day without permission from either a school nurse and/or administrator/designee before leaving school will receive an unexcused absence and may receive a consequence. (Students who leave school due to illness must check out through the health room).

### Habitual Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism

Indiana Compulsory Attendance Code 20-20-8-8:

IC 20-20-8-8 defines any student absent with 10 or more unexcused absences as habitual truancy and any student missing 10% or more of the school year as chronic absenteeism. A child who is habitually absent is chronically absent by having 10 or more unexcused absences in one school year.

### Habitual Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism Guidelines and Procedures

- Students who have accumulated 10 or more Parent/Guardian Verified or unexcused absences could be subject to Indiana compulsory attendance law.

### Attendance Policy and Interventions

All students will adhere to the MVCSC secondary attendance policy.

Offense	# of PV, V, UE Absences	Attendance Policy with Interventions
1st Offense	Day 5	Warning Letter with Notification of Policy
2nd Offense	Day 8	Letter #2 and Phone Call Home
3rd Offense	Day 10	Letter #3 and Attendance Contract
4th Offense	Day 11+	Referral to Probation Possible Home Visit

### Tardiness

The purpose of the tardy policy is to promote student responsibility and career readiness skills. Students who know they will be late should have parents call the school in advance.

## **Tardy to School**

Students who are tardy to their first class during the school day will be counted as tardy. Continued tardiness may result in additional consequences: Detention, Saturday School, In-School Suspension, and/or Out of School Suspension.

## **Tardy to Class**

Students who are not in class and do not have an excused pass and are tardy to class three times in a quarter will earn a detention from their teacher. Continued tardiness may result in additional consequences: Detention, Saturday School, In-School Suspension, and/or Out of School Suspension.

## **Activity Participation**

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities, contests, events, rehearsals, meetings, practices or after-school functions, including employment, unless the student attends at least half of the school day, unless the absence is exempt by state statute. If a student is serving an Out-of-School Suspension or an In-School Suspension for a full day, they are not eligible to participate or attend any activity or practice. If the suspension falls on a Friday, the student is ineligible for the entire weekend.

## **eLearning Attendance Policy**

If the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has an extended period of eLearning for any reason, eLearning attendance policies will be shared with students and families.

## **General Transportation Information**

Students are expected to be waiting at their designated boarding station when the bus is to arrive. Bus drivers will strive to keep a consistent day-to-day schedule; however, snow or other circumstances beyond the driver's control may affect pick-up times. Drivers cannot be expected to wait for students. Parents are encouraged to contact Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Transportation Department (317-482-4123) or the bus driver if they know their child will not attend school or will not be riding the bus on a given day.

Students may only ride the bus in which they are assigned.

No one will be permitted on a school bus during normal daily bus routes other than students, authorized school personnel and law enforcement. Bus drivers are directed not to open their door to anyone else while the bus is on its route. Parents/guardians must call their student's school and request to talk to a bus driver, or they may call the driver at the number the bus driver has provided to them.

## **Bus Conduct Rules**

Safety in the transportation of our students is a paramount concern. Consequently, strict adherence to rules and procedures is expected from students aboard our buses at all times. A school bus is an educational setting and the grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in this handbook apply to discipline situations aboard buses and at bus stops as they do in a school's classrooms. Students may be suspended or expelled from school as a consequence of their behavior aboard a bus or at a bus stop. In addition, Indiana Code provided that upon the recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities may deny the privilege of riding a bus to any pupil whose behavior so warrants.

The following sequences of events may be expected by students who commit **minor infractions** of rules or acceptable standards of behavior while aboard a bus:

First Offense: Driver-student conference.

Second Offense: Referral to school administration. Referral to the school administration will result in a warning.

Third Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of one day.

Fourth Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of three days

Fifth Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of five days

Sixth Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

**Minor offenses** of student discipline aboard the buses include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Failing to stay seated properly while the bus is in motion.
2. Using loud, boisterous, or profane language.
3. Using hands, feet, or body in an objectionable or aggressive manner.
4. Possessing nuisance materials and objects such as radios, cell phones, electronic devices, toys, pets, balls, perfumes and colognes, aerosol containers, etc. Students may carry such objects and materials to and from school with the driver's permission, provided that the driver's instructions for doing so are followed closely.
5. Opening windows without permission.
6. Other violations of the school discipline code and rules of conduct, or laws of the State of Indiana.
7. Eating or drinking on the bus without the driver's permission.

The following sequence of events may be expected by students who commit **major infractions** of rules, or standards of acceptable behavior:

First Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of one day.

Second Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of three days

Third Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year

**Major offenses** of student discipline aboard buses include, but are not limited to:

1. Moving about the bus in any fashion that endangers themselves and/or other students.
2. Throwing any objects or placing any body part out of the window on the bus.
3. Opening emergency exits without reasonable cause and/or permission.
4. Fighting
5. Vandalism
6. Other violations of the school discipline code and rules of conduct, or the laws of the State of Indiana.
7. Possession of any hazardous materials on the bus. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the types of items: fingernail polish remover, hazardous chemicals of any kind, open cologne bottles, lighter fluid etc...

# **Student Code of Conduct**

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The student is responsible to the school for his/her actions from the time he/she leaves home in the morning until he/she returns home after school. Administrators and teachers are expected to maintain discipline since they stand in place of the parents during the school day. Observance of the laws of good citizenship shall be required of all Mt. Vernon Middle School students. Classroom aides, lunch aides and school bus drivers have the same authority as a classroom teacher.

The behavior and conduct of students attending Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation shall reflect the standards of good citizenship, high morality, self-discipline, and responsibility for one's own actions that should characterize all members of a democratic society. To this end, positive discipline is a necessary element and provides all students with a healthy learning environment. The Board of School Trustees of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has declared certain student misconduct as grounds for suspension or expulsion from school. Said misconduct shall include, but not be limited to the following acts:

## **SHOWING OF AFFECTION**

Attraction of middle school students is natural and will occur at Mt. Vernon Middle School. Unfortunately, there are times where students will act inappropriately with their feelings toward other students. It is because of this that students refrain from holding hands, hugging, or kissing at Mt. Vernon Middle School.

## **STUDENT HAZING**

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education believes that hazing activities are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in the school facilities, on school property, or at any Corporation-sponsored event. Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act for initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Administrators, faculty members, and other employees of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation shall be alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed by the discoverer of the prohibitions contained in this policy and shall be 36 ordered to end all hazing activities or planned activities immediately. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Students, faculty members, administrators, and other employees who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana.

## **HARASSMENT**

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education recognizes that a student has a right to learn in an environment that is untainted by any form of harassment or discrimination. Offensive conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with learning performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, discriminatory, or offensive learning environment disrupts the educational process and impedes the legitimate pedagogical concerns of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. The harassment of a student by a fellow student or staff member of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is strictly forbidden.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

This topic includes all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal contact, or physical contact of a

sexual nature. Other prohibited conduct includes that which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, discriminatory, or offensive learning environment on the basis of gender, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, and/or disability.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as overt, repeated acts/gestures including verbal or written communications transmitted; physical acts committed; or any behaviors committed by a student or a group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student. Because of this, no student shall bully another student on school grounds, immediately before, during, or after school hours, or at any time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or while using property or equipment provided by the school. Internet bullying (snapchat, instagram, texting, tiktok, etc.) will also be considered within the grounds of bullying at school. Many times this type of bullying is carried over into the school and may result in disciplinary action from the school. Indiana State Law requires all schools to follow strict guidelines dealing with bullying.

Possible disciplinary action for bullying include: A warning, parent notification by phone or letter, after school detention, Saturday School, suspension from school, and / or recommendation for expulsion from attendance at Mt. Vernon Middle School.

Note: All incidents are thoroughly investigated by the administrative staff to determine if the incident is verified. As a reminder school staff cannot share any information regarding discipline of another child with anyone other than his/her parent or Guardian.

## **STUDENT MISCONDUCT AND/OR SUBSTANTIAL DISOBEDIENCE**

**A. Student Misconduct and/or Substantial Disobedience-** The grounds for suspension and expulsion listed below apply when a student is on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group. These also apply if a student is off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or during summer school.

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this rule:
  - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
  - b. Blocking the entrances or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from use of the building, corridor, or room.
  - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
  - d. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or educational function, or any meeting or assembly on school property.
  - e. Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any other person to conduct or participate in an educational function.
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing, or attempting to steal school property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing, or attempting to steal private property.
4. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way that could reasonably cause physical injury to a person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person does not constitute a violation of this rule. Self-defense does not mean causing injury to the other person involved.
5. Threatening or intimidating any person for any purpose, including obtaining money, or anything of value from the student.

6. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
7. Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, is represented to be a weapon, or looks like a weapon. This includes toy guns, knives, or similar objects.
8. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, positive for THC at any level, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event. Prescribed use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this rule; however, the prescribed medication must be held in the Health Room along with the documentation. If prescription or over-the-counter medication is kept by students, all disciplinary action is in effect.
9. Possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, tobacco product, or intoxicant of any kind.
10. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, or any similar devices, including any products or substances used for these devices.
11. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by caffeine-based substances, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), or stimulants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription.
12. Engaging in the selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other persons or constitutes an interference with school purposes or any educational function.
13. Failing in any number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
14. Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or violating a school rule, and/or a state or federal law.
15. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
16. Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules or state or federal law.
17. Violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function, including but not limited to:
  - a. engaging in sexual behavior on school property;
  - b. disobedience of administrative authority;
  - c. willful absence or tardiness of students;
  - d. engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry or hair style, which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or offensive to school purposes;
  - e. failing to tell the truth about any matter under investigation by school personnel;
  - f. possessing or using a laser pointer or similar device.
18. Possessing or using an electronic device or cell phone in any situation on school grounds during school hours. This includes text messaging.
19. Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.

## **B. Possessing a Firearm**

1. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.



2. The following devices are considered to be a firearm under this rule:
- a. any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
  - b. the frame or receiver of any weapon described above;
  - c. any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
  - d. any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or similar device;
  - e. any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter;
  - f. any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled;
  - g. an antique firearm;
  - h. a rifle or a shotgun which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes;
  - i. a lighter or accelerant capable of causing harm to students, faculty, administration, or building.
3. The penalty for possession of a firearm will include law enforcement being notified. The student will receive a suspension up to ten days and recommendation for expulsion. The expulsion from school will be for a minimum of one year with the return of the student to occur at the beginning for the first semester after the one year period. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, may reduce the length of the expulsion if the circumstances warrant such reduction.
4. The Superintendent will notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

### **C. Possessing a Deadly Weapon**

1. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any deadly weapon on school property.
2. The following devices are considered to be deadly weapons as defined in IC 35-41-1-8: a weapon, taser, or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substance, or other material that in the manner it is used, or could be ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury.
3. The penalty for possession of a deadly weapon includes a suspension up to ten days and expulsion from school for a period of time up to one calendar year.
4. The Superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

### **D. Unlawful Activity**

A student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria which takes place during weekends, holidays, or other breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

### **E. Legal Settlement**

A student may be expelled if it is determined that the student's legal settlement is not in the attendance area of the school where the student is enrolled.

Repeated violations of these rules could result in expulsion from school. Students who are suspended (in-school or out-of-school) are excluded from participating in or attending all school activities on the day(s) that the suspension occurs.

For further clarification of student conduct, refer to Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education Policy 5000-Students.

## **POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS**

**CLASS EXCLUSION:** During class exclusion, a student is assigned to the office during a specific class for up to five days. While in the office, the student will complete class work assigned by the teacher. In addition, a Saturday School may be assigned for the behavior incident.

**Extra-Curricular Activity Exclusion:** Mt. Vernon Middle School provides many opportunities for student achievement and involvement in the educational process. Student involvement and participation in any extracurricular activity is a privilege. For any student to participate in any Extra-Curricular Activity, a student must be in good standing with Mt. Vernon Middle School in the areas of academics, attendance, and discipline. Extra-Curricular Activities include, but not limited to, any and all field trips (including the Washington D.C. field trip for 8th graders, the Cincinnati field trip for 7th graders, the Louisville field trip for 6th graders), attendance to any MVCSC athletic events, attendance to any MVCSC band or choir events, after-school dances, after-school club activities, MVMS Field Day, the 8th grade Recognition Ceremony, Awards Day Ceremonies, etc. Refunds on any extra-curricular activity may be denied by MVMS Administration. The decision of the MVMS Administration is final.

A student at Mt. Vernon Middle School may not be deemed in good standing with the school based upon the following criteria:

- Academics: 2 or more F's on current grades
- Attendance: 10 or more unexcused absences
- Discipline: Major disciplinary infractions that result in consequences of either out of school suspensions, in-school suspensions, and expulsions

**Chromebook Usage:** Students are expected to be prepared for learning activities at Mt. Vernon Middle School, this includes bringing a fully-charged chromebook each and every school day of the school year. Repeated occurrences of a student not being prepared for learning with his/her chromebook may result in a disciplinary consequence such as, but not limited to, a STEP notice, lunch detention, after-school detention, Saturday School, and possible in or out of school suspension. Failure for a student to return a spare chromebook from the school by the end of the school day may result in a disciplinary consequence.

**SOCIAL PROBATION:** Any student who has been involved in an infraction of school rules, or has been found to be in academic non-compliance, may be placed on Social Probation by the administrative staff, in addition to, or in lieu of, other disciplinary actions. Social Probation will be for a definite time period during which critical examination and evaluation of the student's progress should take place.

During the probation period, the student may be denied the privilege of participating in, or attendance at all extracurricular activities (including field trips). If the student is further involved in an infraction of school rules during the probationary period, he/she will be subject to whatever disciplinary action is set forth in the probationary agreement. The parent/guardian will be notified that the student is being placed on Social Probation including the length of the period, the terms of the probation, and the possible consequences of suspension/expulsion if the student is found in further violation of school rules.

**DETENTION:** Detention is used for relatively minor violations of school rules. Detention is a before or an after school study period. Students are supervised during detention by a teacher or administrator. Students are required to bring materials to read or study. Detentions are held on designated days. Before school detentions will last from 7:30 am until 8:30 am. After school detentions will last from 3:50 pm to 4:50 pm. Students assigned to detention must abide by the rules of the detention. Students who are disruptive or otherwise unable to abide by the detention rules will be assigned a

Saturday School. Failure by a student to serve a detention will result in the following:

First Offense - Student may be assigned 1 Day of In-School Suspension

2nd Offense and further offense may result in possible disciplinary consequences such as In-School Suspension, Out of School, and possible recommendation for expulsion to MVCSC Superintendent.

**SATURDAY SCHOOL:** The Saturday School program is offered by the school to keep students in school, and to provide study assistance and personal guidance. A staff member supervises Saturday School. Saturday School meets at Mt. Vernon High School from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. It should be clearly understood that students face immediate Out-of-School Suspension, for up to ten days, if they are guilty of any of the following:

1. Being tardy to Saturday School. The main entrance of the High School is locked promptly at 8:00 a.m.
2. Failure to attend Saturday School.
3. Misconduct during Saturday School.
4. Failure to come to Saturday School prepared with books and supplies.
5. Failure to complete assignments during Saturday School.

Repeated violations of Saturday School guidelines will result in a recommendation for expulsion.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** In-School Suspension was created as an alternative to Out-of-School Suspension. Students assigned to ISS may not participate in and/or attend any sports or extracurricular activities on the day(s) they are assigned. If a student is assigned to ISS, he/she is isolated from the rest of the student population. Assignments for the student are brought to the ISS room and are expected to be completed upon the return to the class. Students will receive full credit for any work completed in ISS. Middle School instructional aids and/or office personnel supervise ISS. If a student violates the rules of ISS, he/she may be suspended from school for up to ten days.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Out-of-School Suspension is used when a student is guilty of a major violation of school rules or when a student is guilty of repeated violations of school rules. Students suspended from attendance at Mt. Vernon Middle School are not permitted to participate in and/or attend any sport or extracurricular activity on the day(s) they are assigned.

**EXPULSION:** Expulsion is the removal of a student from school for a period exceeding ten days. An expulsion is usually for the remainder of a semester, but can carry over up to a calendar year. An expulsion would result in the loss of all credits for that period of time.

**DUE PROCESS:** All students attending Mt. Vernon Middle School shall be afforded the right to due process regarding suspensions, expulsions, and exclusions as outlined in the Indiana Code 20-8.1-1-17 (Burns 28-5303 and 38-5390). Such a right entitles the student and his/her parents to a hearing as outlined by the statute in the case of an expulsion or exclusion, which is a period of time exceeding ten days. The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education in conjunction with the Indiana Code have adopted and listed those reasons, which could result in the suspension, expulsion, or exclusion of a student from school which is outlined in this section.

# Student Athlete Guidelines

## Mt. Vernon Fight Song

Hail, Hail! To Mt. Vernon High  
Hail to the Gold and White  
We will be loyal to you  
Through battles tried and true.  
Fight, Fight, Fight!  
Fighting Marauders are we  
On to victory!  
We are proud to sing  
All the praises of  
Our Mt. Vernon High!  
M-A-R-A-U-D-E-R-S  
Marauders, Marauders, Are the BEST!

## Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Profile

Mt. Vernon Middle School has developed a strong tradition in athletics. The entire school and community take great pride in the accomplishments of Marauder athletic teams. Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic teams reflect the school's philosophy and commitment to excellence.

Mt. Vernon Middle School offers a total of twelve different sports. All students with sufficient ability are eligible to participate in athletics at the Middle School, provided they meet the scholastic standards and conduct requirements established by the Middle School athletic department and detailed in the subsequent pages.

Mt. Vernon Middle School is a charter member of the Hoosier Heritage Conference (HHC). Other HHC member schools include Delta, Greenfield-Central, New Castle, New Palestine, Pendleton Heights, Shelbyville, and Yorktown. In addition, Mt. Vernon Middle School proudly competes with the other three schools in Hancock County: Greenfield-Central, New Palestine, and Eastern Hancock. Mt. Vernon's athletic squads compete for conference and county championships in most of our sports.

## Sports Offered at Mt. Vernon Middle School

### Fall Season

Cheerleading (7-8)  
Boys Cross Country (6-8)  
Girls Cross Country (6-8)  
Boys Football (7-8)  
Girls Volleyball (7-8)  
Boys Soccer (6-8)  
Girls Soccer (6-8)  
Boys Tennis (6-8)

### Winter Season

Boys Basketball 6-8  
Girls Basketball 6-8  
Cheerleading 6-8  
Boys Swimming 6-8  
Girls Swimming 6-8  
Wrestling 6-8

### Spring Season

Girls Softball 7-8  
Boys Baseball 7-8  
Co-Ed Track 6-8  
Co-Ed Golf 6-8  
Girls Tennis 6-8

# **Introduction of Marauder Athletics for Students and Parents**

## **To Parents**

Mt. Vernon Middle School believes that participation in any extracurricular activity provides many opportunities and experiences that assist students in their personal growth and development. The Athletic Department encourages the development of young men and women through athletics, and feels that a controlled, well-organized sports program meets student's needs of self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is the goal of the Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletics to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and able to further each student's educational and social maturity.

## **To Students**

Being a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic team is a fulfillment of an ambition for many students; however, participation carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. An athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many individuals over many years. As a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic squad, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, and you will be challenged to uphold it.

**Responsibilities to Yourself:** The most important of these responsibilities is to develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the most from your experiences at MVMS. Your academic studies, combined with your participation in Mt. Vernon Middle School athletics and other extracurricular activities will do much to prepare you for life as an adult.

**Responsibilities to Your School and to Others:** Another responsibility you assume is to represent your school in the best way possible. Mt. Vernon Middle School cannot maintain its reputation as an outstanding school unless you do your best in all of the activities with which you are involved. By participating to the best of your ability, you contribute to your school's reputation. You assume a leadership role when you become an athlete. The student body, our community, and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field/court. Because of this role, you can contribute greatly to your school spirit and community pride. Make Mt. Vernon Middle School proud of you, and your community proud of your school! As a squad member, you also bear a responsibility to your teammates, your family, and to future athletes. When you know in your heart that you have given your all at practice and in competition, your teammates and family will be proud of you. Remember that being a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School team means that all eyes are focused on you, and students of all ages will look up to you. They will copy you in many ways, whether you realize it or not. Always set a good example and always do your best.

## **Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct**

### **Statement of Adoption**

The specific rules and regulations governing Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic programs have been reviewed and agreed upon by the administration of Mt. Vernon Middle School, and are consistent with the policies of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon Middle School.

### **Philosophy**

Participation in school athletics is a privilege that carries with it varying degrees of honor, responsibility, and sacrifice. Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes are representing Mt. Vernon Middle School and the school community. Since athletes represent their school and student body, it is their duty to conduct themselves in a manner that is healthy and positive for themselves, their family, their school, and their community. Therefore, athletes are expected to represent the school well and abide by the rules established in this handbook. Our code, like that of Mt. Vernon High School and

other middle and high schools, is intended to serve as a deterrent to unacceptable student behavior. However, it is extremely important that our code provides avenues for obtaining help in an attempt to modify student behavior when deemed necessary. An athlete's conduct in and out of school shall be such as not to reflect discredit upon their school and not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, and morale or educational environment in the school. It is recognized that the Principal, acting under the advice of the Athletic Director, faculty, and staff, and by the administrative authority vested in that office, may exclude such contestants from representing the school.

### **Scope**

This code applies to all students connected to the athletic program of Mt. Vernon Middle School and shall govern inclusively all athletes, managers, trainers, and cheerleaders (collectively, "athletes"). The participants, having received this code, must agree to be bound by its contents. Athletes shall be considered in violation of this code if they use, consume, or possess alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or illicit controlled substances (drugs), or if they commit a felony or engage in acts of vandalism, theft, acts of disrespect, hazing, or actions unbecoming an athlete. The Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct is in effect twenty-four (24) hours a day, twelve (12) months a year.

### **Additional Training Rules**

The Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Department delegates to the coach the responsibility of developing a reasonable set of training rules for athletes. Two important conditions are made when making these rules: 1. Rules may not be in conflict with the general rules and policies of Mt. Vernon Middle School, or specific Athletic Department Rule, and

2. All rules should be discussed with the squad prior to the beginning of practice at the first practice session.

Those training rules are considered as valid and binding in addition to this code.

### **Rules and Regulations**

**Absences Due to Injury/Illness:** An athlete who misses five (5) consecutive days of school or athletic participation due to illness or injury must obtain written permission from a physician and present this to the Athletic Director or coach before they again become eligible for participation. Additional practices are required before regaining eligibility for competitions after an extended absence due to illness or injury.

**Academic Eligibility:** Mt. Vernon Middle School has established the following policy for academic eligibility:

1. Academic eligibility will be checked at the end of each academic quarter.
2. A student who receives two or more failing grades on their quarterly report card will be ineligible from any athletic competition for the entire next quarter. 1st Quarter Academic Eligibility will be determined by the previous 4th Quarter report card for 7th and 8th grade student athletes. The athlete will become eligible at the end of the next academic quarter if there are not two or more failing grades on their quarterly report card. The MVMS Athletic Department reserves the right, at any time, to conduct grade checks on student athletes to determine the academic eligibility for an athletic competition or multiple athletic competitions.

**Age Eligibility:** Athletes may not have reached their sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) birthday on or before the date of the last possible contest for the sport in which the athletes participate. The last possible contest is defined as the last contest which is scheduled or, if a tournament is the last scheduled contest, the championship match of the tournament.

**Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) Use:** The usage and/or possession of illicit drugs, alcohol, and tobacco in any form will not be permitted. Please be advised that being in attendance at a party or any place where the illegal possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco occurs may be grounds for suspension from athletic participation. In keeping with the policies and procedures of the Mt. Vernon High School athletic department, athletes engaging in the use and/or possession of these illicit substances will be disciplined as follows:

**First Violation:** The student shall be excluded from all athletic competition for 365 days (one calendar year) from the day that the violation is confirmed as fact.

**Second Violation:**

1. The student will be suspended from all athletic participation for 365 days (one calendar year) from the day that the second violation is confirmed as fact. This policy includes the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs when used off school grounds. The use of these substances on school grounds will be handled by the school administration and will generally result in expulsion, which may result in the student forfeiting his/her privilege to participate in athletics at Mt. Vernon Middle School for the remainder of the athlete's middle school career.

**Rehabilitation** – The student may reduce the penalty to 50% of his/her contest season, by participating in a rehabilitation program/evaluation. The program/evaluation must be approved by the middle school administration and may include a recommendation for parent or guardian participation. The cost of the program is the responsibility of the student and/or his or her parents or guardians. The student will serve the remainder of the entire 365 day suspension if the administration is notified that the student has violated any of the stated conditions of the substance abuse program.

*\*Note: student may not serve suspension in an activity he/she does not regularly participate in.*

**Community Service** - The total penalty may be reduced to 25% of an athlete's contest season if: 1) the student completes 25 hours of community service and 2) the student submits to a substance abuse program as described above. The community service must be approved by the Athletic Director. *\*As stated above, a student may not serve suspension in an activity that he/she does not regularly participate in.*

**Self-reporting** - The total penalty will be reduced to 10% of the contest season if 1) the student or student's parents/guardians report the violation to the Principal, Athletic Director, or head coach prior to the independent confirmation of a violation by the school and prior to the presence of a law enforcement agency or law enforcement person 2) the student submits to a substance abuse program as described above and 3) completes the community service requirement described above.

**Amateurism:** Students shall not play under assumed names, accept payment directly or indirectly for athletic participation, or participate in athletic activities, tryouts, auditions, practices, and games held or sponsored by professional athletic organizations, clubs, or their representatives.

**Athletic Fee:** All athletes have a once per year Athletic fee. This fee helps cover the cost of transportation to and from competitions. If your athlete is in multiple sports, families are expected to pay this fee for their first sport of the school year only.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to make school attendance their first priority. Students must be in attendance at school by 11:00 a.m. and attend all afternoon classes to be eligible for extracurricular activities that day. Exceptions to this would be a prearranged absence or a school related function. A medical appointment or family emergency during the afternoon will also be exempted if the student attends school prior to the contest.

**Awards:** All students who successfully complete a season with a given sport will be awarded a Certificate of Participation acknowledging their work and commitment to the team throughout the season. In addition, special awards will be given at the conclusion of each school year:

1. Outstanding Athlete Awards: Two individuals (one boy and one girl) shall be chosen from each grade by the coaching staff and school administration as Outstanding Athletes. These individuals will be honored with a special certificate and the entering of their names on a plaque to be displayed at school.
2. Three Sport Award: Those individuals who participate in three sports (one in each season) during their seventh and eighth grade years shall be recognized as recipients of the Three Sport Award at the conclusion of their eighth grade year. Recipients will be honored with a certificate and a medal acknowledging their

accomplishments.

**Changing Sports:** If an athlete is cut from a team, the athlete may join another team or program in that sport season. Otherwise, an athlete cannot quit one sport to join another until that team is no longer competing. For example, an athlete cannot quit basketball to try out for wrestling until the basketball season has concluded, or until that student has been cut from the basketball program. If an athlete is removed from a team for any reason other than being cut (quitting, rule violation, loss of eligibility, etc.), that athlete will not be allowed to participate in any practice, conditioning program, or weight room activity for any sport until the team from which the athlete was removed is no longer competing. ***An athlete may not participate in more than one sport in any given season.***

**Chain of Communication:** For purposes of resolving disputes, an athlete should speak first with the coach. If the athlete is unable to resolve the dispute, the athlete should then involve his/her parents, who should meet with the coach. If an acceptable resolution still cannot be reached, the parents should contact the Athletic Director, who under guidance and input of the Principal, shall be the final arbiter of all disputes.

**Cheerleading:** Cheerleading is considered a sport at Mt. Vernon Middle School. All requirements for participation listed here shall apply equally to cheerleaders. The cheerleading coach establishes the procedure for selection of cheerleaders, and the decisions made are final.

**Conduct and Character:** Athletes conduct, in and out of school, shall be such as not to reflect discredit upon Mt. Vernon Middle School, and not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, or moral or educational environment in the school. Athletes who violate this rule may be excluded from representing Mt. Vernon Middle School in athletic participation. ***Misconduct that leads to an in-school or out-of-school suspension may result in athletic probation and/or suspension from athletics for up to one (1) year.*** Only ladies and gentlemen will represent Mt. Vernon Middle School in interscholastic activities.

**Conflicts with Non-Athletic Extracurricular Activities:** Mt. Vernon Middle School recognizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. However, students should be cautious about participating in too many activities. Conversely, students are also cautioned to refrain from “specializing” in one activity, thus denying themselves a well-rounded school experience. The administration has made every effort to reduce the number of conflicts between athletics and other extracurricular pursuits. If a conflict does arise, the student is encouraged to communicate with all coaches and sponsors involved. If the conflict persists, the student and/or the student’s parent should contact the Athletic Director for assistance. A commitment to a school team indicates that all non-school conflicts should be resolved in favor of the school team. Of course, significant religious holidays, family weddings, and funerals come first.

**Disciplinary Eligibility:** In accordance with the policies set forth by the school administration and athletic director, disciplinary eligibility will be determined by a student’s position in the STEP program, established in the section of this handbook “Student/Teacher Expectation Plan (STEP)”

**Equipment Issue and Return:** Mt. Vernon Middle School strives to provide each team member with the best and safest equipment available. Any equipment issued to an athlete must be returned in the same condition (with expected wear and tear) as when issued or the athlete is expected to compensate the athletic department for the lost or damaged equipment. Failure to return equipment or to compensate the school for lost or damaged equipment will result in forfeiture of an award earned in that sport, and may render the athlete ineligible for future sports (until restitution is made).

**Grooming and Appearance:** Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes act as representatives of the school and community and therefore are expected to exhibit a well-groomed and appropriate appearance. Appearance, expression, and actions



always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Once an athlete has chosen to be a member of a squad, he/she has made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in this community. The Principal, Athletic Director, and coaches will determine guidelines as needed concerning the appearance of athletes within the context of safety and accepted social norms. It should be noted, however, that school dress codes apply when an athlete is not in uniform, including when at practice, on trips, before games, and after games.

**Injuries and Medical Care:** All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor, trainer, or treatment center, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity. Injuries that occur while not participating in athletics at Mt. Vernon Middle School should also be reported, in the interest of promoting the athlete's safety.

**Insurance:** Mt. Vernon Middle School administrators and coaches are safety conscious and are trained to instruct athletes in the safe and proper techniques of each sport. Due to the nature of athletic activity, injuries may occur. While the school provides the opportunity for such participation, the parent retains the right of denial of such participation and must carry the responsibility for providing medical care and insurance coverage for their son/daughter. Parents are strongly encouraged to have a family insurance policy that covers athletic injuries and the cost of treatment, or to purchase insurance specifically for that purpose. ***It should be noted that Mt. Vernon Middle School does not carry any kind of first-dollar medical insurance for athletic injuries.***

**Nutritional Supplements:** Mt. Vernon Middle School does not encourage or endorse the use of any type of nutritional supplement. The use of products such as protein supplements, amino acid supplements, creatine, weight gain/loss products, or any other items, while not illegal, is a decision that must be made by the athlete and his/her parents, in consultation with a physician.

**Parent Meetings:** Parents are expected to attend an informational meeting conducted by the coaching staff for each sport in which their child is a participant.

**Parent and Student Certification:** At the beginning of this handbook, is a form acknowledging and accepting the rules contained in the handbook. The signature of both the athlete and a parent is required, and indicates that each has read and understood these stated policies, and agrees to be bound by them.

**Physical Examination:** Students desiring to participate in interscholastic athletics must undergo a physical examination performed by a licensed medical doctor prior to the first practice of the sport in which the student will participate. The physical must be resent, having been conducted no earlier than April 1 of the school year prior to the year in which the student wishes to compete. The physical form may be obtained from the Mt. Vernon Middle School Main Office or on the athletic website. Additionally, students must complete and sign the medical history and emergency contact information, as well as, the on-line concussion and cardiac arrest forms in order to be eligible for participation.

**Practice Sessions:** Practice sessions will be held prior to the beginning of competition, under the supervision of the coaching staff. Team practices are open to team members and school staff only. Generally, practices are not held on days when school is dismissed early. Coaches may schedule practices Monday through Saturday, and some coaches elect to hold practices during school breaks. Athletes are expected to attend practice when present at school and in accordance with the coach's policy on practice attendance, unless prior arrangement has been made with the coach. Coaches may suspend an athlete from competition if the athlete misses too many practices, or a practice immediately preceding a competition.

**Responsibility to Team:** Student athletes must remember that their responsibility to the team does not end with the

conclusion of a day's practice or competition. Participants should not do anything unnecessary to endanger their health or ability to participate while on school breaks, at home, or during the weekend. Additionally, students should remember that all of the rules are in effect at all times during which an athlete is involved in a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic program, including outside of school hours.

**Sportsmanship:** Sportsmanship is an honorable quality that embodies courtesy, fairness, and respect. It is a blending of cheers for the home team and applause for the visitors, observing both the letter and the spirit of the rules, and showing consideration for opponents. In effect, practicing good sportsmanship is practicing the Golden Rule as it pertains to athletic contests. Coaches and athletes should remember that bad sportsmanship is unacceptable in representing Mt. Vernon Middle School. Spectators should realize that an admission ticket is a privilege to observe a contest and support an activity, and not a license to verbally assault others.

**Supervision Before, During, and After Extracurricular Events:** Coaches and sponsors have an obligation to the school and to parents to provide supervision of athletes during practices and events. However, ***students are not allowed to stay after school*** unless the practice or event in which the student is involved begins immediately after school, or unless the coach or designated adult agrees to supervise the students. Additionally, students must arrange for transportation after a practice or event. While the coach has a responsibility to make sure that all students are picked up, students and parents should respect the coach enough to be prompt in arranging for pickup after a practice or event.

**Ticket Information:** Mt. Vernon Middle School charges admission at many of its sporting events. Paid admission tickets help to make it possible for Mt. Vernon Middle School to provide its students the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics. This revenue supports the purchase of uniforms, equipment, and supplies for all of the sports offered at Mt. Vernon Middle School. The athletic department sincerely appreciates the outstanding community support its programs receive from its patrons.

**Travel:** Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes are required to travel to away athletic contests and special events in school approved vehicles (buses) under adult supervision provided by Mt. Vernon Middle School. Parents may arrange with the coach to pick up their child after the game, but parents must provide the coach notice in accordance with the coach's stated policy.