

## Student Handbook Changes for the 2026-2027 school year:

### General:

- Change: Addition of a “policy disclaimer” to the front of the handbook (page 5):

(Specific Language):

### **Policy Disclaimer**

This handbook is intended to provide a summary of expectations, procedures, and guidelines for students and families. It does not replace official Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board Policies or Administrative Guidelines. Staff should always reference Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines to ensure proper implementation and oversight.

### Daily Schedule:

- Change: Updated the daily bell schedules (including 2 hour delay and Wednesday early release) to reflect our change to a block 8 schedule (page 5):

(Specific Language):

### **Daily Bell Schedule 2026-2027**

Black Day		
Block	Time	Minutes
1	8:35-9:57	82
Passing Period	9:57-10:03	6
3	10:03-11:25	82

Gold Day		
Block	Time	Minutes
2	8:35-9:57	82
Passing Period	9:57-10:03	6
4	10:03-11:25	82

Passing Period	11:25-11:31	6
<b>5</b>	<b>11:31-1:25</b>	<b>84</b>
Lunch 1	11:25-11:55	30
Lunch 2	11:55-12:25	30
Lunch 3	12:25-12:55	30
Lunch 4	12:55-1:25	30
Passing Period	1:25-1:31	6
SRT	<b>1:31-2:01</b>	<b>30</b>
Passing Period	2:01-2:07	6
<b>7</b>	<b>2:07-3:30</b>	<b>83</b>

Passing Period	11:25-11:31	6
<b>6</b>	<b>11:31-1:25</b>	<b>84</b>
Lunch 1	11:25-11:55	30
Lunch 2	11:55-12:25	30
Lunch 3	12:25-12:55	30
Lunch 4	12:55-1:25	30
Passing Period	1:25-1:31	6
SRT	<b>1:31-2:01</b>	<b>30</b>
Passing Period	2:01-2:07	6
<b>8</b>	<b>2:07-3:30</b>	<b>83</b>

2-Hour Delay Schedule		
Block	Time	Minutes
<b>1/2</b>	<b>10:35-11:3</b> <b>0</b>	<b>55</b>
Passing Period	11:30-11:36	6
<b>3/4</b>	<b>11:36-1:30</b>	<b>84</b>
Lunch 1	11:30-12:00	30
Lunch 2	12:00-12:30	30
Lunch 3	12:30-1:00	30
Lunch 4	1:00-1:30	30
Passing Period	1:30-1:36	6
<b>5/6</b>	<b>1:36-2:30</b>	<b>54</b>
Passing Period	2:30-2:36	6
<b>7/8</b>	<b>2:36-3:30</b>	<b>54</b>

Wednesday - Early Release		
Block	Time	Minutes
<b>1/2</b>	<b>8:35-9:44</b>	<b>69</b>
Passing Period	9:44-9:50	6
<b>3/4</b>	<b>9:50-11:00</b>	<b>70</b>
Passing Period	11:00-11:06	6
<b>5/6</b>	<b>11:06-1:00</b>	<b>84</b>
Lunch 1	11:00-11:30	30
Lunch 2	11:30-12:00	30
Lunch 3	12:00-12:30	30
Lunch 4	12:30-1:00	30
Passing Period	1:00-1:06	6
SRT	<b>1:06-1:30</b>	<b>24</b>
Passing Period	1:30-1:36	6
<b>7/8</b>	<b>1:36-2:45</b>	<b>69</b>

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## **Directory Information**

- **Change: Revisions to the directory information - (Page 16):**

(Specific Language):

### **Directory Information Notice**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") ensures that personally identifiable information contained in student education records is kept confidential. However, FERPA allows school districts to designate certain non-sensitive information as "Directory Information," which may be disclosed for appropriate purposes at the discretion of the school corporation, unless a parent/guardian or eligible student (18 years of age or older) opts out.

MVCSC designates the following as Directory Information: student name, address, telephone number, email address (including school-assigned email accounts, for limited educational purposes), photograph, date and place of birth, grade level, 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, type of diploma awarded, and awards received, including honor roll and scholarships.

### **Use of Directory Information**

MVCSC does not provide student lists or Directory Information to organizations for profit-making, commercial, or political purposes. The Superintendent may allow access to a school campus or give students' directory information to organizations that make students aware of educational or occupational options. The Superintendent may authorize limited disclosure of Directory Information to a for-profit or commercial entity for a specific educational activity or project, provided that advance notice is given to affected parents/guardians and an opportunity to opt out is offered prior to participation.

Directory Information may be used for a variety of school-related purposes, including but not limited to: yearbooks; student newspapers; student-run media; classroom communication, printed programs for extracurricular activities; news releases; district and school websites; social media; videos; podcasts; and other district or education foundation uses. This information may also be shared with media and broadcasting organizations, which may include their digital platforms. In addition, Directory Information may be shared with community partners to support and promote our district.

School-assigned email addresses are designated as Directory Information solely for the purpose of facilitating student access to approved educational platforms, applications, and services. These email addresses will not be disclosed beyond this limited educational use. Directory Information may also be disclosed, as permitted by law, to institutions of higher education and to military recruiters unless a parent/guardian or eligible student submits a written request to withhold such information. Directory Information regarding former students may be disclosed unless a prior request to withhold such information has been submitted.

## Parent/Guardian and Student Rights

Parents/guardians or eligible students (18 years of age or older) have the right to request that MVCSC not disclose any or all Directory Information. Requests must be submitted in writing to the student's teacher or administrator within ten (10) days of receipt of this notice. If a request to opt out is submitted, MVCSC will not release Directory Information for the remainder of the school year.

Please carefully consider this decision. Directory Information is commonly used for recognizing student achievements, participation in school activities, inclusion in yearbooks and programs, and sharing positive news about students and schools. If you choose to opt out, the student's name, image, and related information will not appear in these contexts. If you have any questions or wish to submit a request regarding Directory Information, please contact your child's teacher, school administrators, or the MVCSC Community Relations Department.

## Attendance

- **Change: Revisions to attendance policy to become uniform across Hancock County (pages 11-14):**
- **Change: Pre-arranged absence policy removed**

(Specific Language):

## HANCOCK COUNTY ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

All Hancock County schools—Greenfield Central Community School Corporation, Eastern Hancock Community School Corporation, New Palestine Community Schools, and Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation—have adopted a unified attendance protocol. These procedures have been approved by the Hancock County Prosecutor's Office and the Hancock County Probation Office to ensure consistency and compliance across all school corporations.

The purpose of these attendance measures is to support regular student attendance and to prevent students from reaching the following thresholds:

- **Habitual Truancy:** Ten (10) or more unexcused absences in a school year
- **Chronic Absenteeism:** Missing ten percent (10%) or more of the school year for any reason (approximately eighteen [18] total days)

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## Reporting an Absence

For every student absence, a parent or guardian must notify the school within 24 hours of the absence.

At Mt. Vernon High School, absences may be reported using one of the following methods:

- Call the front office/attendance office at: (317) 485-3131 ext 1762 or option 1
- Email the front office/attendance office at: [Julia.lowe@MVCSC.k12.in.us](mailto:Julia.lowe@MVCSC.k12.in.us)
- Respond directly to the ParentSquare notification sent via the app, email, or phone call

Failure to notify the school within 24 hours may result in the absence being recorded as unexcused.

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## Discretionary Absences

Under the Hancock County Attendance Protocols, students are permitted seven (7) discretionary absences per school year. Although a student is provided with seven (7) discretionary absences, all efforts should be made to avoid absences during state testing, before and after breaks, and/or during finals.

A discretionary absence is an absence that:

- Does not require documentation or administrative approval, and
- Is reported to the school by a parent or guardian within 24 hours

Once all seven discretionary absences have been used, any additional absences without required documentation or approval will be considered unexcused, unless the absence qualifies as excused or exempt under the guidelines below.

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## Excused Absences

An absence may be considered excused if:

- The school is notified within 24 hours, and
- Appropriate documentation is provided

Excused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness
- Illness in the immediate family
- Quarantine of the home
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Emergency or set of circumstances
- Any other good cause acceptable to the Superintendent or designee, or as permitted by law

## **Submitting Documentation for Excused Absences**

Documentation must be submitted within 24 hours of the absence and may be provided by:

- Delivering documentation to the school's front office
  - Emailing documentation to: [Julia.lowe@MVCSC.k12.in.us](mailto:Julia.lowe@MVCSC.k12.in.us)
  - Faxing documentation to: 317-485-2721
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## **Exempt Absences**

Under Indiana law, schools are required to excuse absences for students under the following circumstances:

- Serving as a page or honoree of the Indiana General Assembly (IC 20-33-2-14)
- Serving on a precinct election board or assisting a political candidate or party on the day of an election (IC 20-33-2-15)
- Being subpoenaed to testify in court (IC 20-33-2-16)
- Serving with the National Guard for at least fifteen (15) days during the school year (IC 20-33-2-17)
- Serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to five (5) days (IC 20-33-2-17.2)
- Participating in an approved educationally related, non-classroom activity (IC 20-33-2-17.5)
- Exhibiting or participating (or having a household member exhibit or participate) in the Indiana State Fair for educational purposes (IC 20-33-2-17.7)

Exempt absences may still require documentation, as determined by the school.

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## **Unexcused Absences**

Any absence that does not meet the criteria for discretionary, excused, or exempt status will be recorded as unexcused. Any absence where a parent or guardian has not contacted the school within 24 hours will be recorded as unexcused.

Once a student has used all seven discretionary absences, any additional absences without appropriate documentation (such as a doctor's note, administrative approval, or an exempt absence) will be considered unexcused.

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## **Attendance Notifications and Interventions**

To keep families informed of attendance concerns, schools will issue attendance letters at the following milestones:

- Discretionary Absence Letter: Sent after all seven (7) discretionary absences have been used
- Attendance Letter #1: Sent after five (5) unexcused absences
- Attendance Letter #2: Sent after eight (8) unexcused absences
- Attendance Letter #3: Sent after ten (10) unexcused absences

Upon issuance of Attendance Letter #3:

- The school will contact the Department of Child Services (DCS), and
- The school will file a Round Table Attendance Conference referral with the Hancock County Prosecutor's Office and Probation Office

Participation in the Round Table Attendance Conference is mandatory.

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## Attendance Contract

After eight (8) unexcused absences, a parent or guardian will be required to attend an attendance meeting with a school administrator or designee. During this meeting:

- The student's attendance record will be reviewed
- An attendance contract will be developed and signed by the parent or guardian
- Expectations for future attendance will be clearly outlined

The school will contact the parent or guardian to schedule this meeting.

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## Monitoring Attendance Records

Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to regularly monitor attendance records through the school corporation's student information system.

At Mt. Vernon High School, this system is PowerSchool.

For assistance with account access or setup, please contact the school office.

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## Additional Attendance Information

- Attendance is calculated based on the full academic school year
- Attendance records transfer between Hancock County schools if a student enrolls in another county school
- Excessive absences or tardies may impact eligibility for out-of-district transfer enrollment

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If you have questions regarding attendance policies or documentation requirements, please contact the Mt. Vernon High School front office.

## Technology

- **Change: Added -"using websites or programs that bypass security features, such as proxy sites" to the Network Access section. (page 26):**
- **Change: Adjusted opt-in dates for Accidental Protection (page 31):**
- **Change: Adjusted wording on availability of opt-in protection to reflect Grades 2-12 (page 31):**

(Specific Language):

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

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) using websites or programs that bypass security features, such as proxy sites, 3) 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.

### **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; Take Home **Chromebooks** (Grades 2-12) will have an accidental protection plan automatically. To opt in to the protection plan parents and guardians can add this fee in eFunds. The opt-in window will be available July 15th - August 31st, 2026.

**If opting out of the premium, parents/guardians will assume full cost responsibility of any and all repairs to a device if damaged accidentally or otherwise.** Repair or replacement cost will be determined



by the corporation repair company.

## **Field Trip Guidelines**

- **Change: Replacement of language related to students & chaperones in the field trips section (page 7-8):**
- **Change: Field trip permission form added (page 8):**

(Specific Language):

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an extension of Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's educational program and are designed to enhance student learning. Participation in field trips is a privilege.

### **Permission & Communication**

A signed parent/guardian permission form is required for all field trips. Families will be notified in advance of trip details. Emergency contact and medical forms must be on file prior to participation.

### **Transportation**

Students and chaperones are required to travel to and from field trip destinations using Corporation-approved transportation per MVCSC Field Trip Guidelines. Due to safety and liability considerations, alternative transportation is not permitted unless pre-approved by administration. Transportation for these events will be fully funded by those participating. With prior principal approval, some chaperones may be approved to drive separately, as long as at least two chaperones ride each bus.

### **Student Expectations**

Students are expected to follow all school rules, and all directions from staff and chaperones. Students must remain with assigned groups, participate in scheduled activities, and demonstrate appropriate

behavior at all times. Failure to meet expectations may result in disciplinary action and/or removal from the trip.

## **Supervision & Chaperones**

All trips will include approved staff and/or chaperones. Chaperones must complete required background checks and volunteer forms. Chaperones are expected to actively supervise students and follow all Corporation policies as directed by school staff. (Staff Reference: C-500R and D-325E)

## **Procedures & Safety**

Field trips must follow approved itineraries, transportation plans, and supervision procedures. Students and chaperones will be informed of expectations prior to the trip, and staff will maintain accountability for all students throughout the trip.

## **Policy Reference**

This section is a summary of expectations. All field trips must comply with Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines, including Policy C500 (School Trips and Activities), Policy C525 (Medical Needs), Policy C325 (Student Supervision and Welfare), Policy D325 (Background checks) and Corporation Field Trip Guidelines.

## **Permission Slip**

Our field trip permission slip can be found here: [Permission Slip](#)

## **Overnight Trips and Travel Expectations**

Students participating in school-sponsored overnight trips are expected to follow all school rules and directions from school staff and chaperones at all times. Students must remain with assigned groups, follow established supervision procedures, adhere to curfews and room assignments, and demonstrate appropriate behavior in all settings.

All travel, lodging, and activities must follow pre-approved trip plans established by staff and approved by the school board. Students are expected to follow all safety protocols, including group travel requirements, check-in procedures, and accountability expectations. Respect for hotel guests, property, and public spaces is required.

Participation in trips requires completion of all necessary forms and adherence to administrative guidelines established by the school corporation.

School staff and chaperones are responsible for supervision, student conduct, and implementation of all trip procedures, including safety, transportation, and medical preparedness.

## **Food Services**

- **Change: Addition of language related to parent/guardians ensuring a positive account balance: (Page 10)**

(Specific Language):

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health and wellness program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced meal is offered at a reasonable price. All foods sold to students during the school day intended for consumption on campus must meet the USDA School Nutrition Standards and Smart Snack regulations. Students may choose between the plate lunch and ala carte items. Per federal lunch guidelines, students are not allowed to order outside food during lunch.

Parents/guardians are expected to check their student's account balance regularly via Skyward Family Access. Parents/guardians are expected to maintain a positive balance in their student's account, failure to do so may result in other actions. Payments can be made with cash/check in person, by mail, or electronically. Students will not be allowed to charge ala carte items or extras to negative accounts, even with cash in hand. To view the full charge policy please visit MVCSC's website. Students should use their student ID in the cafeteria line to process the transaction.

## **Counseling Department**

- **Change: Adjustment of the language related to schedule changes to indicate changes have to be made in the first 10 days of the semester (previously it was during the first 5 days): (Page 21)**
- **Change: Updated links for course scheduling handbooks: (Page 19)**
- **Change: Updated Section from "Early Graduation" to "Mid-Year or Junior Graduation" and language updated on when applications are due and also updated to reflect our change to semesters. (Page 22)**

(Specific Language):

### **SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY**

Schedule changes after the first ten days of the school year, must be requested and approved by an administrator, counselor, and/or through the case conference committee process. Consideration will be given for the following circumstances:

#### **Updated Course Scheduling Handbooks:**

 2026-2027 Course Scheduling Handbook for Cohorts 2027 & 2028

 2026-2027 Course Scheduling Handbook for Cohorts 2029 & Beyond

### **Mid-Year or Junior Graduation**

Students are encouraged to complete four full years of high school. However, it is possible to meet graduation requirements in less than four years. Students who wish to be an early graduate must fill out an Early Grad application when choosing classes for the junior or senior year. Applications will not be accepted after May of sophomore year (junior grad) OR May of junior year (mid-year grad). To graduate in less than four years, a student must have earned the required credits and met all three requirements of the Graduation Pathways. Students who wish to be a mid-year graduate must complete all required courses within the 1st semester; 2 semester courses are not eligible to be used for mid-year graduation status, with the exception of English 12. Students must complete one credit of English 12 during the summer entering their senior year.

### **Athletics**

- **Change: Adjustment of language related to athletic eligibility and the new 8 block schedule: (Page 11 of the Athletic Handbook -hyperlinked in our handbook)**

2. To be eligible scholastically, students must have received passing grades at the end of the last grading period in at least six (6) full credit subjects or the equivalent. Two semesters of the state-required physical education course for 9th and 10th grades may be counted as a full credit subject for eligibility purposes even though the Department of Education does not grant a full credit for the course.

3. To be eligible scholastically, the athlete must be enrolled in at least six (6) full credit subjects or the equivalent and must have passed (6) full credits in the previous 9 weeks. This may include the

above-mentioned state-required physical education course for 9th and 10th grades even though the Department of Education does not grant a full credit for the course.

4. Grade checks will be done quarterly and certified within 10 school days of the end of the quarter per IHSAA by-laws. For 2026-27, these dates would be: Q1 (10/23/26), Q2 (1/8/27), Q3 (4/2/27), Q4 (6/4/27).

## **Cell Phone Policy**

### **Student Expectations and Code of Conduct**

- **Change: Adjustment of language related to cell phone use that reflects the new state law along with progressive discipline plan: (Page 34-35)**

In accordance with Indiana law, the use and possession of personal electronic devices by students is restricted during the school day.

“Personal electronic devices” include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, Meta glasses, earbuds, tablets, and any device capable of communication, internet access, or recording.

From the beginning of the school day until dismissal (“bell-to-bell”):

- Students **may not use or access** personal electronic devices at any time, including during passing periods, lunch, and study halls.
- Devices must be **powered off and stored in a designated location**
- Devices must remain **inaccessible to the student throughout the entire school day.**

The school may authorize limited exceptions for:

- Documented medical needs
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans
- School-approved instructional use on **school-provided devices**

Disciplinary consequences for cell-phone violations will be progressive and will begin with an after-school detention. Repeated violations may result in a more severe consequence, including Saturday school, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or expulsion from school.