

VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



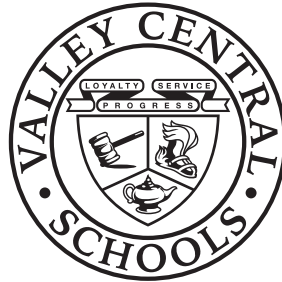
**Elementary**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**

# Elementary

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 2024-2025



**Berea Elementary School**

946 Rte. 17K  
Montgomery, New York 12549  
457-2400 Ext. 11500

**Montgomery Elementary School**

141 Union Street  
Montgomery, New York 12549  
457-2400 Ext. 14500

**East Coldenham Elementary School**

286 Rte. 17K  
Newburgh, New York 12550  
457-2400 Ext. 12500

**Walden Elementary School**

75 Orchard Street  
Walden, New York 12586  
457-2400 Ext. 15500

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***The Valley Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other legally protected status in access to programs provided by the district.***

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## APPOINTMENTS

A student may be released early (upon written request from parents with an administrative approval) or attend school after an appointment (also with a note from a parent or guardian). Partial instruction is better than none. A student being dismissed during the school day must be signed out by the parent or guardian.

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## ATTENDANCE

**Regular attendance is critical to a student's success in school.** Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Persistent absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem. The following circumstances are the only recognized excuses for school absence:

- Personal illness
- Illness/death in the family
- Religious observance
- Required court appearances
- Quarantine
- Impassable roads or weather
- Approved school-sponsored trips
- Military obligations
- Attendance at health clinics
- Absences due to homelessness, as determined by the building principal

If your child will be absent from school, please contact the school prior to or on the day of the absence and provide us with a written note on the day the child returns to school.

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Students are considered in attendance if they arrive at school. **Students must be present in school for half a day or more, in order to participate in extracurricular activities.**

### EARLY DISMISSAL:

Students will be considered an Early Dismissal if they leave school ten minutes or more prior to the end of the school day.

### TARDINESS:

**Prompt arrival to school is expected of all students.** Lateness/tardiness disrupts the class and causes loss of instructional time. Any child who arrives at school after 9:15 a.m. is considered tardy. Tardiness is monitored and frequent tardiness will be reported to the attendance officer.

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## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

### ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The possession, sale, use, transfer or facilitation thereof of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or any other controlled substance, or being under the influence of such substances on the school campus, at school-sponsored events, or on buses, is strictly forbidden.

### BULLYING

Refer to Code of Conduct/Plain Language Summary

### BUS CONDUCT

The following rules have been established in order to ensure the safety of all students who ride buses:

1. Follow the direction of the bus driver at all times.
2. Stay in your assigned seat.
3. Keep all parts of your body and all objects in the bus.
4. No pushing, shoving or fighting at any time.
5. Talk quietly.

When students do not follow the rules on the bus, the following consequences will occur:

- **First and second offenses**-The child will discuss the incident with an administrator. The parents will be notified and a conference may be scheduled. Appropriate school consequences will be implemented. In serious cases, the student may be suspended from school and/or the school bus.
- **Third offense**-The student will not be permitted to ride the school bus for one day or more.
- **Fourth offense or more**-The student will be suspended for an extended period of time. Parents of students who are not permitted to ride the bus must provide transportation.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Please see the Code of Conduct located at the end of this handbook. Copies are available in the Main Office.

## **LOITERING**

Students should leave school and school grounds promptly after classes or activities are dismissed. There is to be no unnecessary "hanging around" before, during or after school.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS/VALUABLES**

Students are not permitted to bring toys or other items to school unless they have permission from the teacher or principal. The staff are not responsible for valuables which students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home.

## **SMOKING/VAPING**

Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes and vaping devices, is strictly forbidden at all times by students and adults in school or on school grounds. Students are not to carry, use, sell or transfer tobacco or synthetic tobacco products of any kind, as well as e-cigarettes and vaping devices.

## **SUSPENSIONS**

*Suspensions are reserved for the most serious infractions or repeated offenses.* It signifies that the child's behavior has been so disruptive that the only reasonable way to deal with the situation is to remove the child from the school environment. If your child is suspended from school, we request that you meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal before reinstatement.

## **VANDALISM**

All of the facilities of the school district are provided through public funds, including local taxes. Any damage done to any school property affects all of us. Parents are asked to impress upon their children the importance of proper care of all school facilities, equipment, etc. Students or others who damage school property on or off campus may be expected to pay for such damage.

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## **BUS COMPANY**

First Student, Inc. provides transportation for the District. Please direct any transportation questions or concerns you have during school hours to Renee Marchant, School Transportation Assistant, at (845) 457-2400 x18115. For questions or concerns after hours, please contact First Student at (845) 895-2463.

### **Parent Information:**

- It is normal for buses to run a little late the first few days of the school year.
- A note is needed to modify bus transportation. Notes must be given to the classroom teacher at the beginning of the day. Students will receive a pass to give to the bus driver at the end of the day.

### **Parent Concerns:**

- Children experiencing trouble on the bus should first inform their bus driver or monitor. The driver can report the problem and can keep an eye on the situation. If a child is uncomfortable talking to a driver because other children or the bully might be watching, he or she should talk to their teacher or an administrator instead.
- The Board of Education has approved the use of video cameras on buses to monitor student behavior.

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## CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The primary purpose of our adoption of this procedure is to protect the sanctity of the class lesson. Additionally, in light of the evolving technology of cell phones and the ability to photograph and record video, it is our goal to protect the privacy of our students and staff alike.

Students shall be permitted possession of cell phones/smart watches/personal electronic devices on school grounds. However, it must be powered off and neither visible nor audible. Should a student be found in violation of this procedure, she/he will be directed to the office. There the phone/watch will be confiscated and held until an administrator meets with the student and/or parent/guardian to retrieve it. Should a situation warrant the use of a phone during the school day, she/he may request permission of a staff member to use a school phone. Administration reserves the right to return cell phones/smart watches at the end of the school day, hold for parent/guardian to pick up, or for repeat offenders hold for 30 days.

At no time shall the District be responsible for preventing theft, loss, or damage to communication devices brought onto school property.

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## CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

It is **very important**, for emergency and administrative reasons, that every student maintain an up to date address and phone number at the school office. Notify the school immediately if you have a change of address and/or phone number during the school year.

In case of an emergency, each student is required to have emergency information on file. A validation form will be sent home on the first day of school and should be returned promptly with any changes denoted.

**Please remember that if there is a change in any emergency contact information, including changes in custody, please notify the school immediately. It is very important to keep this information accurate and up to date.**

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## DASA

Please refer to the Code of Conduct for more information.

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## DISCIPLINE

Please see the complete Valley Central School District Code of Conduct located in this handbook and on the Valley Central School District website.

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## DRESS CODE

Clothing which is considered by school authorities to be dangerous, revealing or otherwise in violation of the District's dress code will not be permitted in the schools as described in the Code of Conduct (page 15) and District Board Policy 5311.5.

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## EMERGENCY CLOSING/EARLY DISMISSAL/DELAYS

Cancellation or early closing of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme or inclement weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. Every practical means is used to notify parents of an impending cancellation, including the website and phone messaging systems. You may call the main district number (457- 2400) or log on to our website ([www.vcsd.k12.ny.us](http://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us)) to find out about delays or closings.

Sometimes it is necessary to dismiss school early as a result of inclement weather or an emergency. It is imperative that we have accurate and updated phone numbers so we can contact you.

When school is closed because of inclement weather or some other emergency, the entire operation involving student programs shall be canceled until further notice. This includes play rehearsals, sports games, and/or practices, and other organized school activities.

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## FIRE EVACUATION AND SAFETY DRILLS

Emergency drills are practiced so that teachers and students are aware of what is expected of them in an emergency. Emergency drills are conducted throughout the school year. Detailed escape routes are posted inside the door of each classroom, cafeteria, office area, etc.

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## FOOD SERVICES

Valley Central is now part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Therefore, breakfast and lunch will be provided to students at no cost for the 2024-2025 school year. An application is not required for this program. The CEP includes one breakfast meal and one lunch meal for each student every day that school is in session. Additional meals may be purchased at the following prices: Breakfast - \$2.00; Lunch - \$3.00; Milk - \$.75. There is still an additional cost to purchase à la carte items. À la carte items include, but are not limited to ice cream, snacks, bottled water, doubles, and extras.

When students make any cafeteria purchases, they will be required to enter their Student ID Number. If there is no money in their account (an option) they can always use cash in hand. We suggest they have money in their accounts in the event they forget to bring money to school that day. There are several ways to apply funds to students' accounts. You can either send in a check made payable to VCSD Cafeteria, send in cash, or contact MySchoolBucks.com on the web. Here you will fund their account via a Credit Card.

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## GRADING/REPORT CARDS

Progress reports are posted to the Parent Portal on SchoolTool three times each year, midway through each trimester. Report cards are issued following the completion of each trimester and are also available on SchoolTool. Please carefully review your child's progress. District coordinated parent/teacher conferences are scheduled following the completion of the first trimester and in March. The parent's attendance at conferences is very important. A parent may request a conference with a child's teacher at any time during the school year. Please call the school for an appointment if a conference is desired. A teacher may also find it necessary to request a special conference with a parent. Please make every effort to meet with the teacher if you receive such a request.

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## HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

### NURSE

School nurses (Registered Professional Nurses) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN's) are assigned to each building to implement the health service program through caring for chronic and acute illnesses, health counseling, health referrals, administering first aid, administration of prescribed medications, assessing and maintaining accurate health and immunization records, and conducting screening for hearing, vision, and scoliosis.

Please be sure to contact the nurse if your child has any acute or chronic health conditions. Also, please call the school nurse if your child is absent from school due to a communicable disease. Students should get permission from their teacher to go to the health office if they are not feeling well and not contact their parents/guardians directly. It is the responsibility of the health office to call home if deemed necessary when a student is ill or injured.

The health office is to be used for illnesses, medication administration, hygiene, health screening, injuries, physical exams, and sports clearance. Persistent illness/injury will be brought to the attention of a parent or guardian, and the student will be sent home or given a referral for further evaluation with a health care provider.

Students being sent home due to illness must sign out in the attendance office prior to leaving the building.

### ILLNESS OR INJURY

In case of illness or injury, a child will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff if needed. School personnel will render first aid treatment only until the school nurse arrives. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If the parents/guardians are not available, the child will be taken to an emergency room. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached and the name and telephone number of the student's family health care provider must be on file at the school.

Parents/Guardians will be requested to pick up their child, if the child:

- Has a temperature of 100 or over;
- Is vomiting due to illness;
- Has been injured and possibly has a fracture or other serious condition;
- Has a rash that is suspected to be contagious;
- Requires special attention regarding his/her health and welfare which cannot be addressed at school.

Parents/Guardians are reminded that the school nurse must be apprised if a child is taking medication or has any chronic illness that impacts attendance or learning.

All children entering school with casts, crutches, stitches, or other serious medical conditions are to go to the nurse's office before school on the first day of return for evaluation of accommodations and/or health care by the school nurse. Please alert the nurse if your child has any allergic reactions to medications, bee or wasp stings, or food. Allergy/Chronic Illness Health care plans should be on file with the health office by the first day of school.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

NYS Public Health Law 2164 requires that every child who is admitted to public school must have evidence of a successful vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, measles, mumps, rubella, polio, Hepatitis B and Varicella (Chicken Pox), or other vaccinations as required by State law. Other vaccinations include a Tdap booster when a child turns 11 years of age and a MenACWY (Meningitis) vaccine when entering 7th grade and a booster MenACWY when entering 12th grade. Exemptions for these requirements are for medical reasons only and must be submitted on a NYS Medical Exemption form filled out by a NYS physician only. All students must have up to date vaccination records or exemption records on file or they may be excluded from school.

## **PHYSICALS/MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS**

STUDENTS MUST HAVE A MEDICAL EXAMINATION IF THEY:

- Enter the school district for the first time (including Pre-K or Kindergarten)
- Are in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11
- Participate in interscholastic sports
- Are deemed necessary by school authorities to determine a child's education program

If the physical exam is not returned to the school by September 30th or 15 days after registration, the school reserves the right to request that the school medical provider (MD or NP) conduct a medical appraisal of your child.

Physical exams by the school Nurse Practitioner can be requested for any student requiring a physical. There is no-cost to you for the school physical. Please contact the health office of your child's school should you wish a physical to be done in school.

## **MEDICATIONS**

According to New York State Law, there is a procedure the school nurse must follow before any medication (prescription and/or over-the-counter) can be given during school hours. Only those medications which are necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours should be administered. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day or while participating in school sponsored activities (e.g. field trips, athletics) must comply with the following procedures.

A written order from a duly licensed prescriber and written parental permission to administer the medication is required. All medications, including nonprescription drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status.

Students may not carry medication with the exception of emergency medications such as Rescue Inhalers and Epi-pens. These medications must have "self-carry" prescriber attestation orders in the Nurse's office. Students are prohibited from bringing any over the counter medications.

Medication orders should minimally include:

- Student's name and date of birth
- Name of medication
- Dosage and route of administration
- Frequency and time of administration
- Possible side effects
- For prn (as necessary) medications, conditions under which medication should be administered.
- Date written
- Prescriber's name, title, and signature
- Prescriber's phone number



#### Other Medication Information:

- Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication dosage.
- The pharmacy label does not constitute a written order and cannot be used in lieu of a written order from a licensed prescriber.
- OTC medications must be in the original manufacturer's container/package with the student's name affixed to the container.
- Medications should not be transported daily to and from school. Parents/Guardians are advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers, one to remain at home and one at school.
- If these procedures are not followed, students may be subjected to disciplinary action.

#### **FIELD TRIPS AND MEDICATIONS:**

Procedures for taking oral, topical or inhalant medications off school grounds or after school hours while participating in a school sponsored activity:

The school nursing personnel should assure oversight of self-administration to:

Student who is supervised/self-directed Voluntary staff member who has been appropriately instructed by the school nursing personnel to assist a supervised/self-directed student. (Note: Consistent with good practice, the employee's willingness to perform the task will be considered in making the assignment.)

#### **PREPARATION OF MEDICATION**

When medication is to be given to a supervised/self-directed student in the absence of a school nurse, the student's medication must remain in a properly labeled pharmacy container, or original over-the-counter container, in the possession of a supervising adult; until it is handed to the self-directed student to self-administer on a field trip or other school event. Children needing medication on extended trips must have their medication in a properly labeled pharmacy container. There must be a medical order and permission slip on file with the school nurse. Administration of oral, topical or inhalant medications to non-self-directed (nurse-dependent) students and injectable medications to anyone must remain the responsibility of the school nurse, licensed practical nurse under the direction of a school nurse, health care provider, parent or parent designee. Students who have an order to "use & carry independently", may take non-prescription and prescription medications in the original pharmacy bottle.

For extended field trips, parents should provide the medication (prepared by the student's pharmacy) to the person in charge of the field trip.

Parents, whose students will require medications for the trip which they do not require on a daily basis at school, should obtain health-care provider orders and provide the orders and medication to the school nurse. The school nurse and chaperones must be notified of any controlled substance. Controlled substances/medications will not be permitted to be self-carried.

If a chaperone is given medication at the last minute, it becomes a judgment call on the part of the chaperone, school nurse, and school administration. Each situation, medical condition, age of the child, nature of the medication, nature of potential side effects, and likelihood of further difficulty from the medical condition must be considered.

#### **MEDICAL EXCUSES FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

If your child is excused from physical education due to medical reasons, the health care provider must provide the school with the reason and duration in writing prior to the physical education class for which he/she is to be excused. Because physical education is a mandated subject, your child will be provided with alternative instruction as allowed by your health care provider. If your child may participate in modified physical education activities, the health care provider must provide the school with that information filled out on a Modified Physical Education Form. This form can be obtained from the health office. Students who are excused from physical education may not participate in other physical activities, which include recess.

## **ASSISTANCE/ HEALTH RELATED/MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

Big Brothers/Big Sisters: 845-562-1408

Community Resources: 211 Available 24 hours/day

Food Pantry (Montgomery): 845-457-9673

Food Pantry (Newburgh-Salvation Army): 845-562-0413

Grief and Loss Support Hospice: 845-561-6111

Bereaved Parents Support: 845-561-2837

Mental Health Hotline: 988

Orange County Youth Bureau: 845-615-3620

Orange County Department of Health: 845-360-6600

Orange County Department of Health Immunization Clinics: 845-291-2330

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

Shelter Assistance: 211 or 845-346-4357

Suicide Hotline: 988

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## **HOMEWORK/SCHOOLWORK**

Homework is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet and comfortable place to work and by seeing that assignments are completed. If your child is sick, and an extended absence is anticipated, you may request homework from the classroom teacher by 10:00 am. For additional information about homework, please refer to the VCSD Elementary Homework Philosophy Document located on our school building web page.

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## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Books, Chromebooks, calculators, musical Instruments and any other instructional materials are loaned to the students by the school district, and it is expected that the items will be returned at the end of the school year, or on a schedule determined by the District, in the same condition in which they were received. The District will keep a record of said item including title, condition and identification number.

Parents/Guardians will be held financially responsible for the books, equipment, musical instruments and Chromebooks that are lost or damaged. Fines/damages must be paid for by the end of the school year.

The District is not responsible for student owned musical instruments that are damaged and/or stolen.

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## **LOST AND FOUND**

Each year children lose valuable personal items. The school is not responsible for items belonging to students, including musical instruments stored at school. In order to help prevent the loss of items, please mark your child's belongings with his/her name.

Each school maintains a lost and found should your child have lost an item. Please feel free to check it periodically. Items left for an extended period of time may be donated to a charitable organization.

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## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Valley Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion, national origin, creed, age, marital status or other legally protected category in access to programs and/or employment, provided by the District. The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment. Contact information for the District's Compliance Officers and Title IX Coordinators can be found on the District's website.

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## **OUTSIDE BEVERAGES AND FOOD**

Any beverage containing stimulant compounds, usually caffeine, such as Energy Drinks, including but not limited to: Red Bull, Monster, Bang, 5 Hour Energy, etc., are strictly prohibited while school is in session. This includes on school grounds, on the bus or at any school sponsored function. If any student is observed in possession and/or in consumption and/or distributing it to others may be assigned discipline and the item will be confiscated. By the same token, under NO circumstance will any student(s) or other persons be allowed to order and/or receive food from the outside while school is in session.

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## **PARENT GROUPS**

The PTA/PTO is the best way to be involved in your child's education. Your ideas and concerns can be voiced and heard by a dedicated group of parents, teachers and administrators who have all joined the PTA/PTO. Your PTA/PTO membership allows you to contribute to your child's growing years when they are most needed.

Member dues are used to help finance field trips, school activities, and special equipment for our students. Your hard-earned money goes a long, long way. Your membership does not obligate you in any way, but shows your support for our students.

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## **PARENT PORTAL**

The Valley Central School District has implemented a web-based communication tool which allows you to access your student's academic profiles via the Internet anytime, anywhere. Please use the link: (<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/parent-portal/>) to sign up if you have not done so already. There will be a short delay between initial login and final access. This delay is due to the amount of time necessary for each account application to go through a comprehensive verification process. A step-by-step guide for Parents & Guardians about how to login and access student information through the Parent Portal is available via a link on the District website. For any questions/concerns do not hesitate to call the main office.

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## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

Promotion and retention are based on an evaluation of academic, social, and emotional growth. Retention is usually considered as a more positive alternative during Kindergarten, first or second grades. Parents can assume their child/ren will be promoted unless the alternative of retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents will be involved in any retention decisions, but should understand that the final decision concerning retention is that of the principal.

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## **RECESS**

We encourage students to be active and will send them outside at every opportunity. Weather permitting, students will go outside if the temperature, considering the wind chill factor, is 20 degrees or warmer, and a real feel temperature of 95 degrees or cooler. Please make sure students come to school dressed appropriately for recess. Students will be permitted to take part in outdoor recess activities regardless of their level of dress for the weather. Students may remove coats, jackets and/or outerwear, if they wish.

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## **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICE**

The school counselors are primarily responsible for assisting the student in recognizing, thinking through and solving their academic and social emotional struggles. Their duties include:

1. Addressing students' social and emotional concerns.
2. Collaborating with teachers to ensure the academic success of students.
3. Working with the community in coordinating school resources and activities.
4. Planning and conducting in class counseling activities.
5. Working with administration in problem solving student and school wide issues.
6. Participating in CSE, 504, MTSS and parent/teacher meetings.
7. Communicating with parents/guardians and assisting them with resources, strategies, etc.
8. Individual and group counseling.

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## **SEX-BASED HARASSMENT**

The Board of Education recognizes that harassment of students and staff on the basis of sex, gender and/or sexual orientation is abusive and illegal behavior that harms victims and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, intimidation and intolerance. The Board further recognizes that preventing and remedying sex-based harassment in schools is essential to ensure a healthy, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can learn and employees can work productively. The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment. You can access the entire Board of Education Policy on the District website and copies are available in the office. Contact information for the District's Compliance Officers and Title IX Coordinators can be found on the District's website.

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## **SPECIAL AREA INSTRUCTION**

### **ART, COMPUTER, LIBRARY, MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Special Area Instruction will take place on an A-E Day schedule, rather than a Monday-Friday schedule. For example, if the first day of school is on a Thursday, that will be an A day. The following day will be a B day and so on. Once E day is reached, the cycle starts again. In the event of a holiday, snow day, etc., the next school day will pick up where the schedule left off. For example, if Monday is an A day and Tuesday is a snow day, Wednesday will be a B day.

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## **SPECIAL SERVICES FOR STUDENTS**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special Education provides specially designed services and programs for children with educational disabilities. It is intended to meet individual needs and enhance strengths. Students and parents are introduced to special education in various ways. Some disabilities can be identified when children are very young while others are not identified until children show difficulty in regular school programs. Special education programs and services are designed to ensure that children with disabilities receive the appropriate and equal opportunities for educational growth up until the age of twenty-one.

### **504 SERVICES**

Under Section 504, students may be considered if they meet the definition of a "qualified handicapped person," which is a person who has or had a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity or is regarded as disabled by others. Major life activities include: walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks. The disabling condition need only substantially limit one major life activity in order for the student to be eligible.

If a student feels that he or she has a question or grievance related to his or her disability, or feels that he or she has been a victim of harassment based upon his or her disability, that student should contact Ivelisse Mojica, Assistant Superintendent.

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## **STUDENT REGISTRATION**

Our Central Registration Office is located in our District Administration Building, 944 State Route 17K, Montgomery, New York, located behind Berea Elementary School. To register students, please contact our Central Registrar at (845) 457-2400, Ext. 18130.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Children entering kindergarten are required to be five years old on or before December 1st for the school year in which they are enrolling. Pre-registration takes place in the Spring. Parents are required to bring an original birth certificate, proof of residence, and immunization records.

### **CUSTODY**

A parent who has sole, joint, and/or physical custody of a child must make this fact known by presenting legal documentation of such custody to the Central Registrar at the time of registration. A parent/guardian who obtains custody or guardianship after the student is registered must also submit legal documentation to the school. Upon a change in custody, legal papers must be presented.

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## **STUDY SKILLS**

A parent can help his/her child/ren be aware of skills and techniques which make learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are suggested practices for achieving good study habits:

- Come to class with pencils, paper, and other necessary materials;
- Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in class;
- Ask questions to clarify problems;
- Plan your day and schedule time for homework;
- Use what is learned and apply it to new situations;
- Strive to do the very best work possible. Just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal.

Speak with your child's teacher(s) regarding specific study skills for your child(ren).

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## **TELEPHONE USE**

The office telephone is a business phone and is not to be used by students except in an emergency. Students are not allowed to use the phone to make personal arrangements (such as requesting permission to go to another child's home after school).

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## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

Security cameras exist in all district buildings for the protection of students, staff and property. These cameras may be used for evidence and investigation of student misconduct.

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## **VISITORS**

The safety of our children, even while in school, continues to be a prime concern in today's society. All visitors are expected to follow the established procedures, which will include signing in and out of the building, providing identification, and wearing a visitor's badge at all times. Access to our buildings for visitors is through the main entrance only, and all appointments with teachers or administrators should be arranged ahead of time (per Board Regulations 1240, 1240-R).

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## **WEBSITE**

We encourage you to visit us at: [www.vcsd.k12.ny.us](http://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us) where you will find a wealth of information on each of our six schools, ALC and the District.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

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# VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### FOR MAINTENANCE OF ORDER ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The Valley Central School District, in accordance with Section 2801(2) of the New York State Education Law, hereby enacts the following Code of Conduct for maintenance of order on school property:<sup>1</sup>

**A. Provisions regarding conduct, dress and language deemed appropriate and acceptable on school property, including a school function, and conduct, dress and language deemed unacceptable and inappropriate on school property and provisions regarding acceptable civil and respectful treatment of teachers, school administrators, other school personnel, students and visitors on school property, including a school function, including the appropriate range of disciplinary measures which may be imposed for violation of such code, and the roles of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, the board of education and parents.**

**1. Conduct, Dress and Language Deemed Acceptable**

- a. Students – Student conduct, dress and language on school property shall be governed by articles “C” - “J” of this Code, as well as Section N.
- b. Employees – Conduct, dress and language for employees on school property shall be determined in accordance with law and collective bargaining agreements.
- c. Contractors with the school district will be required to adhere to the district policy section regarding conduct, dress and language on school property, as applicable. See B(5) of this Code of Conduct.
- d. Visitors – Conduct, dress and language of visitors on school property shall be governed by Section “B(5)” of this Code of Conduct.

**See Board Policies 5311.5, 5312, 5313, 5450, 5450.1, 8111, 8120, 8414**

**2. Roles of Stakeholders Implementing Appropriate Conduct on School Property:**

All stakeholders should assist students in maintaining a safe, supportive school environment, a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, which will strengthen students’ self-concept and promote confidence to learn.

- a. Teachers – Teachers should familiarize themselves with the requirements of this Code, including their rights and responsibilities in removal of disruptive students; referrals of “violent” students as defined in the Code; as well as reporting dangerous situations;
- b. Administrators – Administrators should review and familiarize themselves with their obligations under this Code, including their role in the removal of disruptive students; procedures for dealing with “violent” students; as well as their role in enforcing the Code in a manner which will protect the safety and well-being of various populations of the school while respecting individual rights;
- c. Other School Personnel – Other school personnel should familiarize themselves with the requirements of the Code and for reporting dangerous students.
- d. Board of Education – The Board’s role is to review and adopt this Code of Conduct in accordance with law, and to review, at least annually, the Code’s effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation;
- e. Parents – Parents should recognize that education is a joint responsibility of both parents and the school community and should familiarize themselves with the Code.
- f. Dignity Act Coordinators – The Dignity Act Coordinators will oversee bullying prevention measures and address issues surrounding bullying in their buildings.

<sup>1</sup> *In the event of any dispute between the language of this Code of Conduct and the Board Policies cited throughout, the language of the Board Policies shall control.*

## **g. Students**

- It shall be the **right** of each student in the district to:
  1. have a safe, healthy, orderly and courteous school environment;
  2. have access to all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, religious practice, weight, ethnic group, national origin, or socio-economic status;
  3. have access to student government activities unless properly suspended from participation pursuant to the district's discipline policy;
  4. address the Board on the same terms as any citizen of the district; and
  5. attend school and participate in school programs unless suspended from instruction and participation for legally sufficient cause as determined in accordance with due process of law.
- It shall be the **responsibility** of each student in the school district to:
  1. be familiar with, and abide by, this Code of Conduct and all district policies, rules and regulations pertaining to student conduct;
  2. work to the best of their ability in all academic and extra-curricular pursuits and strive toward the highest level of achievement possible;
  3. conduct themselves, when participating in or attending school-sponsored extra-curricular events, as a representative of the school district, and as such, hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor and sportsmanship;
  4. be in regular attendance at school and in class;
  5. contribute to the maintenance of an environment that is conducive to learning and to show due respect to other persons and property; and
  6. make constructive contributions to the school and to report fairly the circumstances of school-related issues.
  7. report to appropriate school personnel threats of danger and/or physical violence to others and/or destruction of property.

**See Board Policy 5311**

## **B. Standards and procedures to ensure security and safety of students and school personnel.**

### **1. Safety of Students**

The Board of Education encourages and supports all rules and regulations that must be implemented to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students. The provisions of this section will be addressed through board policy. The safety of students shall be ensured through close supervision of students (including surveillance cameras) in all school buildings, on buses, on school grounds, and through special attention to:

- a. maintenance of a safe school environment;
- b. observation of safe practices on the part of school personnel and students, particularly in those areas of instruction or extra-curricular activities that offer special hazards;
- c. provision of safety education for students, particularly laboratory courses in science,
- d. technology courses, and health and physical education;
- e. provision, through the school nurse, of first aid care for students in case of accident or sudden illness; and alerting the school nurse to all accidents. An accident report shall be completed and filed for each accident.

**See Board Policy 5450**

### **2. Notification of Sex Offenders**

The Board of Education also acknowledges the efforts of local law enforcement to notify the district when a person with a



history of sex offenses against a child is being paroled or released into the community, in accordance with the provisions of the Sex Offender Registration Act, commonly known as Megan's Law. The purpose of this notification is to protect members of the community, particularly children, by notifying them of the presence of individuals in their midst who may present a danger. Consistent with its duty to protect students under its care, the district shall cooperate with local law enforcement agencies in this endeavor.

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure the dissemination of such information, as appropriate, provided by local law enforcement officials pursuant to Megan's Law to all staff who might come into contact with the offender in the course of doing their jobs, including Building Principals, staff who issue visitors' passes, bus drivers, custodians, playground monitors, security personnel, and coaches. All other staff members and community residents shall be informed of the availability of such information, upon written request. All staff requests for information provided by the law enforcement agencies shall be directed to the Building Principal. Requests for information from community residents shall be directed to the Superintendent.

**See Board Policy 5450.1**

### **3. Reporting of Hazards**

The Board of Education further recognizes its responsibility to provide an environment which is reasonably secure from known hazards. The Board therefore directs the Superintendent of Schools and all professional and support staff members to comply with occupational safety and health regulations, including the Hazard Communication Standard and "Right-to-Know" legislation.

The Superintendent will direct appropriate personnel to develop and oversee a written hazard communication program. Such program will include the following:

- a. the acquisition, maintenance and review of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) for all known hazardous materials on district property;
- b. the compilation of a hazardous materials inventory;
- c. employee training in hazardous materials management and protection; and
- d. the recording of all incidents involving exposure to known hazardous materials.

The district will comply with the requirements for the visual notification of pesticide spraying as set forth in the Environmental Conservation Law.

It is the responsibility of the entire school community to report any unsafe building or equipment conditions to the main office as soon as possible. In addition, designated administrators will provide notice of hazardous materials within 72 hours of an employee's request.

**See Board Policies 8111, 8115**

### **4. Students and Staff Reporting Unsafe Conditions**

The Board of Education also seeks to ensure the safety of students and employees of the district while on district property.

The Board and administrative staff, in cooperation with students and employees, will take reasonable measures to prevent accidents on the school premises.

Any dangerous conditions involving equipment or buildings or any unsafe practices by anyone in the building or on the grounds of the district are to be immediately reported to the Building Principal and/or Head Custodian.

Unless specifically authorized, no recreational motorized, electrically powered or battery powered vehicles are permitted on school property.

The 15 mile per hour speed limit is to be observed and other posted signs on school grounds are to be obeyed.

Formal objective investigations of all accidents or unsafe conditions are to be immediately conducted by the Building Principal and the results of the investigation are to be presented to the Superintendent in a written report. The results of selected investigations should be communicated to employees and students for the purpose of determining how the accident might have been avoided.

**See Board Policy 8120**

The Superintendent of Schools and Building Principals shall cooperate with the governmental agencies on matters of safety.

The district has determined that BUS-CAMS will be used to assist in the enforcement of transportation rules. They shall establish and check loading and unloading procedures at each school and student conduct on buses. The Superintendent shall arrange for bus emergency drills, including instruction in the use of windows as a means of escape in case of fire or accident, to take place a minimum of three times during the school year. Such drills shall include such instruction and be held at such times as required by the Regulations of the Commissioner.

**See Board Policy 8414**

**5. Visitors to Schools**

Visitors to the schools of the district shall be governed by the following rules:

- a. Each building principal shall establish and maintain a safety plan outlining the process to authorize visitors to their school. Such plans shall be submitted to the superintendent of schools for approval, and thereafter be made available in the school.
- b. The building principal must be contacted by the person or group wishing to visit and prior approval must be obtained for the visit.
- c. Parents or guardians wishing to speak with a specific teacher concerning the progress of a child must make an appointment with the teacher, in addition to obtaining the permission of the building principal.
- d. All visitors must enter through the designated single point of entry (except in the case of a handicapped entrance being more suitable for a disabled individual). Visitors must provide identification, which will be entered into the visitor management system, sign in, and be issued a visitor's permit (as applicable), which must be displayed at all times. The permit must be returned and the visitor must sign out at the conclusion of the visit. Firearms are banned on school property except by uniformed law enforcement agents.
- e. Visitors to schools may be denied entry for any reason, including as a result of a search on the visitor management system. Any visitor who is denied entry must leave school premises immediately.
- f. Registration shall not be required for school functions open to the public, whether or not school-related.
- g. Parents are encouraged to visit guidance counselors, school nurses, school psychologists and other support personnel, by appointment, in order to discuss any school-related problems or concerns the parent may have regarding the student.
- h. Any visitor wishing to inspect school records or interview students on school premises must comply with all applicable Board policies and administrative regulations. In questionable cases, the visitor shall be directed to the superintendent's office to obtain written permission for such a visit.
- i. The Principal is authorized to take any action necessary to secure the safety of students and school personnel. Unauthorized visitors shall be requested to leave school premises immediately, and will be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing, pursuant to the New York State Penal Law, if they refuse.

**See Board Policies 1240-R, 1500, 1520-R**

**6. Reporting Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying**

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to protect students from unlawful harassment, discrimination and bullying while on school property.

Students or staff who wish to report sexual harassment under Title IX, should contact the District's Title IX coordinator. The name and contact information of the District's Title IX coordinator can be found on the District's website or in District policy. Students or staff who wish to report harassment or discrimination should contact the appropriate compliance officer. Students or staff wishing to report an incident of bullying should contact the appropriate building Dignity Act Coordinator.

The Dignity Act Coordinators are as follows:

Berea Elementary, Student Assistance Counselor Katherine Gusmano, 845-457-2400 x11647

East Coldenham Elementary, Student Assistance Counselor Alexandra Riker, 845-457-2400 x12006

Montgomery Elementary, Student Assistance Counselor Sarah Barringer, 845-457-2400 x14645

Walden Elementary, Student Assistance Counselor Lydia Pabon-Genovez 845-457-2400 x15650

Middle School, Student Assistance Counselor Catherine Heil, 845-457-2400 x16241

High School, Student Assistance Counselor Lacey Benjamin, 845-457-2400 x17643

High School Student Assistance Counselor Abigail Wood, 845-457-2400 x17647

Alternative Learning Center, Student Assistance Counselor Lisa Strassner, 845-457-2400 x13610

**See Board Policies 9520, 9520-R, 0110.1, 0110.1-R, 0115, 5311.9 and 5312**

**C. Provisions for the Removal from the Classroom and from School Property, Including a School Function of Students and Other Persons Who Violate the Code.**

- a. Teachers – Teachers will have the authority to remove disruptive students (as defined below) for up to two days in accordance with the process described. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only.
- b. Disruptive Pupil – One who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom.
- c. Removal – Students are precluded from returning to the class of the teacher from which they were removed.

Process for Removal of a Disruptive Student –

1. If the student does present a danger or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, removal can be immediate, but teacher must provide removed student an opportunity to present their version of the events within 24 hours of removal
2. If the student does not present a danger or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, before removal teacher must provide student with explanation as to why being removed, and an opportunity to present their version of the events
3. Within 24 hours of removal, parents must be notified by principal of removal and reasons for removal.
4. Informal conference – If the pupil denies the charge, an opportunity for informal hearing must take place with parents and principal within 48 hours of removal.
5. Principal's determination – The principal must make determination by close of business on the day following the informal conference to either uphold or reverse determination (determination can only be reversed if finding lacks substantial evidence, inconsistent with code of conduct, a violation of law, or if conduct warrants suspension). The principal may designate a school district administrator (e.g., an assistant principal) to carry out the principal's functions in this regard. No pupil removed by a teacher may return until: (a) the principal or designee makes a final determination, or (b) the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

Continued Educational Programming – In the event of teacher removal of a disruptive student in accordance with this Code of Conduct, continued educational programming will be provided during the period of removal as soon as is practicable. The type of continued educational programming will vary depending upon the student's individual needs but may consist of, for example, study hall; in-school suspension; or other instruction as provided by the teacher and determined by the principal.

**a. Staff**

Removal shall be determined in accordance with applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.

**b. Visitors and Contractors**

Removal of visitors and contractors will be accomplished in accordance with section B(5) of this Code of Conduct.

**D. Provisions for detention, suspension and removal from the classroom of students, consistent with §3214 and other applicable federal, state and local laws including provisions for the school authorities to establish policies and procedures to ensure the provision of continued educational programming and activities for students removed from the classroom, placed in detention, or suspended from school.**

- a. "Violent" pupils – Teachers shall report and refer a "violent" pupil (as defined below) to the principal for appropriate action under the Code of Conduct, and a minimum suspension period in accordance with section "M" of this Code of Conduct.

For purposes of this section, a "violent" pupil is an elementary or secondary student up to 21 years of age who on District property, on school buses, or at school activities:

1. commits an act of violence upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee;
2. commits an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully upon District property, school buses, or at school activities;

3. possesses what appears to be a gun, knife, explosive or incendiary bomb or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or physical injury;
4. displays what appears to be a gun, knife, explosive or incendiary bomb or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or serious bodily injury;
5. threatens to use any instrument that appears capable of causing physical injury or death;
6. intimidates and/or threatens others in in any form of communication, including but not limited to, word, action, or dress;
7. knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other school district employee, or any person lawfully upon school district property, or knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school district property; or
8. harasses another student or member of the school community on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, religious practice, weight, ethnic group, national origin, socio-economic status, or predisposing genetic characteristics.

Serious and/or flagrant violations of the district's code of conduct at school or school functions can result in an immediate Superintendent of Schools' hearing. A student may be suspended from school or subjected to other disciplinary action, **including, but not limited to**, when such student:

1. engages in conduct which is:

a. disorderly, i.e.,

- i. fighting or engaging in violent behavior, threatening another with bodily harm;
- ii. intimidation or bullying of students or school personnel;
- iii. making unreasonable noise;
- iv. using obscene, profane, derogatory, discriminatory, or harassing language, including when such language is on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, religious practice, weight, ethnic group, national origin, or socio-economic status;
- v. recklessly engaging in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury;
- vi. defaming individuals, including making false statements or representations about an individual or group;
- vii. creating and/or possessing and/or distributing sexually explicit, nude, or semi-nude images or videos of oneself and/or others (i.e., sexting);
- viii. using, wearing, depicting, possessing or displaying the Confederate flag or its likeness, except when they are used as part of the curriculum and approved by a teacher or administrator;
- ix. Encouraging a verbal or physical altercation;
- x. Inhibiting or obstructing staff from responding to a disruptive situation, including but not limited to verbal or physical altercations or medical incidents;
- xi. videotaping or taking pictures of an altercation at school or other school incident or the distribution of such video or pictures using cell phone, camera, internet, social media or YouTube; or is

b. insubordinate, i.e.,

- i. failing to comply with the lawful directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of the student;
- ii. missing or leaving school without permission; or
- iii. making an audio and/or video recording and/or transmittal, including photographs during any portion of the school day, or on buses, or at school related activities without the express authorization of appropriate school personnel;
- iv. failing to comply with school rules related to cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices;
- v. computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or

internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites or inappropriate searches; or any other violation of the District's Acceptable Use Policy; or

2. engages in any of the following forms of academic misconduct:
  - a. missing or leaving school without permission; and/or
  - b. submitting another's work as your own (electronically or otherwise) and/or other Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) violations;
  - c. plagiarism; and/or using artificial intelligence for student submissions without staff permissions; and/or
3. engages in conduct violative of the Board's rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on school property or at school events, i.e., vandalism or graffiti, arson, use of tobacco products/synthetic tobacco products/paraphernalia, e-cigarettes, vaporizers or other devices used to inhale non-prescribed substances, theft, sexual misconduct, truancy, possession/use/sale/transfer or facilitation thereof of alcohol and/or drugs or drug paraphernalia, weapons and explosive devices. Further, a student shall not be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs on school property or at school events.
4. trespassing; **See Board Policy 5312**; loitering.
5. is a "violent" pupil as defined above.
6. is "repeatedly substantially disruptive" as defined in Educ. Law § 3214.

"Disruptive Student" means an elementary or secondary student up to the age of 21 who:

  - a. continuously interferes or substantially disrupts the educational process;
  - b. continuously interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom;
  - c. demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions;
  - d. intimidates, bullies or defames others in word, action or dress;
    - i. bullying is generally the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, as defined by the Dignity for All Students Act.
  - e. harasses others on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, religious practice, weight, ethnic group, national origin or predisposing genetic characteristics; or
  - f. makes an audio and/or video recording, including still photographs during any portion of the school day without the express authorization from appropriate school personnel; or fails to comply with school rules related to cell phones or other electronic devices.

**See Board Policies 5313.3 and 5311.9**

The range of penalties which may be imposed for violations of the student disciplinary code includes the following:

1. verbal warning
2. written notification to the parents
3. probation
4. reprimand
5. suspension from transportation
6. suspension from co-curricular/extra-curricular activities (including interscholastic sports)
7. suspension of other privileges
8. exclusion from a particular class
9. in-school suspension
10. out-of-school suspension
11. Superintendent's hearing
12. referral to appropriate authorities
13. permanent suspension

Depending upon the nature of the violation, it is the desire of the Board of Education that student discipline be progressive, i.e., a student's first violation should merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. It is also the Board's desire that an employee or agent take into account all other relevant factors in determining an appropriate penalty. The above penalties may be imposed either alone or in combination. Such penalties will be imposed by the Superintendent of Schools or with their permission.

**See Board Policy 5313**

On appeal to the Board of Education for a long term suspension, an early return may be conditioned upon a pupil's voluntary completion of approved counseling or specialized classes.

**See Board Policy 5313.3R**

**E. Disciplinary Measures to Be Taken in Incidents Involving the Possession or Use of Illegal Substances or Weapons, the Use of Physical Force, Vandalism, Violation of Another Student's Civil Rights and Threats of Violence.**

- a. For any of the above violations, the range of penalties which may be imposed upon students (in accordance with Educ. Law § 3214, Part 100 of the Commissioner's Regulations, and this Code of Conduct) pursuant to the student disciplinary code which includes the following:
  1. verbal warning
  2. written notification to the parents
  3. probation
  4. reprimand
  5. suspension from transportation
  6. suspension from co-curricular/extra-curricular activities (including interscholastic sports)
  7. suspension of other privileges
  8. exclusion from a particular class
  9. in-school suspension
  10. out-of-school suspension
  11. Superintendent's hearing
  12. referral to appropriate authorities
  13. permanent suspension

Depending upon the nature of the violation, it is the desire of the Board of Education that student discipline be progressive, i.e., a student's first violation should merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. It is also the Board's desire that an employee or agent take into account all other relevant factors in determining an appropriate penalty.

**Once an out-of-school suspension is assigned, all privileges for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are denied immediately. The District also reserves the right to suspend students for additional time from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, as these are privileges.** The above penalties may be imposed either alone or in combination. Such penalties will be imposed by the Superintendent of Schools or with their permission.

**See Board Policy 5313**

- b. Detention will be accomplished in accordance with § 5313.1 of the District's policy.

The Board of Education believes that detention is an effective method of discipline for students. Students may be assigned detention by teachers and/or administrators. Transportation will be made available for students who are assigned a detention and who need a ride home. The teacher/administrator supervising the detention period will be responsible for dismissing the student in time for such transportation.

**See Board Policy 5313.1**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of school attendance. Therefore, suspension from school must be viewed as a last resort in dealing with student disciplinary infractions. The Board also recognizes the need to remove unruly or disruptive students from the regular class so that learning can take place in the classrooms.

The Board directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop an in-school suspension program. The program should provide appropriate supervision in the in-school suspension rooms and guidelines for the imposition of an in-school suspension.

**See Board Policy 5313.2**

- c. The responsibility for student dress and general appearance rests with individual students and parents. However, the Board of Education requires students, employees and visitors to attend school in appropriate dress that meets health and safety standards and does not interfere with the learning process. The Board also requires students, employees and visitors to wear appropriate protective gear in certain classes (e.g., home economics, shop, P.E.). In addition, the Board prohibits attire bearing an expression or insignia which is obscene, profane or libelous, which advocates racial or religious prejudice, discrimination or harassment, or which displays and/or encourages the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

**See Board Policy 5311.5**

**F. Procedures by Which Violations Are Reported, Determined, Discipline Measures Imposed and Discipline Measures Carried Out.**

- a. The Board of Education believes that each student can be expected to be responsible for their own behavior. The school administration shall develop and disseminate rules of conduct, focusing on personal safety and respect for the rights and property of others to be consistently applied in the classrooms and through the schools. Students who fail to meet this expected degree of responsibility and violate school rules will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and more regulated supervision.

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with a problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that is fair and impartial. Therefore, before seeking outside assistance, teachers will first use all their positive resources to create a change of behavior in the classroom.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair, and consistent in order to be most effective in changing behavior.

- b. Early Identification and Resolution of Student Discipline Problems

Pupil service personnel, administrators, teachers and others will report students to the Building Principals when they believe such students present a discipline problem. If the Principal suspects that the problem may be manifestation of a disability, they will refer the matter to the Committee on Special Education in the manner prescribed by the Commissioner's Regulations and by district policy.

- c. Individuals' off-campus behavior which jeopardizes the safety and/or welfare of school staff and students, and/or damages property and has a nexus to a disruption of the educational process will face disciplinary action in a manner consistent with school practices and procedures. Furthermore, speech which materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the school may be subject to limitation including instances of: severe bullying or harassment targeted at particular individuals; threats aimed at the school community; speech concerning the failure to follow school rules, including lessons, the writing of papers, the use of computers or participation in other school related online activities; and breaches of school security devices.

This includes but is not limited to use of the internet, social media, alcohol and/or drugs, violence, harassment, and other infractions that violate the New York State Penal Law.

- d. Discipline Policy for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will be suspended in accordance with the procedures established under applicable federal and state law and regulation.

**See Board Policies 5310, 5311**

The Board of Education assures that students of the district shall have all the rights afforded them by federal and state constitutions and statutes. The district recognizes all federal, state and local laws in connection with these rights and reminds students that certain responsibilities accompany the rights they are given.

**See Board Policy 5313.3R**

**G. Provisions Ensuring this Code and the Enforcement Thereof Are in Compliance with State and Federal Laws Relating to Students with Disabilities.**

Discipline issues regarding students with disabilities under Section 504 will be referred to the appropriate Section 504 accommodation team for processing. Code of Conduct issues pertaining to students classified under IDEA will be referred to the Committee for Special Education.

**H. Provisions Setting Forth the Procedures by Which Local Law Enforcement Agencies Shall Be Notified of Code Violations Which Constitute a Crime.**

In accordance with consultation with local law enforcement, it is the district's understanding that the following types of conduct are generally referable to law enforcement as crimes:

1. forcible sexual offenses
2. use or possession of weapons
3. drug offenses
4. assaults resulting in serious physical injury
5. serious threat which a reasonable person would perceive as placing a person or persons in danger
6. creation, possession or distribution of sexually explicit, nude or semi-nude images or videos of individuals under the age of 18.

The usual contact between the district and law enforcement parties will be the school resource officer.

**See Board Policy 5313**

**I. Provisions Setting Forth the Circumstances under and Procedures by Which Persons in Parental Relation to the Student Shall Be Notified of Code Violations.**

Notification of persons in parental relation of the fact that a code violation has occurred will be accomplished in accordance with the procedure for removal of disruptive students and the due process rights of students referenced above.

**J. Provisions Setting Forth the Circumstances under and Procedures by Which a Complaint in Criminal Court, a Juvenile Delinquency Petition or Person in Need of Supervision Petition as Defined in Articles Three and Seven of the Family Court Act Will Be Filed.**

The district will observe all applicable procedures under the Family Court Act for filing of PINS petitions, Juvenile Delinquency petitions and it will follow the appropriate sections of Penal Law and Criminal Procedure Law and other statutes for filing criminal complaints.

**K. Circumstances under and Procedures by Which Referral to Appropriate Human Service Agencies Shall Be Made.**

Referrals to appropriate home service agencies will be provided through a list maintained by the Orange County Youth Bureau and distributed by the Special Education Department. This list may be made available to parents where appropriate.

**L. A Minimum Suspension Period, for Students Who Repeatedly Are Substantially Disruptive of the Educational Process or Substantially Interfere with the Teacher's Authority over the Classroom, Provided That the Suspending Authority May Reduce Such Period on a Case by Case Basis to Be Consistent with Any Other State and Federal Law. For Purposes of this Section, the Definition of "Repeatedly Are Substantially Disruptive" Shall Be Determined in Accordance with the Regulations of the Commissioner.**

Where a student engaged in conduct which would define that student as "repeatedly, substantially disruptive" (e.g., engaging in disruptive conduct requiring removal from classroom on four or more occasions during a semester), minimum suspension will be two days subject to modification on a case-by-case basis based upon the particular circumstances present.

**M. A Minimum Suspension Period for Acts That Would Qualify the Pupil to Be Defined as a Violent Pupil Pursuant to Paragraph "a" of Subdivision 2-a of § 3214 of the Education Law, Provided That the Suspending Authority May Reduce Such Period on a Case by Case Basis to Be Consistent with Any Other State and Federal Law.**

Where a student engaged in conduct which would define that student as "violent" (e.g., engaging in violent conduct requiring removal from classroom on four or more occasions during a semester), minimum suspension will be three days subject to modification on a case-by-case basis based upon the particular circumstances present.

**N. Dress Code**

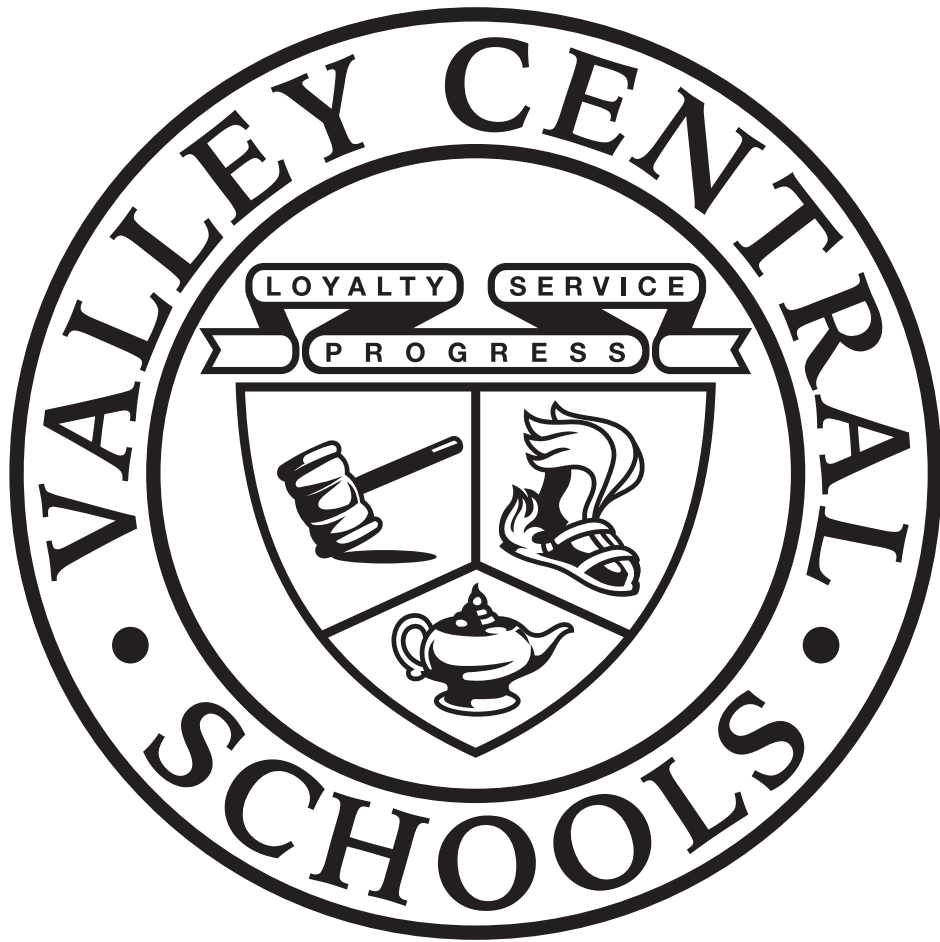
Students are expected to attend school in appropriate type apparel and footwear. Clothing items worn in a revealing manner, and clothing exposing the midriff or undergarments are prohibited, for example, halter tops, tube tops, bare midriffs, revealing sheer clothing, tight shorts, short-shorts, low-riding pants, and tight high-slit skirts. Chains of any kind, spiked collars, rivets, wrist bands, oversized rings, etc. are PROHIBITED and MAY be confiscated. Students are also PROHIBITED from wearing clothing containing drugs, alcohol, tobacco/synthetic tobacco products/paraphernalia, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, sex-related topics, double



meanings, profanity, vulgarity, inflammatory obscene or discriminatory language/ pictures/ symbols. Students may not wear hoods or bandanas in the school other than for religious or safety purposes. Students **may** wear headscarves or head wraps. Various colored bandanas, worn on belts, pants, pockets, as headbands etc., are expressly forbidden, given their association with gang activity. Students are prohibited from using, wearing, depicting, possessing or displaying the Confederate flag or its likeness, except when they are used as part of the curriculum and approved by a teacher or administrator. Students will be issued a warning and continued violations of said rule may be met with disciplinary action.

Students are PROHIBITED from wearing violence-inspired clothing on school grounds, specifically any dress or appearance which encourages and/or advocates violence and/or illegal and/or violent activities and/or violent crimes. No outer garments should be worn around school (i.e. jackets, coats, 3/4 coats, gloves, etc.) for health and safety reasons. Due to safety concerns, all students are PROHIBITED from wearing the following items but not limited to: face paint, masks, costume wigs, helmets, full body costumes, and/or other materials or accessories that may prevent school personnel from properly identifying a student.

The standards of dress will prevail at all times including examination periods and other activities planned for inside the building. Be advised that administration reserves the right to challenge any student's dress or appearance which, in the judgment of a school administrator, may cause a material or substantial disruption to the educational process and/or create a health and safety hazard. In such cases, students will be given an appropriate shirt issued by an administrator or may be sent home to change their clothing. A student who refuses to comply with a principal's request or designee's directive may be subject to disciplinary action.







**Berea Elementary School**

946 Rte. 17K  
Montgomery, New York 12549  
457-2400 Ext. 11500

**Montgomery Elementary School**

141 Union Street  
Montgomery, New York 12549  
457-2400 Ext. 14500

**East Coldenham Elementary School**

286 Rte. 17K  
Newburgh, New York 12550  
457-2400 Ext. 12500

**Walden Elementary School**

75 Orchard Street  
Walden, New York 12586  
457-2400 Ext. 15500

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