



Valley View Middle School STUDENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010

Dear Students:

I hope you had a restful and relaxing summer and it is with great pleasure that I welcome you back to Valley View. Your teachers are looking forward to challenging you to reach your highest potential while creating long-lasting, meaningful, and rewarding experiences along the way. As you get ready for this year, please remember that your success at Valley View is created by your hard work, determination, organization, questions, and participation.

I am a firm believer that if you study hard enough, complete all assignments, and participate at Valley View, you will find success. This school planner is one piece of the puzzle for creating success, for it helps you organize your assignments, assessments, appointments, and activities. The teachers and I are excited to make this your best and most memorable year at Valley View!

Charlie Miller

BE HERE!

You are expected to be here every school day by 8:00 A.M. Be sure that your parent or guardian calls the office by 8:00 A.M. if you are absent. Homework requests should be made at the time of the absence call. The school will call your home if no call is received. Excused absences include personal illness, death in the immediate family, religious holidays, and family emergencies. Unexcused absences, *including personal vacation days*, are included on the report cards. All students must have a note explaining their absence when returning to school.

BE ON TIME FOR SCHOOL!

Students are expected to arrive to school on time. It is the parents and student's responsibility to get to school on time. If you are late, you must report to the main office with your parent/guardian to be signed in for the school day. **More than two unexcused tardies per marking period will result in 7:30 A.M. detention(s).**

BE ON TIME TO CLASS!

Promptness to class is very important. You have three minutes between periods to reach your next class and to be ready when the late bell rings. Your teachers will address any tardiness with you and assign appropriate consequences.

GET INVOLVED!!

There are many opportunities to participate in activities at Valley View. The more you do, the more you'll love being at Valley View!

- Join Student Council – be a class “rep,” run for office, attend meetings, plan dances and events.
- Be a Community Outreach Club member – plan fundraisers that will support worthy causes.
- Let the Homework Club assist you with assignments and projects.
- Be artistic. Join the Art Club.
- If you are an 8th grade student and are interested in photography, see Mr. Murphy.
- Come out for intramurals – soccer, flag football, tennis, floor hockey, field hockey, and volleyball.
- Try out for interscholastic teams – baseball, softball, boys' and girls' basketball, and track & field.

Every year there are new clubs and activities. Find out what they are!

THE VALLEY VIEW STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to provide our students with the best possible learning environment, it must be safe, courteous and free of distractions. The Student Code of Conduct has been developed to inform all students and parents of Valley View's expectations regarding behaviors and conduct. Valley View students will follow these procedures during the school day and while attending after-school activities.

The Student Code of Conduct is based on the guidelines enumerated by the Watchung Board of Education (Policy 5131).

Basic Principles of Positive Student Behavior:

Students are expected to:

- *Demonstrate behavior that promotes a safe and secure environment at all times*
- *Conduct themselves in a way that allows all students to secure the full benefits of our instructional programs*
- *Apply themselves in all curricular areas and set high standards for personal achievement*
- *Be considerate of the thoughts, feelings and heritage of others*
- *Show respect for the property of others*
- *Follow directions and show respect for all supervising adults at all times in all settings*
- *Attend school and classes on a regular and punctual basis*
- *Dress in a manner which reflects purpose and propriety*
- *Resolve conflicts in a positive and constructive manner*

The broad principles listed above provide the foundation for our entire Student Code of Conduct. These principles acknowledge that responsible students set high behavioral expectations and conduct themselves in such a manner as to respect each other's right to receive an education in a safe, supportive, and respectful environment, free of fear and intimidation and respectful of property whether personal or school owned.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is one of the most important lessons education should teach. It is not listed as a subject; however, discipline is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and productivity. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. With a good attitude toward discipline, you will do your part to make Valley View a great school and you will become a better person. Behave in a way that brings you, your family and friends respect and honor.

Students who misbehave will meet with the teacher and/or principal to discuss and resolve the matter. Parent conferences and 7:30 A.M. detentions may be necessary. Violence, the use of profanity, and any and all threats (verbal and physical) are unacceptable and will result in the following: in school/out of school suspension based on the severity of the actions. Valley View School has a "hands off" policy.

BULLYING

In order to maintain a safe and civil school environment, the Watchung Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, which (like other disruptive or violent behaviors) is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

Acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any pupil or staff member will result in the disciplinary sanctions included in policies on suspension and expulsion and conduct/discipline.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be defined as any gesture or written, verbal, or physical act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, or on a school bus and that:

- a. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm or damage to his/her property; or

BULLYING (cont.)

- b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way so as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Board policy requires all students in the district to adhere to the rules and regulations established by the school district and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for violation of these rules.

Any school employee, pupil, or volunteer who has witnessed harassment, intimidation, or bullying or has reliable information that a pupil has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying must report the incident to the appropriate school official designated by the administration. The board shall not tolerate an act of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Student handbooks or similar documents will outline the rules of the district regarding student conduct and identify disciplinary sanctions and due process. Information about this and other policies can be found on the district web site or at the district offices.

HALLWAYS

You may be in the halls only at the beginning and close of school and while passing between classes. You must have the appropriate pass in order to be in the hall at any other time.

MEDICATIONS

The school cannot administer medicine, including aspirin. Students who need to take prescribed medication must have the appropriate form signed by the physician and parent. The form and medication must be left in the office. The Board of Education may permit the self-administration of medication by a pupil with asthma or other potentially life-threatening illnesses provided that certain conditions are met. Please consult the nurse. Epi-pen information is also available.

LOCKDOWNS

Lockdown drills will be held during the school year. When you hear the code over the public address system, respond immediately by getting into the bend and tuck position and by following the directions of your teacher.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the school year. Please remember these basic rules:

- **Check instructions**, which are posted by the door in each classroom.
- **Walk quickly** and quietly to the class's designated area.
- When you hear the fire alarm, assume it is a fire and act accordingly.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students who ride the bus to school should return home on the bus unless you have a note from your parent/guardian. The principal must approve the note. Riding the bus is a privilege and improper behavior on the bus will result in that privilege being denied. After the first incident, students will be removed from the bus for a specified period of time. Remember that the driver is responsible for you while you are on the bus. To be safe, follow all of the bus driver's rules.

While on the bus, follow these simple rules:

- Sit while the bus is moving.
- Keep your arms and head inside the bus
- Do not throw objects within the bus or out the windows.
- **Wear seat belts** at all times.

At dismissal, you should go immediately and slowly to the appropriate area based on weather conditions. **Do not run in the hallways!**

TEXTBOOKS

Your books and workbooks are loaned to you. Please keep your texts clean and covered. Be sure your name and grade are written on the book label. You will have to pay for any lost or damaged books. Please treat your books with care!

LOCKER SEARCHES

Although the Constitution protects all citizens from unreasonable search and seizure, this does not mean one is protected from any search and seizure of materials. A locker is considered school property and school officials have the legal right to enter it. A locker may be searched if the principal has a reasonable basis for believing that the student is concealing material, the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state, or local law or which violates school rules and regulations.

LOCKERS

Their homeroom teacher will assign students a hall locker during the first week of school. Students may keep their outer clothing and other personal property in these lockers as well as the school textbooks and other school property assigned to them.

We do not recommend that valuable items be kept in your locker. Please be advised that during an emergency situation the school reserves the right to remove your lock with metal clippers.

The school is not responsible for any items lost or stolen from lockers. If you have lost something, you should first check all the classrooms you were in that day. Often you will find the missing item there. If you don't, look in the lost and found bin where it may have been turned in. If it was lost in gym class, check with the gym teachers. If you find anything that may be of some value to someone, you should turn it in to the main office.

LUNCH

Student behavior in the lunchroom should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. Please clean up any litter before you leave the lunchroom. Please stay seated until you have finished eating and are dismissed as a group. If a parent brings in a student lunch, they must sign-in and place in the appropriate bin in the main office.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Watchung Board of Education believes that the clothes that students wear should to be appropriate within reasonable limits and should not to be in any way distracting from educational activities.

Students are expected to attend classes in clothing that is neat, clean, and "distraction free". The school authorities have no intention of dictating the specific types of hairstyles and grooming to be worn by the students. However, certain common sense rules should govern the matter in which students are groomed for class, for school social affairs, and for off-campus school activities.

The following types of clothing will be deemed inappropriate:

1. Underwear as outer clothing
2. Clothing that exposes midriff
3. Dresses, skirts or shorts that are shorter than fingertip length; spandex shorts or biker shorts are not acceptable except in gym class

4. Midriffs, halters, transparent blouses or shirts
5. Fishnet, perforated, or low cut tops; tops with no backs or low sides that reveal undergarment
6. Clothing that has any symbol that holds the American flag up to ridicule
7. Torn or ripped clothing
8. Footwear that is considered unsafe or dangerous (flip flops, backless shoes, sneakers with wheels, etc.)
9. Any apparel or signs, patches, or symbols that are vulgar, lewd, obscene, or plainly offensive or which are likely to disrupt or materially interfere with school activities or discipline
10. Any apparel, signs, patches, or symbols which can reasonably be viewed to bear the Board's imprimatur and which contain a message that is ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased, prejudiced, vulgar, profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences
11. Any apparel that displays symbols or advertisements of illegal substances, alcohol, or tobacco or
12. Hats or other headwear unless for medical or religious reasons. **For the safety of all students, no jewelry (including but not limited to earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and wrist watches) is permitted to be worn during physical education classes.**

IMPLEMENTATION POLICY

1. When a pupil is not in compliance with the Student Dress Code, the teacher or other staff member shall send the pupil to the principal or his/her designee with a written report.
2. The principal or his/her designee, after discussion with the pupil, shall contact the parent. The parent shall be requested to bring a change of clothing to school to enable the pupil to return to class.
3. If the parent is unable to bring a change of clothing, the pupil shall be sent to another area where he or she will be given the assignments for the day.
4. **Repeated offenses shall be cause for suspension and/or any other disciplinary action deemed necessary by the principal or his/her designee.**

CELL PHONES, IPODS, ELECTRONIC GAMES, etc.

Students are encouraged not to bring phones into the building. If a student should have a cell phone with him/her, it should be turned off. If the phone should ring or otherwise be a disruption, it will be confiscated* (see code of conduct on page 7). Incoming emergency calls can always be directed to the main office.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

What is sexual harassment? Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can occur under a variety of circumstances, including, but not limited to the following:

1. The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be the opposite sex.
2. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker or even a non-employee.
3. The victim does not have to be the person harassed, but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
4. Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.

Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

What laws prohibit sexual harassment and discrimination?

1. State Law

- The New Jersey Constitution guarantees all students the right to a thorough and efficient (T&E) education.
- The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination ("LAD"), N.J.S.A. 10:5-12, prohibits discrimination in places of public accommodation based on race, creed, color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, age, sex (including pregnancy), familial status, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information.

- N.J.S.A. 10A:36-20 prohibits discrimination in public schools by reason of race, color, creed, sex, or national origin.
- N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq. "Harassment and Bullying Prevention Statute" requires schools to adopt a policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying on school property, at a school-sponsored function or on a school bus.

2. Federal Laws

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects employees from sexual harassment at work.
- Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C.1681 et seq., prohibits sexual discrimination and sexual harassment of students.
 - Comprehensive federal law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity.
 - Prohibited discrimination occurs when a district's employees treat students differently on the basis of gender, or engage in quid pro quo harassment, or when a district is aware of a sexually hostile environment and condones, tolerates or even allows that environment to exist.
 - It is important to recognize that the Title IX prohibition against sexual harassment does not extend to legitimate nonsexual touching or other nonsexual conduct. For example, a high school athletic coach patting a student on the back or a kindergarten teacher's consoling hug for a child with a skinned knee will not be considered sexual harassment.
 - However, in some circumstances, nonsexual conduct may take on sexual connotations and rise to the level of sexual harassment. For example, a teacher's repeated hugging and putting his or her arms around students under inappropriate circumstances could create a hostile environment.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

FERPA regulations provide parents of currently enrolled students and those students who are 18 years old or older the following rights:

1. to inspect and review the student's education records;
2. to seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. to require his/her consent prior to the disclosure of the personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and other federal regulations authorize disclosure without such consent; and
4. to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, United States Department of Education, regarding any alleged failures by the district to comply with FERPA and its regulations. If the district discloses directory information from education records without parental/student consent, the district must notify parents and eligible students of the types of information that the district has designated as directory information and the parents'/students' right to opt out of disclosure of directory information. (Please refer to the "Pupil Records" section of this folder.)

In order to exercise their rights under FERPA, parents/guardians and eligible students must make a formal written request to the appropriate school principal.

PUPIL PRIVACY PROTECTION

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) protects pupil privacy in connection with student surveys and physical examinations. Under this law, parents and students have the following rights:

- a. to inspect the survey and accompanying instructional materials whenever a survey to be conducted is federally funded, in whole or in part, or is otherwise part of a program which receives federal funds;
- b. the right, under certain circumstances, to have the district obtain written parental consent prior to the administration of the survey; and c. the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. Parents have the right to exclude their

child(ren) from participating in any surveys or activities that cover designated topics outlined in the PPRA.

REPORT CARD GRADES

The evaluation of your achievement is one of the most important functions of your teachers. Your grade at the end of each quarter should not be a surprise. If you do not understand a particular lesson, seek out extra help immediately. Any missed work or tests because of a legal absence should be made up as soon as possible. Keep the lines of communication open with your teachers. They will support you in all of your academic endeavors.

Grades for students in grades 5-8 are available to parents using our data collection system, PowerSchool. Information and access codes for this system will be distributed during the school year.

GUIDANCE

The purpose of our guidance program is to help each student achieve his/her highest growth mentally, emotionally, socially, and academically. Teachers, the counselor, principal and school psychologist will try to do this in several ways:

1. Helping new students feel at home at Valley View.
2. Scheduling individual or group conferences whenever a teacher, administrator, student or parent believes it is necessary; students who need to see the guidance counselor should sign up in the guidance office to request an appointment.
3. Designing a testing program to help students learn as much as possible about their capabilities.
4. Discussing any concerns with students and/or parents.

PLEASE KEEP THESE THINGS AT HOME:

Skateboards
Laptops
iPods
iPhones
Electronic games
Hats

VALLEY VIEW SCHOOL STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

INFRACTION	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
Abuse of Hall Passes	Teacher detention	2 Teacher detentions	No more passes (Unless medically excused)
Bias Act/ Bullying/ Harassment	Sent to administrator/parent notified/possible suspension/possible police notified		
Bus Misconduct	Loss of bus privileges for 1 week	Loss of bus privileges for 1 month	Loss of bus privileges as indicated by administrator
Cheating	Zero/Parent notified by teacher		
Cut Class	ISS (1 day)/parent notified by administrator	ISS (3 days)/parent notified by administrator	Possible ISS/parent notified by administrator
Damage to School Property	Sent to administrator/parent notified/payment for replacement/repair/possible suspension/possible police notified		
Defiant/Disrespectful/ Disruptive Behavior	Teacher detention/parent notified by teacher	Administrative detention/parent notified by administrator.	ISS/parent notified by administrator
Disruptive for Substitute	Teacher detention	2 Teacher Detentions	Possible suspension/Parent conference with teacher and administrator
Endangering the Safety of Others	Warning from teacher	Teacher detention/parent notified by teacher	Send to administrator/ parent notified/possible suspension
Failure to Report to Administrative Detention	2 administrative detentions	Possible ISS/parent notified by administrator	Possible OSS/parent notified by administrator (possible conference)
Failure to Report to Teacher Detention	Teacher detention is doubled/parents notified by teacher	Administrative detention/parent notified by teacher	Possible in-school suspension/parent notified by administrator
Fighting	Sent to administrator/parent notified/possible 1 day ISS	Sent to administrator/parent notified/possible 2 days ISS	Sent to administrator/parent notified/possible 3 days ISS
Food in class (other than water)	See Defiant/Disrespectful/Disruptive Behavior		
Forgery	Assignment Grade Reduced/Parent notified by teacher	Parent notified by teacher/ Drop 1 letter grade for the class	
Gambling	Warning	1 Detention/parent notified by administrator	Parent conference/ possible police notification
Hats	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the day by the student	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the day by the parent	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the year by the parent
Inappropriate Clothing	Student sent to the office/parent notification to bring in appropriate attire (see handbook)		
Inappropriate Sexual Contact (Harassment)	Student sent to the office to meet with administrator and guidance counselor/parents notified/possible suspension/possible police notification		
Injury to Other Student(s)	Students sent to administrator/parent notified/possible detention, suspension/police notification		
Leaving School Building Without Permission	Student sent to administration/parent notified/possible suspension/possible police notification		
Use of Cell Phones, IPODS, MP3 Players, Gameboys, and Other Electronic Devices	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the week by the student	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the week by the parent	Confiscated, retrieved from front office at the end of the year by the parent
Possession of Fireworks	Possible suspension/parent notification/possible police notification		
Possession of Illegal Weapon(s)/Imitation Weapon(s)	Possible suspension/parent notification/possible police notification/counseling		
Possession, Distribution, or Use of Controlled Substances	Possible suspension/parent notification/possible police notification/counseling/possible drug testing		
Profane or Abusive Language	Verbal Warning	Parent notified by the adult who heard it	1 week detention/parent notified by administrator
Smoking	Parent notified	Possible suspension/counseling	Possible suspension/counseling
Stealing	Possible suspension/parent notification/possible police notification		
Tardiness to School	After the second (2) unexcused tardy for the marking period , an administrative detention (1 day) will be assigned for each unexcused tardy thereafter.		
Tardy to Class	Warning	Teacher detention/parent notified by teacher	2 Teacher detentions/parent notified by teacher
Threatening to Harm Staff or Another Student	Send to administrator/possible suspension/parents and police notified (Depending on the level of severity)		
Violating privacy of a teacher/student	Possible suspension/parent notified by teacher and/or administrator/possible police notification		

Above consequences are subject to change and are at the discretion of the administrator