

# VESTABURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK AND ATHLETIC CODE BOOK 2023-2024

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[Adopted by the Board of Education on July 1, 2023]



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<b>NOTE:</b>	This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was printed in August 2023. If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal or superintendent, or access the document on the District's website: <a href="http://www.vcs-k12.net">www.vcs-k12.net</a> by clicking on "handbook" and finding the specific policy or administrative guideline in the Table of Contents for that section.
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## **FOREWORD**

The student handbook has been created to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents/guardians may have during the course of the academic year. The handbook also contains information about student rights and responsibilities. Each student is responsible for knowing its contents. Please take the time to become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for you and your parents'/guardians' use. It can be a valuable resource during the academic year and is a means to avoid confusion and misunderstanding when questions arise. Should you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook please contact your building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of August 2023. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2024 the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

## **DISTRICT VISION**

The Vision of Vestaburg Community School is to empower all to create and achieve their goals and dreams.

## **DISTRICT MISSION**

The mission of Vestaburg Community School is to build a foundation and prepare students for their future.

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of this district to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Vestaburg Staff will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, disability, religion, gender, age, ancestry, national origin, or other protected characteristics as well as a place of residence within district boundaries, or social or economic background. Any person who believes that the school or any staff person has discriminated against a student on the basis of race, color, creed, disability, religion, gender, age, ancestry, national origin, or other protected characteristics as well as a place of residence

within district boundaries, or social or economic background, has the right to file a complaint. A formal complaint should be made in writing to the superintendent.

Brandon Hubbard  
Superintendent  
989-268-5353

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The compliance officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunities.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Vestaburg Community School recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The district believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school as well as greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally results in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism. The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members. A copy of the district's parental involvement plan is available in the office, along with the school improvement plans.

## SCHOOL DAY

**Daily Office Hours:** 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Elementary (K-5) Daily Breakfast:** 7:55 a.m. to 8:10 a.m.

**Secondary (6-12) Daily Breakfast:** 7:45 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.

Students are expected to be in class at 7:55 a.m.

No student is allowed to leave school property once they have arrived without permission of the building principal or designee. Doing so will result in consequences aligned with skipping school.

Lunch is served daily between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. except on 11:00 a.m. release days.

Weather permitting, recess/outdoor time is provided for specific grades. Temperatures, including wind chill, must be ten degrees or higher. Students are expected to go outside at their designated times and need to plan and have proper clothing available.

Students are not allowed to remain in the building unsupervised. Students are expected to leave the building by 3:10 pm daily unless they are being supervised by a staff member or after school activity coach or supervisor.

### **TOBACCO USE/SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Vestaburg Community School is a smoke and tobacco-free environment. Smoking and other uses of tobacco are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vapes, or similar devices at any time on school property or at school-related events by students, staff, or visitors.

### **NUT AND LATEX FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Vestaburg Community School is a nut and latex-free environment. Nut and latex products may pose a danger to a student's health and to the health of others due to severe allergic reactions. The school prohibits nut or latex products from being brought on school property.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights of freedom of expression and association and to be treated fair as long as they respect those rights of their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teacher directions and obey all school rules. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, the student must notify any staff person immediately. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process before a student is removed because of her/his behavior.

Parents/Guardians have the right to know how their child is performing in school. Parents/Guardians will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed when concerns arise. Many times, it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver that information, especially at the secondary level. Parents/Guardians are expected to access the Parent Portal within PowerSchool to monitor their child's progress and performance. Each student and parent is assigned a password and provided instructions regarding how to access their child's information. If there are any questions or concerns regarding this program please contact the office immediately. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to build a two-way link with their student's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish her/his educational goals.

The staff expects students to arrive at school prepared to learn. It is the student's responsibility to arrive on time and to be prepared to participate in the educational program. If for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from a member of the district's staff.

Adult students (age 18 or older) are expected to follow all school rules. If residing at home, adult students should include their parents/guardians in their educational program(s).

## **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

Student safety is the responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, tornado, lockdown drills, and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, they must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical form completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the school office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

## **MEDICATION & OTHER HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b, and F1c must be filed with the respective building principal and/or school nurse before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours
- C. All medications must be registered with the school nurse.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
  - Medication may be delivered to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance.
  - Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, backpack or other means on or about their person.
- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting on time and for taking the prescribed medication.

- G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

### **ASTHMA INHALERS AND EPI-PENS**

Students, with appropriate written permission from a physician and parent/guardian, may possess and use a metered-dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Commencing with the 2014-15 school year, each school in the District shall have at least two (2) epinephrine auto-injectors (Epi-Pens) available at the school site. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to be sure that the supply of Epi-Pens is maintained at the appropriate level and that they have not expired. The Superintendent shall also be responsible for coordinating the training of district employees to administer Epi-Pen injections and to maintain the list of employees authorized to administer such injections. In addition, commencing with the 2018-2019 school year, Vestaburg School will have the opiate overdose medicine, Naloxone, available at the school site. Naloxone is a medication that is used for any suspected opiate overdose. The Superintendent and/or his designee shall also be responsible for coordinating the training of district employees.

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

All injuries must be reported immediately to the school staff responsible for the supervision of the student at that time and report it to the teacher or office, depending on the nature of the injury. If minor, the student may return to class. If medical attention is required, the nurse and/or office staff will follow the school's emergency procedures. Each student must have an emergency medical authorization form on file in the office. Insurance claims must be filed within 30 days. School insurance is supplemental to home insurance.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission from the teacher to go to the nurse. When a child is suspected to be ill, the school staff (school nurse) will call the parents/guardians to report the situation.

It is the policy of the district that any student who is known to be experiencing a concussion or concussion-like symptoms be forbidden from participating in any physical activity or exertion, including but not limited to, athletic competitions and practices, physical education, and recess until cleared in writing by a physician.

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to the students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents/Guardians should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. The building principal must approve applications. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this state, parent, student, or caregiver. A physician must certify the nature and existence of a medical condition, state the probable duration of the confinement, request such instruction, and present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an education program.

## SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

### ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

Students are expected to enroll in the school district in which they live. Schools of Choice applications are available in the school offices. Students may pick up an application form in the building office of their home district. Vestaburg Community School participates in the MAISD Cooperative Schools of Choice programs, thus, all the School of Choice students need to apply and enroll during the approved window. This includes students both transferring in and out of the district.

Students that are new to Vestaburg Community School are required to enroll with their parents or legal guardian. When enrolling, the parents/guardians will need to bring:

- A certified copy of a birth certificate from the County Clerk's office
- Custody papers and/or restraining orders from a court (if appropriate)
- Proof of residency
- Proof of immunizations or a waiver form a doctor or the Health Department
- Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P) or 504 Plan if the student has one in place.
- Kindergarten Dental Screening

New students will not be allowed to begin attending school until proof of immunization or a valid waiver is presented at the office.

Students enrolling from another accredited school must have an official transcript from the sending school in order to receive credit from that school. The counselor will assist in obtaining the transcript if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Adult students (18 years of age or older) may enroll themselves, but if residing with their parents/guardians, are encouraged to include them in the process. Adult students do carry the responsibilities of both the student and parent.

Unaccompanied youth will have equal access to enrollment. Students who meet the federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the district's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the district. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the district's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the district had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the district. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a

hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

Please notify the school immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year.

### **SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT**

**Elementary level** – Each student will be assigned to the appropriate classroom and programs in which the student will be participating. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

**Middle and High School levels** – Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrolling. The schedule is based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled by the school counselor. It is important to note that some courses may be denied due to lack of space or the need to take prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a pass or schedule change. If a student becomes more than one semester behind their current grade level, a consideration will be given to place the student in our alternative education program for credit recovery purposes.

Foreign students and foreign-exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent/guardian or the parent/guardian contacting the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

### **TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT**

If a student plans to transfer from Vestaburg Community School, the parent/guardian must notify the office. The transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the office for specific details.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

No student under the age of 18 will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of their parents.



## IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from a doctor or from the Health Department meeting immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with state law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the building principal.

### IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless given a waiver, or qualifying under The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, students must meet the following requirements:

- **Diphtheria:** Four (4) or more doses of DTP or DT (pediatric) vaccine or any A combination thereof is the minimum acceptable. If a dose was not received on or after the fourth birthday, a booster is required prior to school entry.
- **Tetanus:** Four (4) doses of any appropriate tetanus vaccine. If a dose was not received on or after the fourth birthday, a booster is required prior to school entry.
- **Pertussis:** Four (4) doses of any appropriate pertussis vaccine. If a dose was not received on or after the fourth birthday, a booster is required prior to school entry.
- **Polio:** hree (3) doses of any appropriate polio vaccine. If a dose was not received on or after the fourth birthday, a booster is required prior to school entry.
- **Measles:** Two (2) doses of live measles virus vaccine after 1st birthday at least thirty (30) days apart with one (1) of the doses given after fifteen (15) months of age. A physician's certification of laboratory evidence of immunity in the blood will satisfy these requirements.
- **Rubella:** Two (2) doses of live rubella virus vaccine after 1st birthday at least thirty (30) days apart with one (1) of the doses given after fifteen (15) months of age. A physician's certification of laboratory evidence of immunity in the blood will satisfy these requirements.
- **Mumps:** Two (2) doses of live mumps virus vaccine after 1st birthday at least thirty (30) days apart with one (1) of the doses given after fifteen (15) months of age. A physician's certification of laboratory evidence of immunity in the blood will satisfy these requirements.
- **Hepatitis B:** Three (3) doses of the Hepatitis B virus vaccine are required before enrollment in school.
- **Varicella:** Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, one (1) dose is given after twelve months of age and prior to the thirteenth birthday.

All preschool students must be immunized in accordance with the regulations provided by the State Health Department.

## **CONTROL OF CASUAL CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS**

Due to the fact that a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly transient pest, such as lice and bed bugs. Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments. The school will notify the Health Department whenever it becomes aware of the possibility of a serious health threat.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines.

## **CONTROL OF NON-CASUAL CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

In the case of a non-casual contact communicable disease, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have her/his status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the Montcalm County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person is respected. The School will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), Hepatitis B, and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens, if the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION-AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT - SECTION 504**

Vestaburg Community School provides a variety of special education programs for students identified as having a disability defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A student can access special education services through proper evaluation and placement procedure. Parent involvement in this procedure is required. More importantly, the School wants the parent to be an active participant. To inquire about the procedure or programs, should contact the Special Education Director in the K-12 office.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the school to ensure that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but also to all individuals. Students with disabilities may be served within the regular education program with an accommodation plan developed by school staff. Parents who believe their child may have a disability that substantially limits the child's ability to function properly in school, should contact the office.

## STUDENT RECORDS

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the Board nor its employees shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:

- A. a student's name;
- B. address (except for students participating in the address confidentiality program act);
- C. telephone number;
- D. date and place of birth;
- E. photograph;
- F. major field of study;
- G. participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team;
- H. dates of attendance;
- I. date of graduation;
- J. awards received;
- K. honor rolls;
- L. scholarships;
- M. telephone numbers only for inclusion in school or PTO directories;
- N. names of parents.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA),

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to school office personnel. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, the student's parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or their parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or their family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;

- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or their parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose); and
- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605  
Washington, D.C.

[www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco)

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

[FERPA@ED.Gov](mailto:FERPA@ED.Gov); and

[PPRA@ED.Gov](mailto:PPRA@ED.Gov).

### **ARMED FORCES RECRUITING**

The School must provide at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. “Armed forces” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent/guardian of a student submits a signed, written request (Form 8330 F13) to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent/guardian does not want the student’s directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives then the school officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student’s directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of Directory information. Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure to any or all “directory information” including in the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

## STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

Vestaburg Community School charges specific fees for co-curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit. Fees may be waived in situations where there is a financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the items. The fine will be used to pay for damage, not to make a profit.

Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly as others may need their use.

Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of report cards.

## STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to the school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safekeeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

## REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Parents/Guardians have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. If the parent/guardian wishes to do so, they should contact the building principal.

## MEAL SERVICE

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes breakfast and lunch available to students for a daily fee. However, Vestaburg Community School is a Community Eligible Program. This means that all students receive free breakfast and lunch. Ala carte items are available for middle and high school students daily and for upper elementary students on a scheduled basis. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the cafeteria. We ask that no elementary students bring soda/pop for lunch/snacks. ***No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the principal.*** Applications for the school's ***“Free and Reduced-Priced Meal Program”*** are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes that he/she is eligible, contact the office. Federal funding is often based upon the percentage of free and reduced lunch count. It is extremely important that these applications be returned. Information received is confidential. Outside sources will not be allowed to deliver food to the school during school hours without explicit permission from school administration.

## SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

The school complies with all safety laws and will conduct all safety drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. SwiftReach (our robo call system) will be utilized for mass communication efforts. This communication may be done via text message, phone call, or email. For the most updated announcements, accurate contact information is to be provided to the office upon the beginning of each academic year. Vestaburg Community School has an emergency response plan that covers a wide variety of emergency situations. If you would like more information, please contact the school administration. During an emergency situation, school staff may not be available to return phone calls or emails due to being focused on the safety of our staff and students. To keep up to date with the most important information, please make sure that your contact information is updated and correct at all times. The school administration will provide updates when it is feasible and safe.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will make every attempt to notify students and parents/guardians through the automated alert system (SwiftReach). However, in case the system is down the school will also notify the local radio and television stations. In addition to these media outlets, the school will post updates on the school Facebook Page-[Vestaburg Community School](#). Parents/Guardians and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

### **VISITORS**

In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor between the hours of 7:30 am and 3:15 pm must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, he/she should call for an appointment prior to coming to school, in order to prevent any inconvenience. Students may not bring student visitors to the school.

### **SCHOOL DANCES/ACTIVITY NIGHTS**

If a student leaves the dance/activity early, he/she will not be allowed to return. Guests are **NOT PERMITTED** at elementary/middle school dances/activity nights. High school students wishing to bring a guest must fill out the proper guest request forms and receive approval from the principal (no guests over the age of 20 will be permitted).

### **USE OF THE SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

Students must receive the permission of the teacher and/or building administrator before using any equipment, materials, and facilities. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and safekeeping of



any equipment or facility they are allowed to use. Students are not to remain in the building after school (3:10pm) without supervision (from a school staff member, teacher, coach, etc.).

### **LOCKER POLICY**

- Each student will be assigned a locker and is responsible for its contents.
- Lockers are to be locked at all times and locker combinations shall not be shared with other students.
- Do not put stickers on or write on lockers
- Do not share a locker with another student unless assigned a partner by the office.
- Students who do not clean his/her locker at the end of the year may be subject to a fine and/or be assigned a summer work-session.
- Lockers are school district property and may be inspected by the administration for any reason at any time.
- Report any problems you may have with your locker at the principal's office.
- No student has the right to enter another student's locker without permission.
- Backpacks, book bags, duffel bags, purses, etc.: In order to maintain a safe, backpacks, bags, purses, and the like are not allowed to be taken to classrooms and should be kept in the assigned locker. Materials must be kept in a student's locker.
- Students must use school-provided locks unless they receive permission from the administration. Non-school provided or approved personal locks may be cut or removed from the locker at any time. The school will not be responsible for the cost or replacement of the lock.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students who have lost items should check at the office and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be donated or disposed of periodically throughout the school year.

### **STUDENT SALES**

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the Superintendent or his designee. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

### **USE OF TELEPHONES**

Office and teacher telephones are not to be used by students for personal calls, except in an emergency. Students should not have cell phones on or use cell phones except during approved times as determined by the building principal. Cell phones may be confiscated if used without permission. Students will **not** be called to the office to receive a telephone call.

#### **Cell Phones/Electronics**

- Kindergarten through 8th grade: Cell phones/Electronics are in students' lockers at all times.

- 9th through 12th grade: Cell phones/Electronics are in students' lockers at all times. Electronics will be allowed during lunchtimes and passing period. During instructional hours electronics are not permitted in or out of the classroom
- 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade: Phones will not be permitted during the instructional time. Phones may be used during non-instructional time (before & after school and lunch)
- Students that wish to leave school due to illness, emergency, etc. must do so through the office. If a parent/guardian wishes to excuse a student, they must contact the office directly.

Consequences for cell phone/electronics violation at any grade level:

1. The phone will be turned off and turned into the office. The offense will be logged in PowerSchool. Students may pick up the phone from the office at the end of the day.
2. The phone will be turned off and turned into the office. The offense will be logged in PowerSchool. The parent must pick up the phone from the office.
3. The phone will be turned off and turned into the office. The offense will be logged in PowerSchool. The parent must meet with the Principal and/or Dean of students when picking up the phone.

Student refusal to relinquish a cell phone/electronics will result in a level three behavioral referral and will result in the process automatically moving to step three in the consequences process.

Additional consequences and measures will be considered (i.e. detention, suspension, restorative action, student cell phone banned from school, student dropping the cell phone/electronics at the start of the day in the office, etc.) if the cell phone/electronics usage continues during inappropriate times determined by either the teacher or school administration (instruction, class time, etc).

## STUDENT DRIVING AND PARKING REGULATIONS

Motor vehicles are to be driven in a safe and conscientious manner. To ensure the safety of both pedestrians and drivers, the following traffic and parking regulations have been enacted for campus safety and control of traffic. ***Please remember, driving an automobile, whether on campus or on a public road, is a privilege, not a right.*** Vehicles driven by students on school property may be searched if school staff has reasonable suspicion that it may contain contraband material prohibited by school policy.

- Students are required to register their vehicles with the school district. By the end of the second week of the academic year, students must communicate with the office the make, model, description, and license plate number of the primary car that they will be driving to school. Students are responsible to communicate with the office, within 48 hours if their primary vehicle changes. Failure to do so will result in their privilege of driving to school being suspended until they provide this information.
- Student parking is provided in the parking lot located on the north side of Vestaburg High School. Students are not to drive or park on any of the grassy or dirt areas of the campus or in areas designated for faculty, visitors, or any other area not authorized. (This includes the church parking lot.)

- Vehicles are to be parked in the parking spaces provided and within the painted lines. Vehicles are not to be parked in the travel lanes except for the purpose of loading or unloading passengers and not at any time in a manner to block the normal flow of traffic. Students are not to associate with non-students that may be in the parking lot during school hours. Ex-students and non-students should only be in the parking lot for the purpose of bringing or picking up students of Vestaburg High School and not for socializing.
- There will be no loitering in the parking lot. Once students enter the building they are not to go to their vehicle without permission from the office. Failure to get permission (or a pattern of behavior asking to go to their car) could result in the student being disciplined and/or receiving consequences for not following proper procedures.
- Most vehicle accidents occur because of moving violations. Students are to drive slowly and cautiously while on campus. Reckless driving, speeding, "squealing" tires, or "burning off" and racking off or gunning engines will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Drivers will not allow another person to cling to or ride on the outside of a moving vehicle. Both the driver and the other person may be liable for such action.
- Vehicles are to be driven only on the paved portion of the campus grounds. All traffic control devices, signs, and directions must be obeyed.
- Excessive violations and reckless driving can result in the suspension of driving privileges.
- Glass containers are not permitted in the parking lot.
- Any accident on campus should be handled the same as on a public street and the police should be called.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

All publications, distribution, or display of written materials and artwork to or by students are subject to review by the administration. Such materials must be without libel, obscenity, or any advocacy of illegal acts. The general nature of such material should be consistent with the goals and purposes of the school and any distribution that disrupts or interferes with school activities must be avoided.

## **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

No announcements or posting of outside activities will be permitted without the approval of the superintendent. A minimum of 24 hours' notice is required to ensure that the superintendent has the opportunity to review the announcement or posting.

## **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

The Vestaburg Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) has been highly involved in the success of this school. They are a very active group that provides many extras for our students through their annual fundraisers. Students enjoy the benefits of that work all through the year. Money is used for field trips and also to purchase playground equipment for students to enjoy. All parents are urged to actively participate. If you are interested in being a part of this committee please contact the school administration.

## **SCHOOL FIGHT SONG**

*(To the tune of the Notre Dame University's fight song)*

Fight, fight for the red and the white.

They are the colors that stand out so bright.

Keep our standards always high.

We never let a chance go by.

To Vestaburg, we'll always be true.

Our teams are fighting always for you.

Fight on Wolverines and we will cheer you to victory!

## **MASCOT AND SCHOOL COLORS**

Vestaburg Community School's mascot is the Wolverine and the school colors are red and white.

## SECTION II - ACADEMICS

### COURSE OFFERINGS

High school course offerings are published on the school website, [www.vcs-k12.net](http://www.vcs-k12.net).

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parent/guardian consent. Attendance rules apply to all field trips. **Students may have to meet specific expectations as set by the principal in order to participate.** Only Vestaburg students may attend school-related field trips. School chaperones must meet Vestaburg Community School policy, including background checks. Chaperones must adhere to all school policies (including tobacco, drug, and weapon free). **All individuals attending the trip will be expected to ride the school-provided transportation, including chaperones. If transportation changes are necessary, they must have prior approval from the building administration.**

### GRADES

Vestaburg Community School has a standard grading procedure for each building level, as well as additional notations that may indicate work in progress or incomplete work. The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based on test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. If a student is not sure how his/her grade will be determined, he/she should ask the teacher.

Parents/Guardians of student's grades 3-12 are expected to view current grades online, via PowerSchool. Information on how to do this is available through the main office.

Students and parents/guardians share responsibility with teachers for monitoring progress and performance.

In addition, parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall, and upon request. Report cards are provided at the end of each semester.

The school uses the grading system as detailed below:

#### **Elementary School (Grades K-5)**

Elementary report cards differ at each grade level. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will provide information about the grading procedure and report card format. If you have any questions please contact your student's classroom teacher.

## GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Vestaburg Middle/High School grades will reflect the demonstration of the understanding, application, and mastery of the curriculum through assessments.

### Secondary (Grades 6-12)

It is expected that all students will achieve a passing grade in each class. Grades are cumulative, per semester and based upon percentages. Corresponding letter grades are listed below.

100-93%	A	82-80%	B-	69-67%	D+
92-90%	A-	79-77%	C+	66-63%	D
89-87%	B+	76-73%	C	62-60%	D-
83-86%	B	72-70%	C-	59% and Below	F

The grading scale is rated "A," "B," "C," "D," in decreasing order for passing work and "F" for failing work. For purposes of calculating high school grade point averages (GPA), the following point equivalents are used:

4.00	A	2.67	B-	1.33	D+
3.67	A-	2.33	C+	1.00	D
3.33	B+	2.00	C	0.67	D-
3.00	B	1.67	C-	0.00	F

### High School (Grades 9-12):

Academic grades are weighted and calculated based on the following percentages:

45% - 1st Quarter Grade

45% - 2nd Quarter Grade

10% - Final Exam

## GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

A semester, and cumulative GPA can be viewed on our online grading system (PowerSchool).

## TESTING OUT (HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT)

Students who feel they can demonstrate mastery of course material for core classes, not electives, may request the opportunity to “test out” of a particular course. This policy will not apply to the State-of-Michigan-mandated course of government, physical education, choral, or instrumental music classes. This policy also does not apply to classes previously taken.

Any high school student who wishes to test out of a course in which they are not enrolled must receive a percentage of 78% or better. No actual grade will be earned by testing out of a course, the notation “pass” or “credit” will be applied. Credits earned through this provision will be counted as credit toward graduation.

All requests must be pre-arranged and completed one week prior to the start of the semester/course. It is the student’s responsibility to study and prove mastery of the material. Students will not be provided with study materials for testing out purposes.

Should a student earn a 78% or higher on a cumulative exam in their course (previous stipulations apply regarding specific courses), who otherwise would fail to earn credit, may apply to earn credit (pass/credit) for the class to the administration.

## EXAM EXEMPTIONS

### Seniors

Any Senior that meets the following criteria in a class/course will be excused from that course's final exam. Online courses are excluded from this policy.

1. Must have an 87% or higher in the class.
2. Must have 2 or fewer absences for the semester. This includes both excused and unexcused absences. School-related absences will not be counted
  - a. Please pay specific attention to the school related absence, college visit(s). Up to and only 3 college visits will be counted as school related absences. Please see the College Visits section for more information.

## PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION

Promotion and retention are at the discretion of the district superintendent and/or designee.

### Elementary and Middle School

Promotion to the next grade (or level) *may* be based on the following criteria:

- The current level of achievement
  - Potential for success at the next level
  - Emotional, physical, social maturity
-

- Light's Retention Scale
- Parent/educational team discussion and resolution

Promotion is based upon meeting academic standards.

Middle school students with failing grades may not be able to participate in athletics per the MHSAA guidelines.

**High School**

Progress towards the completion of high school culminating in earning a high school diploma is solely based on the completion of coursework and earned credits. A student is only promoted when the necessary credits are earned or the student has a Personal Curriculum driven by that student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all requirements are being met. Information about credit and course requirements are available in the guidance office.

The following number of earned credits designates the grade in which the student will be registered:

Freshman	Up to and including 5 credits
Sophomore	More than 5 credits and up to and including 10 credits
Junior	More than 10 credits and up to and including 16 credits
Senior	More than 16 credits

Students that are not classified as juniors may not be permitted to take the SAT. Students' grade classification is solely based on credits earned, not age

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Diploma**

The district will acknowledge each student's successful completion of academic requirements and credits or a personal curriculum when appropriate.



**Specific course requirements are:**

Electives	4+ Credits
English	4 Credits
Foreign Language	2 Credits
Fine Arts, Vocational Education or any combination thereof	1 Credit
Health	.5 Credits
Mathematics (including senior year) Financial Literacy is required beginning with	4 Credits
Physical Education	.5 Credits
Science	3 Credits
Social Studies	3 Credits
Financial Literacy (beginning with the class of 2027)	.5 Credits

**Total 24 credits Possible (22 needed for graduation)**

Students transferring from other school districts will receive an appropriate credit adjustment based on a transcript provided from the previous school district.

**GRADUATING WITH HONORS**

Each academic year, Vestaburg High School will name Valedictorian(s) or Salutatorian(s) based solely on grade point average. In order to earn being named Valedictorian(s) or Salutatorian(s) a student must attend Vestaburg High School for a minimum of 2 academic years.

High Honors recognition includes students that earned a grade point average of 3.5 to 4.0.

Honors recognition includes students that earned a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.49.

Any student who achieves any of the above recognitions, must have completed the state required classes and credits to earn their high school diploma.

**OTHER APPROVED EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Students needing to make up credits will be given the opportunity to make up credits during their high school career. These credits can be made up through Edgenuity as a part of their schedule or through our alternative education program. Credits earned through approved courses may be used to determine athletic eligibility. Grades will be used to calculate GPA and will be used on transcripts unless the course is a credit/no-credit course or an alternate agreement is in place.

A senior will be included on the list of eligible candidates for graduation provided he/she is carrying enough credits at the beginning of the second semester of his/her senior year so that receiving a diploma is feasible. However, based on the first semester senior grades, those students who will be unable to meet the Board of Education graduation requirements at the end of the second semester will not be able to participate in commencement ceremonies. Students must remain in good standing (behavior, attendance, and academic performance) through the 8<sup>th</sup> semester of their high school career.

### **EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS and PERSONAL CURRICULUM**

The district recognizes the need to provide alternative means by which students achieve the goals of the district.

Such options may include, but not be limited to, tutorial programs, independent study, correspondence courses, educational travel, mentorship programs, summer school, and/or early college entrance. These programs may not be utilized by a student to avoid taking required courses offered in the school's regular program.

Credit will be granted to the student upon complete evaluation of the program.

The credit shall be placed on the student transcript. The amount of credit counting toward graduation shall comply with the district graduation requirements.

For any twelfth (12th) grade student who wishes to take one (1) or more courses not offered by the district at a post-secondary institution, the Board shall pay that portion of the tuition and fees stipulated by statute providing s/he satisfies the necessary conditions set forth in the administrative guidelines.

Any student that wishes, may request the replacement of the required courses (Personal Curriculum) as permitted by State law and regulations. Anyone wishing to request a Personal Curriculum will need to contact the High School Office at 268-5343.

## **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Any student in 11th or 12th grade may enroll in a post-secondary program providing he/she meets the requirements established by law and by the district. Any interested student should contact the principal or high school counselor to obtain the necessary information. Students enrolling in Dual Enrollment or transferring to Vestaburg will have their credits prorated using a formula developed and maintained in the High School Counselor's Office. All students wanting to dual enroll may be required to take and pass the Compass Test as administered by Montcalm Community College.

## **ONLINE/BLENDED COURSES**

Students in grades 9-12 that are determined to be eligible by the administration (according to State law and requirements) may enroll in up to two online/virtual courses. However, students are expected to complete courses that are offered by VHS and will not be allowed to take a course online that VHS offers. Exceptions can only be determined by the administration.

## **RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Students who have displayed significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include, but are not limited to: academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism. The staff initiates recognition for such activities. Recognition and honors may be revoked as the result of inappropriate behavior and/or violations of school board policies. This includes Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

You must be a junior or senior with a 3.5 cumulative GPA and meet the criteria set forth by the NHS Faculty Council. The NHS Constitution is available for anyone who is interested in seeing it (see NHS adviser).

## **HONOR ROLL**

A high school student with a 3.00 or higher grade point average per semester will be placed on the honor roll. The honor roll list will indicate students with all A's and students with a grade point average of 3.50 or above. A student with an "F" in any class will not be placed on the Honor Roll. A student with an incomplete (I) will not be placed on the Honor Roll until the "I" is removed and a GPA can be calculated.

## **HOMEWORK**

The assignment of homework can be expected. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the required state assessments and graduation.

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

To measure student progress, students will be assessed in accordance with state standards and district policy.

Each student will be expected to pass appropriate grade-level assessments. Students will also be expected to take the appropriate state-mandated assessments, including the NWEA, M-STEP, SAT (PSAT), and ACT Work-Keys. Additional assessments may be given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These assessments are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Vocational and interest surveys may be given to identify particular areas of student interest or talent. Students suspected of learning issues may have more thorough assessments. Specific information and/or parent consent will be obtained for testing. Vestaburg Community School will not violate the rights of consent and privacy of a student participating in any form of evaluation.

College entrance testing information for high school students can be obtained from the high school guidance office.

## SECTION III--STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Vestaburg Community School provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. There are many student groups that are authorized by the school. It is the district's policy that the only authorized groups are those approved by the Board of Education and sponsored by a staff member.

Extra-curricular activities may not reflect the school curriculum but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

### NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the superintendent or his designee. The application must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities, and that school staff persons do not play a regular role in the event.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as prescribed by law is not permitted. All groups must comply with school rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate. No non-district sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

### ATHLETICS

Vestaburg Community School provides a variety of athletic activities in which students may participate providing they meet any eligibility requirements that may apply. For further information, see the athletic codebook.

### STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The school encourages students to take jobs outside of school that will not impact their academic success or attendance. A student must follow all of the laws pertaining to employment such as (but not limited to) filing the appropriate paperwork (a school/work permit). A work permit can be obtained from the main office.

## SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

### ATTENDANCE

Attending school is both necessary and the law. State law requires school attendance until the age of 18. Students who do not maintain good attendance may fail, lose certain privileges, and/or have their parents taken to court. Vestaburg Community School has an attendance policy to help avoid these negative consequences.

### KEY POINTS

- Students should be in school every scheduled day from:
  - Elementary: 8:00am – 3:00 pm
  - Middle School/High School: 8:00am – 3:00 pm
- To be eligible to participate in any athletic activity offered by the school, students must be in school the entire school day on the day of the activity.
- Students are expected to attend every class meeting.
- **Middle School/High School (Grades 6th - 12th):** Attendance records are maintained on a course-by-course basis. When a student arrives to class without a pass and is tardy for more than 10 minutes, he/she is considered absent unexcused. The student should still go to class to receive credit for the work done in the portion of class he/she attended.
- **Elementary (Grades K-5):** Attendance records are maintained on a morning and afternoon basis. Any student more than 20 minutes late (after 8:15am) will be marked (AU) absent unexcused for the morning count. Similarly, the afternoon session begins at 11:30am. Any student more than 20 minutes late (after 11:50) will be marked absent (AU) from school for the afternoon count. When a student arrives to class without a pass and is tardy more than 20 minutes, he/she is considered absent unexcused. The student should still go to class to receive credit for the work done in the portion of class he/she attended.
- The parent/guardian must contact the school office and leave a return phone number and reason for any absence. Only the student's parent/guardian may excuse an absence.
- All absences due to school-sponsored trips are considered excused.

### INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Student's Responsibilities

- It is each student's responsibility to be aware of his/her attendance status in class and to make responsible decisions about attending classes on a regular basis.
  - The student should monitor his/her own attendance and speak with his/her teachers if he/she has any questions about attendance records.
  - The student must obtain and make-up class work missed due to absences. It is the student's responsibility to see his/her teachers to obtain missed work.
-

## Parent/Guardian Information and Responsibilities

- The parent/guardian should monitor his/her son/daughter's attendance in each of his/her classes.
- We encourage parents to discuss the importance of good attendance with their children.
- To excuse a student's absence, the parent/guardian must call the K-12 office the night before, or the day of the student's absence at 989-268-5343 prior to 2:00 p.m. Messages left after 2:00 p.m. will not be considered, and the student will be marked unexcused for the day. The Dean of Students will review special circumstances.
- Parents/guardians can excuse a student from school a maximum of six (6) times per school year. Additional absences will be counted as unexcused without a doctor's note or other relevant documentation.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS

Students are expected to attend every class meeting unless excused according to the procedures described here. Three (3) unexcused absences will begin the truancy process.

### Documented Excused Absences

The following absences are considered documented excused absences and do not count towards truancy, however, documentation must be provided and missed work must be made up:

Reasons	Required Documentation
Religious Holidays	Parent Note
Mandatory Court Visits	Court Documents
Testing (Special Education, etc.)	Evaluator Note
Field Trips/School Sponsored Events	Nothing is required
Extended Illness	Doctor/PA/NP note
Family Funeral/Emergencies	Parent Note
Health Professional Visit	Doctor/PA/NP note
College Visit (3 excused, maximum)	A letter (on the specific school letterhead) indicating the student's name, date of visit, and a contact number for the school official.

Routine health professional appointments should be scheduled after school. If this is unavoidable, parents/guardians must notify the K-12 office or submit a note in advance of the appointment. The appropriate documentation should be turned in to the office when the student returns to school.

### MEDICAL EXEMPTION

A doctor, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner's note will excuse absences for an ongoing, chronic, or long-term illness (**long-term illness is defined as (4) or more consecutive days of absence**) provided that the note is written on the doctor, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner's stationary, showing the name of the student and stating that the student was under his/her care for a particular time interval. If the medical care/treatment limits activity, a date to resume normal activity must be provided by the medical professional providing the care. If the illness impacts the semester grade, administration, in consultation with the guidance counselor, will review his/her situation and determine if the student will receive an Incomplete (I) for a grade.

### SKIP DAYS

There are NO sanctioned "skip days" at VCS. Student-organized "skip days" undermine the educational process. Students involved in a "skip day" will be considered absent unexcused.

### DISMISSALS

Once the school day has commenced and a student is in attendance, he/she may be dismissed via a parent/guardian phone call or written note prior to the dismissal. Notification after the fact will not be excused and will be recorded as an unexcused absence. When a student is dismissed, he/she is expected to leave school grounds or wait for his/her ride in the K-12 office. In the event of illness, while the student is in school, dismissal will be arranged by office staff.

### TRUANCY

#### Montcalm Area ISD Truancy Program Highlights for Vestaburg Community Schools

This is the process that the Montcalm County agencies have implemented to help deal with poor school attendance (truancy). Here is what you can expect to happen:

- Once your child has accumulated **three (3) or more unexcused** absences, the school truancy referral process will be started. You will receive a letter, phone call, home visit, or possibly all three, to alert you that your child is missing too much school.
- **Five (5) or more** accumulated **unexcused** absences, the school refers the case to the MAISD Truancy Officer for follow-up. It is likely, but not certain, that you will be contacted by a school official as well.
- **Eight (8) or more** accumulated **unexcused** absences, the school, and MAISD Truancy Officer refers the student/parent truancy case to the Prosecuting Attorney for judicial review/action.



## **EXCUSED LATE ARRIVALS**

If a student has a professional health appointment or other obligation that requires him/her to arrive late to school, the parent/guardian must call the main office **prior** to the student's arrival to school in order to excuse the late arrival. A student who arrives late must immediately report to the main office for an office pass, prior to going to class.

## **TARDY POLICY**

### **MS/HS Tardy Policy**

If a student arrives to class without a pass after class commences, he/she is considered tardy. Students should still go to class even if they do not have a pass. Students who are more than ten (10) minutes late shall be counted absent for that class period. Students that demonstrate excessive tardiness may be assigned consequences by an administrator. The administration will review tardies on the first Monday of each month. Once a student reaches 11 tardies they will serve an after-school detention. The length of the detention will be determined by the number of tardies a student has; 2 minutes will be served for each tardy.

## **COLLEGE VISITS**

Students are encouraged to schedule college visits during non-school hours. However, a student will be excused from school for college visits or interviews that cannot reasonably be scheduled outside of school time. Students can schedule no more than three (3) college visits or interviews during the school year (during the school day). Any visits or interviews beyond the allocated three (3) college visits will be recorded as unexcused absences. A letter (on the specific school letterhead) indicating the student's name, date of visit, and a contact number for the school official must be provided to consider one of the three visits, as a school related absence. Appropriate documentation will help to determine length of college visit (travel time, etc.)

## **VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Parents/Guardians and students are reminded that Michigan's law requires attendance for students. We strongly discourage family vacations while school is in session. Family vacations/personal trips interrupt the educational process. Completion of make-up work does not compensate for the impact of lost instructional time and classroom experience, regardless of the course or course level. Makeup work will be expected according to the make-up policy below.

## **MAKING UP TESTS AND OTHER SCHOOL WORK**

Students who are absent from school shall be given the opportunity to make up work that has been missed.

- For school-related absences, work must be made up in advance of the absence (or arranged at another time, prior to the absence, at the discretion of the teacher).
-

- For excused and unexcused absences the students will have the number of days absent, to make up the work or assessment.
  - Long-term assignments given on the day of an absence are due on the original due date.

Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances due to situations such as hospitalization and being on homebound status. These exceptions will be determined by school administration. An effort will be made by teachers to have students complete work/missed assessments during class time, however, arrangements outside of class time may also have to be made. Teachers will have the work, readily available to the students, upon their return.

### **STUDENT PICK-UP POLICY**

If your child needs to be picked up from school, please observe the following:

- We must receive a signed note at the beginning of the day (except for students who are picked up on a regular basis).
- Your child's after-school plan needs to be established before coming to school, in the event an emergency arises and the after-school plan changes, the main office must be notified to ensure proper communication with the student, teacher, etc.
- Before any student is allowed to leave the building they must be signed out in the office by a parent/guardian or someone who has parental permission.
- High school students must report to the principal's office before they leave the building.
  - High school students will be allowed to sign out if:
    - Their parents/guardians have called the office in advance.
    - The parent/guardian comes into the office when he/she wishes to pick up a student.
    - The student has a note from a parent/guardian with a phone number on the note so the school could contact the parent or guardian to verify the note.
    - The student has received permission from the principal.

Students will only be allowed to sign back into school with a doctor's note or a parent present.

A student will be considered skipping if he/she leaves the school and does not sign out. A call from a parent/guardian after the student has left the building will not be accepted without administrative approval.

Vestaburg Community School is a closed campus for students, this includes during their lunchtime. Any student leaving school grounds, during the school day, will be considered skipping and disciplinary action including detentions and up to suspension will follow.

#### **Student Messages**

The staff at Vestaburg Community School will make every effort to get messages to students, however, some circumstances limit our opportunities to deliver them in a timely manner and in a way that is the least disruptive. We would prefer to only have to deliver messages that have great significance to students (we try to limit disruptions to the learning environment).

## CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at Vestaburg Community School is to prepare students to become responsible, respectful, and contributing members of the community and society by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Vestaburg Community School has adopted and implemented Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to help establish a highly effective learning environment. PBIS has been proven to improve the social, emotional, and academic success of students. Below are our four school-wide behavior expectations.

*Each student shall be expected to:*

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Ready
- Be Safe

For additional information regarding student expectations at specific times and in specific locations throughout the school day, please see our School Wide Behavior Matrix ([Elementary](#) and [Secondary](#)) established by our PBIS Initiative.

### **Dress and Grooming**

The intent of the Vestaburg School dress code is to promote a good academic environment, maintain discipline, and prevent any disruption to the educational process. Any type of dress, behavior, or practice which creates a dangerous situation, infringes upon the rights or safety of others, is immodest, profane, portrays nudity, sexual innuendo, or is otherwise disruptive to the school setting, per staff and administration discretion, will not be allowed. Exceptions may be made by the administration for special events/occasions, for example, spirit days.

Students and parents should be able to answer no to each of the following questions in regard to clothing worn at school for:

- Does my clothing expose too much?
- Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors?
- Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing?

Additional Expectations:

- Hooded shirts may be worn, however, hoods may not be worn on heads.
- Shirts must touch the top of pants/skirt/shorts when arms are extended above the head.
- Shirts with sleeves cut off should not be cut down the sides to expose the chest/torso/etc.
- Hats will be allowed in grades 9-12 only unless they become a distraction to the learning environment.

- Hats are not allowed in grades K-8.
  - If a student wears a hat into the building, it must be placed in their lockers before the 1st hour begins (start of the school day for K-6), and may be taken out after 7th-hour ends (end of the school day for K-6).
- Shoes are required of all students.
- Sunglasses cannot be worn during the school day

Students who are representing Vestaburg Community School at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

### **COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES**

Seniors are reminded that it is a privilege to participate in commencement exercises. In order to participate in the commencement ceremony, all seniors must have completed all graduation requirements. Exceptions may be made by the administration for extenuating circumstances. Students that do not meet this requirement may still earn a diploma but will not be allowed to participate in commencement. Any student engaging in behaviors that reflect negatively upon the school, the individual, or the ceremony will not be allowed to participate. Students not properly attired shall also forfeit commencement privileges. Standards for proper attire and conduct are furnished to seniors prior to the ceremony. Senior pranks are neither appropriate nor acceptable at Vestaburg Community School. Any and all pranks will result in disciplinary action and possible legal ramifications. Any student needing assistance or clarification in meeting these standards should notify the high school office. Students unwilling to honor these policies as stated will receive their diplomas without participation in the commencement exercises.

### **CARE OF PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and may be returned upon request. If a student does damage to or loses school property (including technology), the student or his/her parents/guardians will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student may also be subject to additional discipline.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the responsibility of Vestaburg staff to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. We expect our students to act as partners in the maintenance of a learning environment that supports the emotional, social, physical, and learning needs of all students in our schools. Disciplinary actions will follow within the sound

discretion of the school's staff and administration when student actions are not compatible with school expectations.

**Due process** ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after a review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation. The administration will contact parents when removal from the program is deemed necessary. The parent always has the opportunity to meet with administrators to review the disciplinary action, request modification of the disciplinary response, and plan preventative procedures with school staff to support student success.

The following chart provides a list of major areas that could result in disciplinary action. An explanation of each behavior and the possible consequence follows the list. The absence of a behavior or any specific action from the list does not mean that such conduct does not violate the discipline code or cannot be punished.

### **EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

As part of the PBIS Process, Vestaburg Community School has created a [document](#) that outlines the terminology and definitions for minor behaviors (staff managed) and major behaviors (office managed), locations, perceived motivation, and others involved. In addition to this document, it is imperative to address other behaviors that may occur within an educational setting:

**Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the district** - Any statement or non-contact action that a staff member, student, or other person associated with the district feels to be a threat will be considered a verbal assault as well as profanity directed toward a staff member in a threatening tone. Verbal threats may result in suspension and expulsion.

**Extortion** - Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force or deception to take or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**Gambling** - Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized sports betting and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**False alarms and false reports/Bomb Threats** - A false emergency alarm or report endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community and the persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**Trespassing** - Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the principal. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**Harassment** - Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a

safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school-sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless handheld device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or the assistant principal, or may report it directly to the office immediately

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for the employee, an exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

## **Harassment**

- Submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- Submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;

- The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

**Sexual Harassment** may include but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Pressure for sexual activity;
- Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety;
- A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

## **Hazing**

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
  - Physical punishment or infliction of pain
  - Intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
  - Dangerous activity;
  - Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
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- Forced detention or kidnapping;
- Undressing or otherwise exposing intimates.

Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

## **Bullying**

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

## **Notification**

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

## **Implementation**

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the district reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

## **Procedure**



Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the principal or dean of students. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the superintendent. Complaints against the superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior that has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, the exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action is taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the superintendent. The superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

### **Non-Retaliation/False Reports**

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

### **Definitions**

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment, or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular

definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

**Aggressive behavior** is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

**At School** is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

**Bullying** is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or causing substantial disruption in or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- **Physical** - Hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, and unwanted physical contact.
- **Verbal** - Taunting, malicious, teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats.
- **Psychological** - Spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

**Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to the unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from a rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**Intimidation/Menacing** includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property, or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

**Staff** includes all school employees and Board members.

**Third parties** include but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

## **CRIMINAL ACTS**

Any criminal acts taken at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

## **DISCIPLINE**

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply to going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident. Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

In accordance with our PBIS initiative, the following actions may be taken in response to inappropriate behavior (this is not an all-encompassing list):

- Alternative Placement
- Bus Suspension
- Conference with Student (restorative)
- In School Suspension
- Individualized Instruction
- Loss of Privilege
- Out of School suspension
- Parent Contact
- Restitution/Community Service
- Time in Office/Detention
- Behavior Plan
- Other suggested corrective strategies (ie; Time out, time owed, proximity, verbal redirection, etc.)
- Other actions (ie; Personal plan, threat assessments, bullying investigation, parent visit, behavior plan, etc.).

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

Formal discipline removes the student from the classroom. It includes emergency removal for up to 72 hours, suspension for up to 10 school days, suspension for more than 10 school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next academic year. Removal for less than 1 school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense. If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to the superintendent, and a formal appeal hearing will be held. Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the superintendent and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to be present. The superintendent then takes testimony and determines whether or not expulsion is appropriate. This decision may not be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

Students involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the school rules. This is especially true for infractions involving drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use or harassment.

If a student commits a crime while under the school's jurisdiction, she/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime).

## **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Should it be necessary to suspend or expel a student from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

### **Suspension from School**

When disciplinary action is considered a student will be notified of the charges. The student will be given an opportunity to explain his/her side, and the administrator will explain to the student the evidence supporting the charges. After this student conference, the principal will make a decision on the disciplinary action to be taken. In all cases resulting in suspension, the parents will be contacted and provided information

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concerning the incident and the response of the principal. The parents will have the option to have a conference with the principal or may be required to meet for a conference depending upon the seriousness of an incident or a perceived need to discuss further preventative measures that will keep a student in school in the future.

Suspension of longer durations will require a parent conference and in some cases may require the involvement of the superintendent.

### **Expulsion from School**

When a student is being considered for expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents, which will contain:

- The charge and related evidence;
- The time and place of the Board meeting;
- The length of the recommended expulsion;
- A brief description of the hearing procedure;
- A statement that the student may bring parents, guardians or counsel;
- A statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- A statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction.

Students being considered for expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education or official(s) designated by the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within ten days after notification of expulsion, the expulsion can be appealed, in writing, to the Superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature, with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

Vestaburg Community School makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. Disciplinary action that does not result in removal from school may not be appealed. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the principal.

### **THE DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities will be entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information, please refer to the Vestaburg Community School Special Education Handbook.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches.

No strip searches will be conducted by any employee of the district but may be conducted by law enforcement officials if deemed necessary.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items that have been confiscated.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION**

The school recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, non-commercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

Material cannot be displayed if it:

- Is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent or vulgar,
- Advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
- Intends to be insulting or harassing
- Intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.

Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the principal 24 hours prior to display.

## **STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES**

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist a student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, she/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. As with suggestions, concerns and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.

A student has the right to a hearing if the student believes she/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

## SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

The school provides bus transportation for all students who live outside the town of Vestaburg. The bus schedule and route are available by contacting the Transportation Director at 268-5255.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow some basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation that may be provided.

The driver is responsible for student safety and may assign seating or direct the student in any reasonable manner to maintain that safety.

### **BUS DISCIPLINE**

School administration and/ or transportation supervisor may suspend a student's transportation privilege for failure to follow expected school or bus conduct.

Students that do not follow the expected conduct on the school bus may be removed by the driver for up to 3 days. In addition, the student may be referred to the superintendent for further consequences.

\*Severe Clause: In the case of improper behavior that puts students, bus drivers, property, and others at risk, a student may be suspended/expelled from the bus or school without going through each disciplinary step.

### **PARENT/ GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY**

The transportation supervisor or bus driver must be notified if a child is not going to ride the bus. After 3 days of non-notification, the bus driver is not required to stop until the transportation department is notified the student will be participating in school transportation. If a bus turnaround is required, the property owner must keep it usable and safe for students and the bus. Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the transportation supervisor when a student needs to ride a different bus or be picked up or dropped off at a different stop other than their assigned bus stop. Routes are planned to provide the shortest time and safest transportation possible. Passes for other routes will only be assigned for emergency or childcare only.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

While waiting for the bus, students are to stay off the traveled roadway at all times. Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and the bus driver's signal before crossing the road. Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus and within the complete view of the driver. Students should always look both to the right and to the left before proceeding across the road.

**Students are never to go under the bus, run back to the bus after leaving the designated drop-off, or walk behind the bus.** Students are to be at their assigned bus stop ready to board when the bus arrives. Students are to go directly to their assigned bus when they are dismissed from school. When boarding the bus, students are to promptly find a seat. Bus drivers have the right to assign any students a specific seat or a specific area on their bus. Students are not allowed to eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus. Students are to participate in scheduled "bus evacuation drills."

### **SELF-TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**



### **(Cars, Cycles, Bicycles & Scooters Included)**

Students are much safer on school transportation. Self-transportation is a privilege and can be revoked at any time. Parents/guardians are expected to use discretion when determining if their child should use self-transportation. Students are expected to follow all state laws when driving and are expected to drive safely at all times. All vehicles driven to school must be street legal.

Students should drive carefully at all times. During the school day, students are not to use vehicles or be in the parking lots without school approval. Students should park in designated student parking areas. Each student is responsible for his/her vehicle at all times regardless of who is driving it. Students may not park in the Church lot or the visitors' area by the gym lobby entrance during class hours. Obey all parking signs. Teachers and bus drivers have priority parking in the elementary lot and behind the high school. Students should use the south parking lot. Always park in an orderly fashion. Failure to follow parking procedures will result in loss of driving privileges. Bicycles should be placed in the racks or areas provided. Bicycles and scooters should not be ridden on the sidewalks by the school buildings. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged vehicles.

### **TRANSPORTATION TO THE CAREER CENTER**

Students are expected to ride school-provided transportation to and from the Career Center when it is available. When school transportation is provided, students will not be allowed to drive to the Career Center unless they have received permission from the school administration due to extenuating circumstances.

## **SECTION VI - ELECTRONIC INFORMATION ACCESS & USE POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Vestaburg Community School District encourages and strongly promotes the use of electronic technologies in educational endeavors. The district provides access to information resources available in a variety of electronic formats, and the development of information management skills. Together these allow learners to access current and relevant resources, provide the opportunity to communicate in a technology-rich environment, and assist them in becoming responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

The use of technology at Vestaburg Community School is a privilege extended to students, faculty, staff and community members to enhance learning and exchange information. Each user of technology shall read the following in its entirety and sign the corresponding “Responsibility Statement” which follows, prior to accessing and using technology (located on the back of the green sheet during enrollment/start of school/registration information).

### **DEFINITION OF VESTABURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY MEMBERS**

All account holders on the Vestaburg Community School District network will be granted access to all services the network offers, based upon need and access privileges. The following people may hold accounts on the Vestaburg Community School Network:

- **Students.** Students who are currently enrolled in the district may be granted a network account upon agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.
- **Faculty and Staff.** Staff members currently employed by the district may be granted a network account upon agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.
- **Community members and others.** Anyone may request a special account on the district network. These requests may be granted on a case-by-case basis, depending on need and availability and agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.

### **OTHER DEFINITIONS**

- **District equipment** includes but is not limited to computers, drives, printers, scanners, networks, video and audio recorders, cameras, photocopiers, telephones, and other related technological resources
- **Software** includes but is not limited to computer software, print, and non-print resources.
- **Networks** include but are not limited to all voice, video, and data systems including the district's internal network, and the Internet.

### **DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Vestaburg Community School District is responsible for the management of the structure, hardware, and software that the district uses to allow access to informational technologies for educational purposes. These include:

- Assigning and removing member accounts on the network(s).
- Maintenance and repair of equipment that comprises the network(s).
- Selection of software that the network will support.
- Electronic Information Access and Use Policy.
- Defining the rights/responsibilities of members.

- Providing resources that support the mission of the district.
- Provide training opportunities on the use, care, and application of information technology, including training on new technologies, software, and media as they are acquired and put into use in the district.

The district does not take responsibility for resources located or actions taken by the members that do not support the purposes of the school district.

The district will implement software\hardware measures on all district computers to block materials and web sites that it deems inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use. The district also realizes that it cannot block all web sites or material inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use, but will actively monitor and block sites or material inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use. To meet the requirements of CIPA, we have addressed:

- Access by minors to inappropriate material on the internet and world wide web;
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic communications;
- Unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, regarding minors;
- Measures designed to restrict minors access to materials deemed “harmful to minors”;
- The development and completion of a plan to monitor minors’ use of the internet in school.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Rights - Members have the right to:**

- Use all authorized hardware and software, when available, for which they have received training to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Access information from outside resources, which facilitates learning, and enhances educational information exchange.
- Access district networks and the Internet to retrieve information and facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Sign up for approved listservs and newsgroups on the internet, which facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.

### **Responsibilities - Members are responsible for:**

- Utilizing technology in the school only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of the school.
- Maintaining the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords.
- All material received via the internet under his/her user account accepts responsibility for keeping all inappropriate material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the school's network, equipment or software from entering the school via the internet.

- Keeping hardware and software from being removed from school premises without prior consent from the technology coordinator.
- Maintaining the integrity of the electronic mail (e-mail) system, reporting any violations of privacy, and making only those e-mail contacts, which facilitate learning and enhance electronic information exchange.
- Make sure that all food and drinks are kept out of the computer labs and away from all computers.
- Preventing and knowingly installing computer viruses on school equipment.
- Properly using and caring for that hardware and software which they have been trained to use and refrain from using any technology for which they have not received training.
- Adhering to copyright guidelines in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of text or files on the Internet or from other resources.
- Adhering to the rules established for the use of hardware, software, labs, and networks in the school or through remote access outside of the school.
- Adhering to district guidelines as it pertains to plagiarism or the unwritten consent from the author from which it is derived.
- Adhering to district policy and guidelines as it pertains to web page development and design.

**Members are prohibited from:**

- Using the technology for personal or private business, including product advertisement or political lobbying, or for making any financial commitments on the Internet.
- Maliciously using technology to disrupt the use of technology by others, to harass or discriminate against others and to infiltrate unauthorized computer systems.
- Accessing materials that the district deems inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use.
- Revealing the personal address(s), telephone number(s) or identification information of yourself or others.

## **NETWORK ETIQUETTE**

Members are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use appropriate language. Do not use profanity, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Do not use the network in such a way that it would be disruptive to others. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
- All publications, information, files, and programs accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property; therefore, they should be given copyright consideration.

**Notes:**

- Files on the network are district property and subject to control and inspection.

- Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Systems operators have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK BEHAVIOR**

- Members violating any of these Rights and Responsibilities may be banned from using school hardware and telecommunications software to access the Internet.
- Members will be required to make full financial restitution for any unauthorized expenses incurred or any damages caused.
- Members violating any of these Rights and Responsibilities may face additional disciplinary and/or legal action deemed appropriate in keeping with the disciplinary policies of the school, state, and federal law.
- The building administrator will determine what is inappropriate use based on the Electronic Information Access and Use Policy. The account may be closed at any time for infractions.

#### **Challenges:**

Challenges to district information resources shall be made in writing and shall state the reasons for the challenge. A district appointed panel shall review the challenge and determine its appropriateness.

### **VESTABURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT SUMMARY**

This is a policy summary. Students and staff should read and will be accountable for following the entire policy. Technology covered by this policy includes the use of district software, audio and video media, computers and hardware peripherals, network, telecommunications, video, and audio equipment.

The use of district technology is a privilege that can be revoked at any time by the district. Each individual member is responsible for the reasonable care of technology, including hardware and software while in their possession or while they are using it.

District technology members will be responsible for its use and misuse. Appropriate use of district technology is defined as use in furtherance of the instructional goals and mission of the district. Members should consider any use that does not fall under this definition of appropriate use as being potential misuse for which a loss of technology use and disciplinary consequences may occur.

Staff and students acknowledge that software, audio, and video media is protected by a variety of licensing agreements and copyright laws and that any misuse of these may subject the member, as well as the district, to a variety of legal liabilities.

Members are responsible for the security of the technology, including the ability to use that technology to access confidential information, while such technology is in their possession or under

their control. Staff and students are not to either use or disclose confidential information except as a part of an appropriate educational use of technology.

Passwords are the property of the member and are not to be used by anyone else.

Checking out District technology for non-classroom use must be in accordance with Current Policies and Guidelines. All technology must be returned and available for instruction whenever students are present for instruction.

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## SECTION VII – Athletic/ Extra Curricular/Academic Competition Code Book

### Table of Contents

- I. Philosophy of Athletics/ Academic Competition
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6. Practice regulations
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## Philosophy of Athletics

The interscholastic athletic program at Vestaburg Community School is a vital and integral part of the total educational program. Its purpose is to make positive contributions to the development of participants, spectators, school, and the community. In as much, the Vestaburg Community School recognizes the Michigan High School Athletic Association's annual handbook as the governing body over our interscholastic athletic code. The district realizes it must meet the minimum requirements put forth by the MHSAA and the MHSAA grants districts permission to supersede the minimal requirements set forth in their handbook with more stringent requirements the district deems appropriate at a local level.

### A. Philosophy of participation will vary at the different grade levels.

The primary function of athletic programs at the middle school level is to provide instruction in the basic skills. Many skills are best learned under game conditions. Therefore, a major goal of programs at these levels is to give every athlete the opportunity to use these skills under game conditions.

The primary function of athletic programs at the JV and Varsity levels is to win the game, while also developing student athletes in their sport.

Every attempt will be made to allow all students to remain on the team in which they are interested.

The athletic director, after having a discussion with the varsity head coach regarding various team members, will make the final decision on the number of athletes to be carried on a team. Many variables will be taken into consideration before making such a decision. In general, the following will apply:

7-8 Everyone on the team in good standing will participate in the game, but may not receive equal playing time.

JV Every attempt will be made to get all athletes in good standing in the game, but this may not be possible in a close contest.

Varsity At this level, the ultimate goal is to follow our guidelines in developing responsible student-athletes and to win. In some game situations, not all team members may be able to participate.

## II. Objectives of Our Athletic/ Academic Competition Program

The athletic program includes these objectives:

1. To teach people to relate to each other and work together for a common goal
2. To give athletes the opportunity to develop physical and mental abilities to the fullest
3. To provide the opportunity to gain personal and group recognition
4. To teach athletes to display victory humbly and defeat gracefully
5. To teach good sportsmanship
6. To teach good health habits through physical training
7. To stress the importance of the athletes doing their best academically and athletically
8. To teach the importance of making a commitment
9. To give positive reinforcement

### Sports Offered

Vestaburg Community School offers the following sports at the middle and high school level.

Season	Girls Sports	Boys Sports
Fall	Cross Country Volleyball	Cross Country Football (club sport at middle school level)
Winter	Basketball	Basketball
Spring	Softball Track and Field	Baseball Track and Field

### Physical Examination

All athletes must pass a physical examination before participating in any phase of the athletic program. A physical examination card indicating that the student has passed the physical examination and is able to compete in athletics must be completed by an examining physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner and returned to the office of the athletic director prior to participation. For the card to be valid, the examination must be given on or after April 15 of the previous school year. A physical examination card may be obtained by contacting your coach and/or the athletic director. Only one card must be submitted per school year for each student. In

cases of injury or serious illness, the school district reserves the right to require that an athlete be re-examined by a physician before resuming participation in athletics.

### **Academic Eligibility**

#### MHSAA HANDBOOK: SECTION 8—CURRENT ACADEMIC CREDIT RECORD

Academic eligibility checks of not more than 10 weeks (semesters) or seven weeks (trimesters) are required. If a student is not passing at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student when checked, that student is ineligible for competition until the next check but not less than for the next Monday through Sunday. If the next eligibility check reveals the student is still not passing at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student, that student is ineligible for competition for not less than the next Monday through Sunday, and so on until the student is passing 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student from the start of the semester or trimester through the most recent eligibility check. INTERPRETATIONS—SECTION 8 46. In schools whose classes are approximately equal in length, “receiving credit” (as in Section 7) or “passing” (as in Section 8) 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student is defined here and throughout these regulations as meeting requirements of courses for which credit toward graduation or a certificate of completion would be granted by the school. Except as provided under Note 2 below, the credit load potential shall be the same for all students enrolled in the school to be represented. The minimum would be met, for example, by the following:

Passing 3 of 4 classes

Passing 4 of 5 classes

Passing 4 of 6 classes

Passing 5 of 7 classes

Passing 6 of 8 classes

At Vestaburg Community School, an athlete shall maintain at least a minimum 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) semester grade point average with no failing grades to remain eligible to participate in athletic competitions. Grades earned through the Montcalm Area Intermediate Career Center, School-to-Work, and any high school course taken via the internet will be counted in averaging a grade point average. Dual-enrollment college grades do not count toward grade point averaging.

Once an athlete is deemed ineligible to compete, the athlete will remain ineligible for a minimum of one week (Monday-Sunday). An athlete is only allowed two periods of ineligibility in one season of a particular sport. If an athlete becomes ineligible a third time, the athlete will be

dropped from the team for the remainder of the season. If the athlete is deemed ineligible to compete when semester grades are released, he/she is ineligible to compete athletically for no less than 60 school days of the next semester. However, any student that is deemed ineligible according to Vestaburg Community School Policies, but meets the state requirements and two (2) or fewer courses (must pass 66%) may be placed on academic probation. Students that meet the criteria will be suspended from participating in athletic contests for (50%) of the scheduled competitions for the affected season. Upon completion of the suspension the student may be allowed to begin participating in athletic contests provided that they are in good standing with the team and are meeting and continue to meet all academic requirements for the remainder of the semester. Semester grades will be computed one week after the end of the semester. Students will be notified of any ineligibility as soon as the athletic administrator has the information. Any student who is ineligible to compete because of academic sanctions and who receives disciplinary sanctions will complete any athletic-related suspensions or other sanctions during the next season in which he/she is eligible to compete.

Credits earned through approved courses may be used to determine athletic eligibility. Grades will be used to calculate GPA and will be used on transcripts unless the course is a credit/no credit course or an alternate agreement is in place.

The procedure for determining eligibility is as follows:

1. Teachers will turn in grades every other Thursday.
2. The athletic director will inform coaches of ineligible athletes Friday.
3. Coaches will inform athletes of ineligibility that day.
4. Athletes will become ineligible on Monday and remain ineligible until the Monday one week later.

\*Middle School student athletes are required to meet the standards set by the MHSAA. For example, a student who fails three (3) or more classes will be ineligible to participate in athletic competition for a minimum of 60 school days. Students that meet the state standards but fail to meet the standards set by Vestaburg Community Schools will be ineligible on a weekly basis.

### Attendance

Students who are absent from any part of the school day may not participate in that day's practice or competition unless authorized by the building principal or designee. Exceptions include

pre-arranged appointments, which cannot be scheduled at other times, school-sponsored or related trips, and other applicable situations, which arise.

## Practices

Practice regulations:

- a. A coach must be consulted if any athlete must miss a practice. An athlete missing a practice without good reason will be dealt with at the coach's discretion.
- b. Illness or an extreme emergency would be a good reason for missing a practice or game.
- c. Obey the specific rules of the coach, who is responsible to the athletic director.

Summer and holiday practices -- When scheduling summer and holiday practices, the head coach will meet with the athletic director to discuss such practices. Family vacations and personal commitments, along with grade level of participants, will be major considerations when determining such schedules. Sunday practices are discouraged and shall not be mandatory. The athletic director should approve all such schedules.

## Communication

Parents and other supporters: ***It is expected that all parties will follow the coach-parent communication plan.***

- a. The appropriate line of communications when wishing to discuss team or play issues (discussions are more helpful when arranged ahead of time - 24 hours) is as follows:
  1. Parent/supporter with Coach
  2. Parent/supporter with Coach and Athletic Director
  3. Parent/supporter with Coach, Athletic Director, and Principal
- b. Locker room and attendance - Parents and supporters not directly associated with the team are not allowed in the locker room immediately before games, during halftimes or immediately after games, except in an emergency.
- c. Practice attendance - Parents and supporters are welcome to attend practice situations, except in special cases, as long as they do not interfere with the practice sessions.

## Student Athlete Discipline Code

#### IV. Code of Conduct for Student Athletics/ Academic Competition

Participation in sports is a privilege extended to those students whose scholastic record and citizenship status satisfies the standards imposed by the school and the Michigan High School Athletic Association. Athletes earn their place on a team and keep that place with a show of commitment, dedication, and attitude. Coaches should not tolerate any departure from this course that would adversely affect the performance or attitude of the team.

##### D. On the Field

In the area of athletic competition, an athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics. The student athlete learns the fact that losing is part of the game, and that he or she should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate your opponent on a well-played game after the contest. As a Vestaburg athlete, you are expected to show exemplary sportsmanship at all times. True athletes have complete control of themselves at all times.

##### E. On the Campus

Behavior and appearance on the campus is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders, since fellow students respect and follow them. An athlete should conform to school dress and grooming rules at all times. Leaders will accept these responsibilities, realizing that they influence many others on the campus. Athletic leaders work for the betterment of the school and what is right and good for their fellow students.

##### F. On Trips

On trips, athletes directly represent the community, school, and coaches. It is, therefore, expected that all concerned will dress in an acceptable manner when traveling and conduct themselves on the bus in a manner in keeping with this code. It is our philosophy that the team and individuals benefit when all athletes ride to and from events on the school transportation. Exceptions are discouraged, except in extreme circumstances. Student athletes may not be released to any other individual, even with parental permission. In a

situation where the student must ride home with the parents or guardians, a parent or guardian must physically sign the student out with the coach.

G. Behavioral expectations in and out of school

Behavior expectations must be adhered to. They have been developed for the welfare and benefit of the athletes. The athlete must observe the rules, train faithfully, and follow the specific training instructions of the coaches of the particular season. General rules are in effect for all athletes year round. This also includes any sponsored camp, activity, fundraising event, or any other instance where the student can be considered to be representing Vestaburg Community School. Students in violation of the handbook have the option of telling an administrator immediately following the incident. Students who choose to come forth may receive a reduction in their athletic suspension.

**Consequences and Procedures**

Level	Definition of Offense	Disciplinary Action	Second Offense	Additional Offenses
I.	<p>General classroom misbehavior, which is reported in written form to the administration for a school punishment. This shall occur after the classroom teacher has attempted to work with the student (through private conversations, classroom detentions, or other disciplines). Level I infractions are cumulative throughout the school year.</p> <p>An athlete shall not remain in a place where he/she knows that alcoholic beverages are being served to or consumed by persons under the legal age. In addition, an athlete shall not remain in a place where he/she knows or can be reasonably presumed to know that any provisions of the Michigan Controlled Substance Law are being violated.</p>	<p>The athlete will be suspended from one game unit (one football game, one baseball double header, etc.). The suspension will be effective with the next <i>logical</i> game, i.e. if a varsity football player is disciplined on a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, the suspension will be effective that Friday (or whatever day the contest is scheduled). If the action occurs on Thursday or Friday, the suspension will take place the following contest. A similar plan is in effect for all other sports, but during this step, the student-athlete's suspension will not be effective <i>immediately</i>. The athlete will be expected to practice with the team throughout the suspension period, unless the suspension occurs at</p>	<p>The second offense will result in a two game-unit suspension.</p>	<p>A third offense automatically goes to Level II.</p>



		or near the end of the season and affects the remaining schedule.		
II.	Penalties for verified violation of the Vestaburg Community School Student Handbook. These penalties are an alternative to the handbook and shall take precedence. Level II infractions are cumulative throughout the school year.	Automatic and immediate suspension from 25% of the season's scheduled contests. If the season is more than 75% complete, the remainder of the suspension will be made up in the next sport in which the athlete participates. For the suspension to be complete, the athlete must finish any season in which the suspension occurs in good standing with the coaches involved. The athlete will be expected to practice with the team throughout the suspension period, unless the suspension occurs at or near the end of the season and affects the remaining schedule.	<u>2nd Violation</u> - The athlete will be immediately suspended from 50% of a season's contests. If the season is more than 50% complete, the remainder of the suspension will be made up in the next sport in which the athlete participates. For the suspension to be completed, the athlete must finish any season in which the suspension occurs in good standing with the coaches involved. The athlete will be expected to practice with the team throughout the suspension period, unless the suspension occurs at or near the end of the season and affects the remaining schedule.	
III.	1. Use, possession, concealment, distribution, sale or being under the	<u>1st Violation</u> - The athlete will be immediately suspended from 50%	<u>2nd Violation</u> - The athlete will be immediately placed on indefinite suspension, to be	<u>3rd Violation</u> - Immediately, the athlete will be permanently ineligible to participate in athletics.

<p>influence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Tobacco or tobacco products in any form.</li> <li>b. Alcohol or such beverages in any form.</li> <li>c. Illegal drugs, including but not limited to those substances defined as "controlled substances" pursuant to federal and/or state statute.</li> <li>d. Steroids, human growth hormones or other performance enhancing drugs.</li> <li>e. Substances purported to be illegal, abusive or performance enhancing, i.e. look-alike drugs.</li> </ul> <p>It shall not be a violation of the athletic code for an athlete to use or possess a prescription or patent drug when taken pursuant to a legal prescription issued by a licensed physician for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to school-sponsored</p>	<p>of a season's contests. If the season is more than 50% complete, the remainder of the suspension will be made up in the next sport in which the athlete participates. For the suspension to be completed, the athlete must finish any season in which the suspension occurs in good standing with the coaches involved. The athlete will be expected to practice with the team throughout the suspension period, unless the suspension occurs at or near the end of the season and affects the remaining schedule.</p>	<p>reviewed by the Athletic Council one year (365 days) after the offense.</p>	<p>at Vestaburg.</p>
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<p>activity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Violation of a federal, state or local law/ordinance on school premises or during a school-sponsored activity.</li> <li>3. Theft, vandalism, destruction of property, or possession of stolen goods belonging to our school, to an opponent's school, or to any applicable entities.</li> <li>4. Felony or misdemeanor acts other than minor traffic offenses.</li> <li>5. Conviction of said act is not necessary.</li> </ol> <p>Level III infractions may occur at any time during the calendar year and are cumulative throughout a student's school career.</p>			
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1. Violations will be verified in the following manner:
  - A. Student (or parental) admission.
  - B. Law enforcement reports.
  - C. Vestaburg staff member, or a representative thereof, reporting an observed violation by the staff member.
  - D. Responsible adult reporting an observed violation.
2. Due process and right of appeal are offered to athletes according to school policy. Any athlete who feels that he or she has been unjustly suspended or discriminated against may appeal the decision to the Athletic Council. Until the Athletic Council makes a decision, the suspensions will be upheld. The council shall consist of all head coaches, two non-coaching teachers, the principal, and the athletic director. The principal shall act as secretary and the athletic director shall act as chairperson.
3. Upon written receipt of an appeal, the athletic director shall call a meeting of the council within five (5) days. Parents of the appellant shall be notified of the hearing in advance of such hearing. Votes shall be of public record and recorded as part of the record kept by the secretary. The council must decide to uphold the decision of the administrator/coach, overturn it, or amend it. Within three (3) days of the hearing, the council shall render its decision and give written notice to the student, parents, principal, coach, and athletic director. The athletic director shall maintain records of the hearing.
4. The student may appeal the decision of the council to the superintendent. If not satisfied with the decision, the student may further appeal to the Vestaburg Board of Education. Any decision by the Vestaburg Board of Education will be final.
5. Vestaburg Community School recognizes that a student may elect to become an athlete at any time during his/her school career; therefore, the Board of Education recognizes a statute of limitations for offenses. Penalties for Level III infraction(s) will be in effect one year from the date of the infraction, whether or not the individual is an athlete at the time of the infraction.



denied until a physician's statement is produced clearing that student to participate.

- d. Concussion Information: Vestaburg Community Schools recognize the importance of the pertinent safety of our students and as a result abides by guidelines set forth by the State of Michigan and the Michigan High School Athletic Association including providing parents and students with updated information and materials annually regarding concussions. By signing the acknowledgment page at the end of this handbook, I acknowledge that I have received such materials.

## PARENT/STUDENT/SCHOOL COMPACT

As a Parent/Caring Adult of a Vestaburg student, I will encourage and support my child's learning by:

- Seeing that my child attends school regularly (except when ill), is punctual, and ready to learn.
- Establishing a time and place for homework and checking it regularly.
- Instilling high expectations for my child as an individual and encouraging a positive attitude about learning.
- Keeping the lines of communication open with teachers and/or school officials.
- Showing an interest in my child's well-being by attending (when possible) school functions, supporting school activities, and parent/teacher conferences.
- Encouraging daily reading at home.

As a Vestaburg student, I will actively participate in my learning by:

- Coming to school on time every day, except when ill.
- Coming to class prepared with all materials, homework, and a positive attitude to learn.
- Completing all classroom lessons and homework on time in a way that is accurate and neat.
- Showing respect at all times to everyone and cooperating with others.
- Obeying all school rules and conducting myself accordingly.

- Doing my part in keeping my school clean and safe.

As Vestaburg Staff, we will encourage and support students' learning by:

- Providing a safe and positive learning environment conducive to learning.
- Setting high instructional standards that encompass the content standards and benchmarks.
- Helping students develop responsibility for their own behavior and learning.
- Creating a warm atmosphere for parents/guardians during classroom visits and participating in activities.
- Communicating regularly and working with families to support students' learning.
- Valuing and respecting the importance of the parents' role in the education of their children.



## SECTION VIII - APPENDIX

### PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK, ELECTRONIC USE POLICY, AND ATHLETIC CODE BOOK

*An up to date Vestaburg Community School Handbook can be found on the school's website at [www.vcs-k12.net](http://www.vcs-k12.net). Please be advised that by signing the Student Enrollment Form you are agreeing to that you have read and understand all policies as they are presented in this handbook.*

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_