



Benjamin Franklin Middle School

2019 / 2020

You are a unique learner capable of academic success, emotional growth, and physical health.

You will learn to appreciate the diversity in others, develop new talents, and become life long learners.

Your Challenge begins today!

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DAILY SCHEDULE

PERIOD	SUBJECT	TEACHER	ROOM #
1st			
2nd			
3rd			
4th			
5th			
6th			
7th			
8th			
9th			

VALPARAISO MIDDLE SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

THE VALPARAISO MIDDLE SCHOOLS PROVIDE A POSITIVE, SAFE,
AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS ARE
EMPOWERED TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THEIR OWN
EDUCATION AND TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL.

WE BELIEVE ALL STUDENTS

- ... NEED TO BE PROVIDED A SOLID ACADEMIC FOUNDATION
WHICH INCLUDES COMMUNICATION, RESEARCH, AND
TECHNOLOGY SKILLS
- ... NEED SKILLS TO ADAPT, COMPETE, AND CONTINUE
LEARNING IN AN EVER-CHANGING SOCIETY
- ... NEED TO FEEL VALUED AND RESPECTED AS INDIVIDUALS WITH
DIVERSE EXPERIENCES AND BACKGROUNDS WHILE DEVELOPING
CHARACTER, CITIZENSHIP, AND RESPONSIBILITY
- ... BENEFIT WHEN TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY
COLLABORATE IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

BFMS SCHEDULE

6th Grade

7:50-8:40	-----	1 st Hour
8:44-9:34	-----	2 nd Hour
9:38-10:28	-----	3 rd Hour
10:28-10:58	-----	LUNCH
11:02-11:52	-----	5 th Hour
11:56- 12:46	-----	6 th Hour
12:50-1:22	-----	VIKING TIME
1:26- 2:06	-----	8 th Hour(Allied Arts)
2:10-2:50	-----	9 th Hour(Allied Arts)

7th Grade

7:50-8:40	-----	1 st Hour
8:44-9:34	-----	2 nd Hour
9:38-10:28	-----	3 rd Hour
10:32-11:12	-----	4 th Hour(Allied Arts)
11:16-11:56	-----	5 th Hour(Allied Arts)
11:56-12:26	-----	LUNCH
12:30-1:20	-----	7 th Hour
1:24-2:14	-----	8 th Hour
2:18- 2:50	-----	VIKING TIME

8th Grade

7:50-8:30	-----	1 st Hour(Allied Arts)
8:34-9:14	-----	2 nd Hour(Allied Arts)
9:18-10:08	-----	3 rd Hour
10:12-11:02	-----	4 th Hour
11:02-11:32	-----	LUNCH
11:36-12:08	-----	VIKING TIME
12:12-1:02	-----	7 th Hour
1:06-1:56	-----	8 th Hour
2:00-2:50	-----	9 th Hour

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 2:50 p.m. Main doors to the building will be open to students at 7:35 a.m.

All students must be out of the building by 3:00 p.m. unless under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Students are not allowed to roam the hallways or other areas while waiting for rides.

The school day consists of nine periods. There are three 30 minute lunch periods, which occur on a staggered basis and are counted as one of the nine periods at each grade level.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The handbook has been prepared for the students of Ben Franklin Middle School to aid them in adjusting to their middle school years. The book contains information regarding school activities, rules, and general regulations for the efficient operation of the school and is intended to comply with the applicable requirements of the Indiana Code.

Parents of Benjamin Franklin Middle School students should familiarize themselves with the handbook in order to have an understanding of the middle school educational program and student expectations.

HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK

1. Write your name in the handbook.
2. Take time to read the handbook so that you are familiar with the rules that govern work and conduct.

3. Let your parents read it so they will have a better understanding of middle school programs, rules and expectations.
4. Keep the handbook available so you can turn to it when you are in doubt about something. Always feel free to go to your teachers, counselor or principal with your questions or problems. They will be glad to assist you.

HEALTH SERVICES

The health program of the school is under the direction of the school nurse and school administration. The nurse is available on an on call basis. First aid, when needed, is administered by available school personnel. In case of a serious illness or injury, the school will contact the parents/guardian to arrange for the student to be picked up or taken to the hospital emergency room. A student is never sent or taken home unless the parent assumes responsibility when someone is not home.

Students who are ill or injured should notify their teacher to receive a pass to the health office. Usually, parents will not be contacted concerning the illness or injury unless the illness or injury is serious in nature or the student has a fever or communicable illness.

School authorities, the school nurse, or other school personnel do not attempt to treat or diagnose cases of illness or injury. Parents should inform the school nurse of any physical conditions of their child that requires special attention such as asthma, seizures, diabetes, heart conditions, etc. This medical information should be kept up-to-date, as well as all other pertinent information such as home address, phone number, contacts, doctor, etc.

MEDICATIONS

To safely administer medication/treatments required for a student's health and well-being at school and to abide by Indiana law, the following guidelines shall be followed.

1. Dispensing prescription medication or administering treatment at school without written instructions from BOTH the parent/guardian AND physician is prohibited. Verbal instruction does not meet legal requirements.
2. Non-prescription medication only requires a parent/guardian signature.
3. Written instructions should include date, student, reason for giving, medication, dose, time, duration, and signature.
4. All medications must be sent in the original labeled pharmacy or manufacture's container.
5. Medications are kept in the school health office. (An exception would be when a student has authorization to carry medication for emergency/chronic health needs (EpiPen, inhalers).
6. The school nurse or her designee has the sole responsibility of giving or dispensing medication.
7. One (1) dose of a non-prescription medication in the original container may be kept with the student if there is a parent/guardian medication authorization on file with the school health clinic.
8. Medications no longer used or needed must be picked up by the parent/guardian or a designated, in writing, person 18 years of age or older. Medication not picked up by the end of the school year will be properly disposed of.

Should you have any questions regarding medication or health services please feel free to contact the school nurse.

HOMEWORK

The role of homework as a link between home and school is a vital one. Homework assignments, through a cooperative effort between the parent, child, and teacher, can become a significant extension of the school day. Homework is an opportunity to reinforce and practice new skills; an opportunity to gain background information for upcoming lessons; and an opportunity to complete unfinished class work. It is a daily responsibility that demonstrates the importance of education.

STUDENT LOCKERS

Students are not to give their locker combinations to others under any circumstances. Locker switching is not permitted. Posters placed in lockers must be in good taste and put up with magnets only. Tape is not to be used.

All lockers, desks, and other student storage areas (such as closets and cabinets) made available for student use on premises, including lockers located in the hallways, physical education and athletic dressing rooms, industrial technology classrooms, and the art classrooms are the exclusive and sole property of the Valparaiso Community Schools. These lockers, desks, and other student storage areas are made available for student use in the storing of school supplies and personal items necessary for use in school. These storage areas should not be used to store items which cause, or can reasonably be foreseen to cause, an interference with school purposes, or an educational function, or for some purpose which is forbidden by Indiana State law, school rules, or school board policy. The students' use of the locker, desk, or other student storage area does not diminish the school corporation's ownership or control of those areas.

The Valparaiso Community Schools retains the right to inspect the lockers, desks, and other student storage areas and their contents to insure that these areas are being used in accordance with their intended purpose; and to eliminate fire or other hazards; maintain sanitary conditions; attempt to locate lost or stolen materials; and to prevent the use of any locker, desk, or other storage area to store prohibited or dangerous materials such as weapons, illegal drugs, contraband, tobacco products, or alcohol.

The inspection of particular student's locker or storage areas will not be conducted unless the building principal or his/her designee has "reasonable cause for a search."

Whenever an individual student's locker or storage areas has been inspected, the building principal or his/her designee shall notify the student of such inspection as soon as practicable thereafter.

LOST AND FOUND

A Lost and Found area will be located in the laundry room. Items may be claimed before or after school. Students finding lost items are encouraged to bring them to the office. Any valuables may be taken to or claimed in the office.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

Money and/or other valuables should not be brought to school. However, if it is absolutely necessary that a student bring a large amount of money or other valuable items to school, such items should be left in the office for security and picked up when needed. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen money or valuables.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies will be held in the auditorium or the school gymnasium. They may be held for programs or group instruction, and the following behavior is expected of all students during assemblies:

1. Students should take their seats immediately and get quiet as soon as the speaker approaches the microphone. Note: Students are assigned specific seating areas for assemblies.
2. Students are to be courteous and listen attentively.
3. Appropriate applause should be given for deserving presentation.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Several bulletin boards are located throughout the building. These bulletin boards are for providing information to the general student body. All materials placed on the bulletin boards must receive prior approval and be initiated by the principal or his/her designee. If materials have not been properly approved, they will be thrown away. This includes campaign materials.

VISITOR REGULATIONS

1. All visitors must obtain a visitor's pass from the principal's office.
2. The following people may be granted a visitor's pass:
 - a. Visitors with specific appointments.
 - b. Former students wishing to visit teachers must telephone the school and set an appointment time. Former students may not simply "drop in" or enter the building looking for teachers or students.
3. No student guests will be permitted at school.
4. A visitor's pass need not be requested if a person's presence limits him/her to business in the Main Office.
5. Personnel who are present for a specific school purpose of service or maintenance (salespersons excluded) need not obtain a visitor's pass.
6. Any person not abiding by the regulations governing visitors may be subject to trespass as defined by state statute.

MEDIA CENTER

Philosophy:

The Media Center is dedicated to helping students and staff to be effective users of ideas and information. The Media Specialist endeavors to connect people with information by providing access to materials in all formats through carefully selected and systematically organized collection of diverse learning resources. These resources represent a wide range of subjects, level of difficulty, communication formats and emerging information technologies. The Media Center strives to provide instruction in the use of information technology and to provide resources and learning activities that foster interest in reading, viewing and using information and ideas.

Student Behavior:

Students in the Media Center are expected to comply with the school rules as stated in the Student Handbook. The Media Center should be a quiet place to study and to research. It is not a place for friends to meet and socialize during advisory class. Students must sign in and out of the Media Center and have their pass signed upon leaving.

Circulation and Fines

Students must have their school ID to check out materials. All books are due two weeks from the check out date. Magazines are due one week from check out date. There will be a \$0.10 per school day fine for late materials. Overdue notices are sent out once a week. Students with overdue materials or fines may not check out additional materials until late items are returned and fines are paid. The school's purchase price must be paid if materials are lost or damaged beyond repair. There is a book drop box in the commons area for student convenience.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Uniform

- a. Students must wear the required Valparaiso Middle School's Physical Education uniform: shorts, shirt, white athletic socks, and gym shoes with laces. Shorts and shirts are available at Blythe's Sporting Goods.
- b. If gym shoes are worn to school, it is recommended that a separate pair be worn for physical education class.
- c. Sweat suits are recommended for outside activities.

- d. The physical education uniform is to be taken home on Friday to be washed and returned clean on Monday.
2. Showers
- a. Showers are optional. Students wanting to take a shower may do so upon request.
- b. Students are provided with a towel if requested.
3. Physical Education Locker
- a. Lockers are provided in the physical education area for personal belongings.
- b. Locks are provided. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen money, valuables, or locks.
- c. Cell phones are prohibited in all locker rooms at all times.**
- d. After school hours, cell phones must be stored in a student's back-pack or gym bag and cannot be used until after exiting the locker room.
4. Physical Education Participation/Attendance
- a. Students will dress and participate every day even if participation is limited due to a minor medical problem (ex. cold, flu, sore throat, asthma, etc., students will still dress and participate to the best of their ability). A parent's note for limited activity will be accepted for one or two days only. The note must be dated and signed.
- b. Any student who needs to be excused for more than two days should be under a doctor's care and will need a note, stating the medical problem, signed by the doctor.

CURRICULUM

SIXTH GRADE

Language Arts – Reading, Spelling, Grammar
 2 periods/daily
 Core Plus
 Social Studies – History and Geography
 Math
 Science
 Family and Consumer Science – 7 weeks
 Industrial Technology – 7 weeks
 Visual Arts – 7 weeks
 General Music – 7 weeks
 Digital Communications (Keyboarding)– 7 weeks
 Physical Education / Health
 Choir/Band/Orchestra - electives

SEVENTH GRADE

Language Arts – Reading, Spelling, Grammar
 World Language (must meet criteria) or
 Communications Arts
 Social Studies – History and Geography
 Math
 Science
 Family and Consumer Science – 7 weeks
 Industrial Technology – 7 weeks
 General Music – 7 weeks
 Visual Arts – 7 weeks
 Digital Communications (GAFE/MS Ofc)– 7 weeks
 Physical Education / Health
 Choir/Band/Orchestra – electives

EIGHTH GRADE

Language Arts – Reading, Spelling, Grammar
 World Language (must meet criteria) or
 Communication Arts
 Math
 Science
 Social Studies
 Family and Consumer Sciences – 7 weeks
 Industrial Technology – 7 weeks
 Visual Arts – 7 weeks
 PLTW Computer Science– 7 weeks
 Digital Communications (Personal Finance/College & Career Ready)– 7 weeks
 Physical Education / Health
 Choir/Band/Orchestra – electives

MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSES TAKEN FOR VHS CREDIT

Algebra for VHS credit

At the end of your child's first semester of Algebra instruction, you as parent will have a decision to make. You may elect to have your child receive high school credit for Algebra. At the end of the first semester, you will be asked to sign a credit declaration at which time, the grade your child received for the first semester will be reflected on their high school transcript.

Your child will also have earned one high school credit towards the minimum 40 required for high school graduation. Your child will automatically continue to second semester where their second semester grade will be reflected on their high school transcript and they will have earned a second high school credit towards a high school diploma. The semester grades earned will count towards their high school grade point average (GPA).

If you decide against your child taking Algebra for high school credit at the end of the first semester, your child will remain in the class for the remainder of the year, but they will not have the option to receive high school credit and the grade will not be reflected on their high school transcript.

All eighth grade students who are enrolled in Algebra regardless of whether they are taking it for high school credit or not are required by the state of Indiana to complete the End of Course Assessment (ECA). Successful completion of the ECA is a graduation requirement in the state of Indiana.

Biology for VHS Credit

Eighth grade students who are enrolled in the Biology I course will receive two semester credits towards their high school graduation requirements with the successful completion of this course. The semester grades will be reflected on their high school transcript. The semester grades earned will count towards their high school grade point average (GPA).

Students who are enrolled in the Biology I course will also be required to participate in the Biology I End of Course Assessment (ECA) as required by the state of Indiana and the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements.

World Language for VHS credit

Near the end of your child's seventh grade year of world language instruction, you and your child will have a decision to make. Your child's teacher will make a recommendation regarding their continued enrollment in the world language course. If you elect to have your child enroll in the eighth grade world language course, then the grade they received as a seventh grader will be reflected on their high school transcript. They will also have earned one high school credit towards the minimum 40 required for high school graduation. Upon successful completion of the eighth grade year of the world language course, the grade they received will be reflected on their high school transcript. The student will also have earned one high school credit at the completion of eighth grade for a total of two credits on their high school transcript in world language. The semester grades earned will count towards their high school grade point average (GPA).

If you elect to not have your child continue in the world language courses in the eighth grade, their grade will not carry over to the high school transcript and they will be enrolled in a communication arts class as an eighth grader. Remaining in the world language class as an 8th grader and auditing is not an option

HONOR ROLLS

Students who earn a 3.5 grade average and above will be placed on the Principal's Honor Roll.

Students who earn between 3.0 and 3.49 grade average will be placed on the B Honor Roll.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards will go home at the end of the nine weeks-grading period. Cards will be distributed the last period of the day just prior to students being excused for the day except the last grading period when cards will be available in the main office for parent pickup.

Progress reports will be available on Parent Portal weekly when school is in session. If parents desire a conference concerning progress reports or report cards, they should first contact the teaching team or counselor.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

National Junior Honor Society is an honorary organization with members selected from seventh and eighth grades. The requirements for membership are based on scholarship, citizenship, character, leadership and service.

The student must have a middle school cumulative grade point average of a 3.5 or better in English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language and communication arts. All grades in other subjects must average to a 3 point or better.

All citizenship grades must be satisfactory. Students must also display examples of acceptable character in the classroom and school community.

To qualify in the areas of leadership and service a student must participate actively in at least one school activity for one school year prior to induction. One season of any sport or after school intramural program, clubs, and academic competitions qualify as activities.

After becoming a member, he or she must continue to participate in activities, display good standards of citizenship and character, and maintain the academic standards required for membership. To participate in service projects students must maintain these requirements and will be informed at nine week intervals if they fall below the standards.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council is the students' legislature. It consists of many students and five officers all selected by the student body. The president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and sergeant-at-arms are elected by the student body in the spring before the year in which they will serve. Student Council members are expected to set a good example for the student body. The goals and purpose of the Student Council are as follows:

1. The Student Council advises and assists the school administration.
2. It assists in and promotes various social activities.

3. It represents the students of the various homerooms and clubs by handling their suggestions and ideas.
4. It recognizes outstanding individuals in the student body.
5. It initiates and carries out various projects, which will aid in the improvement of our school and community.

SAFETY DRILLS

Unannounced safety drills will be held frequently to familiarize students with the procedures necessary to relocate in safer areas of the building in case of a tornado warning or to evacuate the building in case of fire. The prescribed procedures and routes for relocation and evacuation are posted on the bulletin board in each classroom. Students should learn both types of routes from each of their classrooms. When the fire alarm sounds or a tornado drill is announced, students should move quickly and quietly to their designated areas. Running and talking will not be permitted. Students must remain in their designated areas until further instructions are given.

TORNADO INSTRUCTION

1. A tornado evacuation plan will be given to each teacher and posted in each room. Students should study the plan and become familiar with it.
2. When the alert is sounded, all students should proceed to the designated area as outlined by that room's emergency plan. All persons will remain in the designated area until the all clear is sounded.
3. In case of a real tornado alert, students will be asked to get down on their knees and cover their heads with their arms to protect themselves from flying debris.
4. All students are to be absolutely quiet so that instructions can be heard by all.
5. **Students are to obey all instructions given to them during a drill or an actual alert.**

CAFETERIA / LUNCH

The campus is closed during the lunch periods at Benjamin Franklin. NO STUDENT MAY LEAVE SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING THE LUNCH PERIOD. All students must eat in the cafeteria, whether they eat cafeteria food or a lunch brought from home. The following rules apply to the cafeteria:

1. Students are to form orderly single file lines and move quickly through the serving area.
2. Meals must be paid for as students pass the cash register.
3. All food eaten at school **MUST** be eaten in the cafeteria.
4. All food, paper, and trays must be removed from the tables when students have finished eating.
5. Classes are in session during the entire lunch period. Therefore, to avoid disturbances, all students will remain in the cafeteria throughout their lunch period.

POWER FAILURE

In the event there is a power failure throughout the building, the following instructions will be followed.

1. Teachers will remain with their students at all times.
2. Students will remain in their classrooms. The only exception will be if emergency lighting in an interior room fails to work. In this case, the teacher will take the students to an exterior classroom with windows.
3. All movement will be made in a quiet and orderly manner.
4. If a room is vacated, the door to that room should be closed.
5. If the emergency occurs during a class break, teachers are to go to their assigned classroom. Students are to go to the nearest classroom (an exterior room or one with emergency lighting) or to the gym. Students are to remain in the nearest area until further instructions are given. Teachers who have prep period following the class break will check restrooms etc.
6. Electrical or gas equipment being used when the blackout occurs should be shut off immediately.
7. Injuries or any unusual happenings should be reported to the office immediately.

HALLWAY PASSES

There should be only a very limited number of times when a student finds it necessary to leave the classroom. No student should be in the halls during class period without a pass. All passes are to be completely filled out and signed by the releasing teacher. Only authorized passes should be used. Any student who is in the hallway during a class period may be asked to show the pass.

CHEATING / PLAGIARISM

1. Any student that submits work (tests, homework, project, etc.) that is not his/her own receives no credit for that work.
2. The student will receive a letter grade of "F" or numerical grade of zero for the work \
3. The teacher will notify the parent of the dishonesty.
4. In the instance that this is the student's first offense for the current academic year, the student will be given an opportunity to resubmit the assignment as original work with a 20% grade mark down prior to any grading by the teacher.
5. Repeated acts of dishonesty will be referred to the assistant principal and counselor.

6. Assisting in the submission of dishonest work will be treated in a similar manner. Examples are: allowing others to use your work before, during, or after class; passing on test information; etc.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for a student's success in school. A student who is not regular in attendance loses valuable educational opportunities, tends to feel left out, loses interest, and often drops out of school. Business and industry require attendance and dependability, and the school regards the training in these habits as a shared responsibility. It is the purpose of these procedures to stimulate both student and parents to assume the responsibility of maintaining good school attendance.

Students who are absent for any reason should access Parent Portal for assignments.

Tardies Students are encouraged to be on time for school. Tardies to school will only be excused if the student is ill or has an appointment.

Absences In order for a student absence to be excused, the parent or guardian must do one of the following:

1. Send a signed written statement at the time the student returns to school indicating the nature of the absence, the specific day(s), and/or time(s) of the absence.
- OR
2. Telephone the school during the time of absence stating the nature of the absence, the specific day(s), and/or time(s) of the absence.

If a written statement or telephone call is not received as outlined above, the student may be considered unexcused.

Absences Fall into Two categories

1. Excused for reasons stated previously. A student may make up work missed during an excused absence. However, it is the responsibility of the student to ask each teacher what has been missed. It is your child's responsibility to ask for any make-up work missed during his/her absence. The missed work must be made up immediately. The allotted time will be equal to the number of days missed. The following reasons are recognized as legal reasons for absences:
 - Absence due to illness or injury
 - Absence due to death in the family
 - Absence due to religious holidays
 - Absence arranged in advance through parental contact with the principal or his designee.
 - Absence of an unusual or emergency nature which is approved by the principal or his designee.
 - After five (5) consecutive absences, school officials may require a doctor's note. If the student absences, due to illness, become excessive, we will require doctor's notes for any subsequent absences, due to illness.
2. Unexcused for truancy, suspension, or reasons other than those stated above. It is the student's responsibility to ask for any make-up work missed. The missed work must be made up immediately and in the allotted time, which is equal to the number of days missed. If a student fails to make up the work, the missed assignments become a failing grade.

Planned Vacations or Trips

The Valparaiso Community Schools recognize that vacations and out-of-town trips do not always coincide with school vacation. Parents desiring to have their children absent from school for a family vacation or trip must follow these procedures:

1. The parent MUST arrange with the school principal at least three days in advance for the student to be out of school.
2. The student will be counted absent, and the absence will be marked unexcused.
3. The student must tell the teacher of the planned absence. Teachers may provide homework in advance when definite advance class plans have been made, but teachers are not required to give a student homework before a vacation. Students who receive homework in advance must turn in the completed work prior to leaving for vacation or on the first day returning to school. Students will be expected to make up other work in the time allotted by the teacher upon return.
4. When the above arrangements have been met and the work is made up on time, there will be no penalty assessed for the absence.

Medical Appointments

Parents should make every effort to schedule medical appointments so the student will not miss school. If this is impossible and a student must be absent for a short period of time, s(he) is to bring a note from the parent or guardian to the office before school the day of the appointment. A pass will be issued to excuse the student from class at the proper time.

Tardiness

Punctuality is required at Benjamin Franklin. Tardiness to school will be handled as a rule infraction and will be dealt with according to the following:

1st offense = verbal warning

2nd offense = verbal warning plus parent contact

3rd offense = short (30-45 minute) detention assigned to student

4th offense = long (2 hour) detention assigned to student

5th offense = second long (2 hour) detention assigned to student

6th offense = referral to school administrator, discipline may include in-school suspension

This policy will be applied on a semester basis and thus, students reset to zero at the beginning of the second semester.

Habitual Truancy

Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 338 defines "chronic absenteeism" as a student who is absent 10% or more of the school year for any reason. Furthermore, SEA 338 defines a "habitual truant" as a student who is absent for 10+ days without excuse or absent under parental request filed by the school. As a result of SEA 338, BFMS is required to continuously monitor student attendance, reduce absenteeism and truancy, and report students who are chronically absent or habitually truant to the State, which includes a referral to Project Attend.

A student is habitually truant if s/he has skipped school enough times that the skipping has handicapped that student's ability to receive an education that is appropriate for his/her grade level. Habitually truant students who are thirteen or fourteen years old shall have their name submitted to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and may not be issued an operator's license or a learner's permit until they are 18 years of age, or until the school that they attend determines that they are again eligible for a license or permit due to improved attendance.

It should also be noted that operator's licenses and learner's permits may not be issued to persons under 18 years of age who have more than one suspension from school during the same school year or who are expelled from school during the school year for misconduct.

After-School Activities

Students who miss any part of a school day because of illness, other than because of a prearranged appointment, cannot participate in or attend after-school contests, practices, performances, parties, or other similar activities that same day.

Project ATTEND

Students with excessive absences or trancies will be referred to the Porter County Probation Department for participation in Project ATTEND.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Perfect attendance awards will be given to those students who have not been absent from school for any reason. A student is considered absent if they miss ANY part of the school period/class/day. Perfect means perfect.

BOOKS AND FEES

All textbooks must be rented. Book rental fees are due in full at the beginning of each school year. Those unable to pay in full are required to sign a promissory note to have completed payment by the beginning of the second semester. Any amount still outstanding at this time will be referred for collection unless the parent has contacted the school office to arrange for a deferred payment schedule. Certain classes may also incur a lab fee for consumable items or activities. The associated lab fees will be listed per class on the student schedule. These lab fees are also due at the beginning of the school year and will be included with book rental as a total amount to be paid at the time of registration. Applications for free / reduced price meals and textbook rental assistance are available in every school office and through the RDS Parent Access online. If you believe your family is eligible for assistance, please complete the application as soon as possible. For those who qualify for free / reduced price meals, the State will pay a portion of the textbook rental and consumable costs due. **A new application must be submitted each school year.**

Each student will be held financially responsible for any loss or damage incurred to their assigned books.

STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Guidance counselors and a **social worker** are available to students at **Ben Franklin Middle School**. The counselor can be very helpful to students who request assistance with academic problems, personal matters, career planning, standardized test interpretation, and other related issues. The counselor may request a conference with a student for various reasons such as a get-acquainted interview or a discussion of issues identified by school or home. Parent-teacher conferences may also be held when necessary to improve the student's academic and/or social adjustment. Students are urged to make their needs and concerns known to their counselor and/or social worker. Parents are also encouraged to contact the student services department regarding their child's progress. When social, emotional or financial assistance is necessary, the counselor or **social worker** will refer parent(s)/guardian(s) to the appropriate agency or community resources.

PROGRAM / SCHEDULE CHANGES

Much time has been spent in developing the program of studies for each student. Both the students and their parents, as well as guidance counselors and teachers have been involved in this process. Therefore, each student should have been

properly placed and schedule changes should not be necessary. However, if schedule changes are absolutely necessary, the following guidelines will apply:

Required Subjects: Changes to a different level may be made at any time provided that the student, parents, counselor, and teachers agree that the change is advisable.

Elective Courses: Schedule changes in elective courses will be made only during the first two weeks of a semester. A written parental request and approval by the involved teachers and principal are required.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School is seldom closed because of inclement weather. However, if it becomes necessary to close or delay school, the announcement will be made on radio stations WAKE (1500) AM and WLJE (105.5) FM and be posted on the school website (www.valpo.k12.in.us). Parents or students should **not** call the school office or the Central Administration Office concerning school closing; rather, they should listen to the above stations for official announcements.

TELEPHONE

Students are not to use the telephone in any of the school offices or classrooms without permission. Students are requested to remind parents that they should limit calls to school except in cases of a serious nature or emergency. Students will not be called to the phone. Messages will be delivered to students in cases of urgent matters only.

WORK PERMITS

Work permits are issued from the office and are necessary for any student between 14-17 years of age who has a part-time job other than babysitting, yard work, newspaper carrier, or corn detassling. The steps to follow in obtaining a work permit are:

1. Meet academic and attendance standards as defined in VCS permit requirements
2. Pick up an intent-to-employ form in the office.
3. Fill it out completely, and have it signed by your parent, employer, and yourself.
4. Return it to the office with a copy of your birth certificate.

Failure to comply with item 1 above will result in loss of work permit as per Indiana Department of Labor guidelines.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The philosophy of middle school is to produce a well-rounded educated student. The aim of extra-curricular activities is to help students develop areas outside of academics. Students are only expected to have an interest and a basic desire to work hard and learn. Students can profit a great deal from participation in one or more of the following extra-curricular activities while enrolled at Ben Franklin Middle School.

CLUBS/OTHER

Builders Club
Chess Club

STEAM Club
Student Council
Student Newspaper (BF Life)
National Junior Honor Society
Drama Club

Yearbook Staff
Intramural Activities
School Sponsored Activities
Science Olympiad
Academic Teams

ATHLETICS (BOYS)

Cross Country (6,7,8)
Football (7,8)
Wrestling (6,7,8)

Tennis (6,7,8)
Basketball (7,8)
Track (6,7,8)

ATHLETICS (GIRLS)

Cross Country (6,7,8)
Volleyball (7,8)

Basketball (7,8)
Track (6,7,8)
Gymnastics (6,7,8) at VHS
Tennis (6,7,8)

ELIGIBILITY RULES

Students participating in any middle school extra-curricular activity (athletics, clubs, etc.) must abide by the rules listed below. These rules are in effect during the entire calendar year.

1. Every student shall follow specific rules developed by the individual sponsor/coach. These rules are to be approved by the principal or his/her designee. Rules regarding curfew hours, practices, performances, attendance, and meetings are just a few of the areas that students need to make themselves aware of as a participant in an extra-curricular activity. Penalties for violating the rules will be determined by the sponsor/coach with approval of the athletic director and/or principal.
2. In addition to the rules mentioned above, all school rules apply.

3. Infractions involving the use, transmission, or possession of drugs, alcohol and tobacco will be handled as follows:

First Offense – A suspension of eighteen (18) calendar weeks excluding the period between the last full day of school in

the spring and the first full day of school in the fall (i.e., summer vacation) will be assessed. The suspension begins at the time the incident is confirmed by school officials if the infraction occurs during the school year or on the first full day of school if the infraction occurs during the summer months. The student may not practice or participate in any extra-curricular activity in any capacity during the 18-week suspension.

At the end of eight (8) weeks of the suspension, the athlete and his/her parents may appeal to a board consisting of an administrator, athletic director and two teachers appointed by the Principal. The appeal may ask the board to recommend that the penalty assessed the student be modified. The board shall be empowered to recommend that the penalty be reduced, maintained, or modified. Under no circumstances can the board recommend increasing the length of the penalty. The board also has the power to establish probationary periods and rules for students who have been suspended. The probationary periods established may not extend beyond ten weeks after the end of the original suspension of eight weeks. All recommendations of the board are subject to the approval of the Principal. The Principal's decisions shall be final.

Second Offense – A suspension of one (1) calendar year will be assessed. The suspension begins at the time the incident is confirmed by school officials.

These rules are in effect from the first full day of school for a sixth grade student until the last full day of school for an eighth grade student (throughout the middle school years). The term "school officials" shall include middle school coaches, teachers, counselors, athletic directors, assistant principals, and principals.

Academic Requirements

To be eligible; a student must be passing all classes.

1. For core academic classes that meet five days per week (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Physical Education and Health, Band, Choir, Orchestra):
 - A. If a student receives an F on the progress report generated in the fifth week of a given grading period, the student will be unable to compete in games and/or participate in extra-curricular activities for a minimum of one calendar week until all grades are D- or above. The student will be allowed to participate in practices only. The student cannot travel to games, wear a team uniform, sit with the team during a game, and/or participate in performances in any other extra-curricular activity.
 - B. If a student receives an F for the first time at a nine- week grading period, the student will be on probation until the progress report is generated during the fifth week of the next grading period. During probation the student will be allowed to practice and cannot travel to games, wear a team uniform, sit with the team during a game, and/or participate in performances in any other extra-curricular activity. If at the time the progress report is generated during the fifth week of the next grading period the grade is still an F, the student is removed from the athletic team for the remainder of that sport season and 4 ½ weeks from all other extra-curricular activity.
 - C. If a student receives an F again in the same subject on a nine-week grading card, the student will be off the team and/or extra-curricular activity for a full nine weeks.
 - D. If a student receives two F's in the same grading period, the student will be off the team and/or not permitted to participate in any extra-curricular activities for nine weeks.
 - E. A grade of F in the fourth grading period causes a student to be on academic probation at the beginning of the next school year. The student may practice and compete in the sport/activity until the progress report is generated in the fifth week of the next grading period. If the grade is still an F when the progress report is generated in the fifth week of the next grading period, the student may not participate for the remainder of the season.
2. For Allied Arts classes that meet based on a 7 week rotation If a student receives an F at the end of a seven- week grading period, the student will be unable to compete in games and/or participate in extra-curricular activities for a period of one (1) calendar week immediately following the end of that 7 week rotation. The student will be allowed to participate in athletic practices only. The student cannot travel to games, wear a team uniform, sit with the team during a game, and/or participate in performances in any other extra-curricular activity.

The following dates will be used to determine eligibility: September 19, 2018, November 15, 2018, February 13, 2019, and May 1, 2019

Citizenship Requirements

Any student participating in extra-curricular activities at Benjamin Franklin Middle School is expected to display good citizenship. If in the professional judgment of the Principal/Assistant Principal/Athletic Director a student's citizenship is unsatisfactory, that student may be denied participation in extra-curricular activities.

Physical Requirements

1. No student will be allowed to participate in any athletic practice or event until a signed physical form has been filed in the school office.
2. The physical must be taken after April 1 to be eligible for use during the following year.
3. A slip signed by both the student athlete and the parent acknowledging agreement with these rules must be on file with the Athletic Director before that student athlete may begin practicing or playing on any middle school athletic team.
4. Students who miss any part of a school day because of illness, other than because of a prearranged appointment, cannot participate in or attend after-school contests, practices, performances, parties, or other similar activities that same day.

VALPARAISO SCHOOLS' BEHAVIOR POLICY

In order to function properly, public school education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students. In addition

to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship (including an appreciation for the rights of others) must be taught and demonstrated. However, no school or school system can discharge these responsibilities if it permits students to act in an objectionable manner or to disregard rules and regulations adopted for the benefit of all.

The foundation of public school education is based upon the concept of self-discipline, a self-discipline which allows individuals to exist in a world of change and with the rights afforded them by our federal and state constitutions. Standards of conduct are necessary to assure that students seeking to express their own individual rights do not at the same time infringe upon the rights of others. The responsibility for the development and maintenance of self-discipline falls to the cooperative efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community.

Much of the responsibility for rule making, enforcing disciplinary procedures, and other authority as reasonably necessary to carry out the school purposes of the school corporation is delegated by the Board of Education to responsible officials within the Valparaiso Community Schools. The purpose of discipline controls is to help create an atmosphere that promotes the best possible learning environment for all those involved in the education process. In all matters relating to the discipline and conduct of students, school corporation personnel stand in the relation of parents and guardians to the students of the School Corporation. Therefore, school corporation personnel have the right to take disciplinary action necessary to promote student conduct that conforms to an orderly and effective education system.

An environment that permits the teaching-learning process to proceed in an orderly manner is the objective of all school personnel. School staff members will make every effort, individually, collectively, and cooperatively with appropriate available community resources, to help each student gain acceptable self-discipline standards.

However, in the absences of self-discipline, the superintendent, principal, and administrative personnel, or any teacher of the school corporation is authorized to take certain actions reasonably desirable or necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent and interference with the educational process.

Some behavior is much more serious than other behavior and requires different approaches and clearly defined actions. Verbal warnings, detention, Friday classes (not an elementary option), reprimand, probation, referral to special personnel in the schools (counselor, assistant principal, principal), parent conferences, restitution, suspension, and expulsion are examples of devices available to school personnel in dealing with students who are involved in school discipline problems. Any or all the techniques may be used. Certain acts of misconduct will subject the student to suspension or expulsion from school.

Suspension

Subject to the procedural provisions of the applicable Indiana State Statutes, a student may be suspended by a building principal for a period of not more than ten (10) school days for any conduct constituting grounds for expulsion. A hearing examiner may continue the suspension until the date of an expulsion or until the date the hearing examiner makes a report of his or her findings and recommendations of the action to be taken to the superintendent.

Expulsion

Valparaiso Community Schools recognizes that removal from the educational programs at the school by expulsion is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student and one that cannot be imposed without due process since removal deprives a child of the right to an education. In accordance with the due process procedures defined in this policy and by Indiana Code 20-33-8, with the exception of a violation of rule 17 listed under the grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy, a student may not be expelled for a longer period than the remainder of the school year in which the expulsion took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester. Whenever a student is expelled during the second semester, the expulsion remains in effect for summer school and may remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year. At the discretion of the administration, an Expulsion Waiver Agreement may be offered to the student when deemed appropriate.

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

The grounds for suspension or expulsion apply when a student is:

1. On school grounds immediately before, during, and after school hours and at any other time when a school group is using the school.
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event, including school buses.

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct or substantial disobedience. The following include examples of student misconduct or substantial disobedience, but are not limited to:

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, bullying, fear, passive resistance, harassment (verbal or physical which include, but is not limited to, sexual, racial, and ethnic) or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is illustrative of the type of conduct which may result in expulsion:
 - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use
 - b. Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
 - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
 - d. Falsely activating fire or entry alarm systems and setting off firecrackers or similar items.
 - e. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or educational function, or of any lawful meeting or assembly on school property.
 - f. Continually and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere seriously with the ability of a teacher or any other school personnel to conduct the educational function under their supervision

However, none of the foregoing restrictions are to be construed as to make any particular student's conduct a ground for expulsion where such conduct is constitutionally protected as an exercise of free speech or assembly or other right under the Constitution of Indiana or the United States.

2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property or possessing stolen school property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing or attempting to steal private property or possessing stolen private property.
4. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from the student.
6. Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any other object that looks like or can be reasonably considered a weapon including but not limited to chains, stars, numb chucks, metal knuckles, spike bands, etc.
7. Possessing or attempting to possess, using or attempting to use, selling or attempting to sell illicit drugs, drug related paraphernalia, substances represented to be illicit drugs, prescription drugs used inappropriately, alcohol, stimulant, inhalant, intoxicant of any kind, or/and any product that produces an altered mental or physical state when used.
8. Providing or bartering for illicit drugs, drug related paraphernalia, substances represented to be illicit drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, stimulant, inhalant, intoxicant of any kind, or/and any product that produces an altered mental or physical state when used.
9. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or and educational function.
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
11. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that are reasonably necessary to carry out school purposes or educational functions and are validly adopted in accordance with Indiana law.
12. Failing to comply with the smoking/tobacco restrictions for school buildings and grounds.
13. Being absent or truant from school or class without the knowledge or consent of the parent or school, or absent from school when there is an attempt to evade the school attendance law.
14. Engaging in any speech, drawings, or conduct that is lewd, vulgar, indecent, or offensive to the purposes of the Valparaiso Community Schools; including but not limited to speech, drawings, or conduct that relates to cults, street gangs, skin-heads, etc., that relates to acts of serious disrespect to school employees.
15. Failing to notify school officials or to secure administrative authorization to attend Valparaiso Community Schools as a tuition student if a student's legal settlement or residency is not within the attendance boundaries of the Valparaiso Community Schools or failing to pay tuition.
16. Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate student conduct rules or state or federal law.
17. Possession of a firearm or other deadly weapons:
 - a. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.
 - b. The following devices are considered to be firearms or other deadly weapons:
 - any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
 - the frame or receiver of any weapon described above
 - any firearm muffler or silencer

 - any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison, gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce,

mine or any similar device

- any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
- any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled
- an antique firearm
- a rifle or a shotgun which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes
- a weapon, device, laser or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substances, or other material that in the manner it is used, or could ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury; or
- an animal that is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury.

c. The penalty for possession of a firearm: ten (10) day suspension and expulsion from school for one calendar year.

d. The superintendent shall notify the county prosecutor's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

18. Gang Prevention

Presence of gangs and gang activities can cause a substantial disruption to school and school activities. A "gang" is defined as any group of students who are perceived as a distinct group (not an approved school organization), which prompts a disruptive response in the school community.

The following rules act to prevent disruption and to prohibit gang activities by restricting those actions which foster such activities or which, because they may be performed in relation to gang activities, endanger even those students who do not intend to show gang membership or affiliation.

No student on school property or at any school activity:

- a. Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, drawing, graffiti, or other items which may be viewed by school officials as evidence of membership in or affiliation with a gang.
- b. Shall commit any act of omission, or use any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, drawing, graffiti, other written communications, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in a gang.
- c. Shall use any speech or commit any act or omission in promoting the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to: 1) soliciting others for membership in gangs; 2) intimidating or threatening any persons; 3) violating any other rules as stated in the student handbook;

19. Engaging in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urging of other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes coercion, harassment, bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.

20. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.

21. Failing to completely and truthfully respond to questions from a staff member regarding school-related matters including potential violations of the student conduct rules or state or federal law.

22. HARASSMENT, BULLYING, AND THREATS

VCS schools are committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. Ben Franklin Middle School encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Bullying behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, social/relational, and psychological abuse, electronic or written, as provided herein Ben Franklin Middle School will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation and/or create an objectively hostile learning environment. This policy applies when a student is on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or, using property or equipment provided by the school. In accordance with Indiana state law, bullying prevention rules may also be applied regardless of the physical location in which the bullying behavior occurred as long as the actions take place between students of the same school district.

Bullying as defined in state law means overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal, written or digital/electronic communications transmitted, physical acts committed, or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or substantially harm the other student. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, derogatory name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

If a student is the target of bullying or any unwanted sexual, gender, religious, racial, ethnic, or physical disability-related conduct or derogatory communications, the student should report such behavior to the office. All reports shall be kept confidential and shall be investigated in a timely manner. All threats of any nature will be taken seriously and dealt with accordingly. Threats of disrupting the educational process, administering bodily harm, damaging property, or committing acts of violence will all be dealt with severely. School board policies and administrative guidelines are in place stating that a student threatening others or threatening suicide may be required to be professionally evaluated before being allowed to return to school. "I was only kidding" is not a justifiable defense or excuse.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS (GENERAL RULES)

Maintaining a friendly, safe school where there is a positive and productive atmosphere is everybody's job. Proper behavior by each of us insures equal educational opportunities for all students. In order to maintain such an atmosphere and insure such opportunities, reasonable rules for student behavior have been established. These rules apply at school, on the way to and from school, and at all school related activities.

1. **RESPECT FOR PROPERTY:** these rules apply to personal property of others as well as school property. In accordance with Indiana State Law, students are under the jurisdiction of school officials going to and from school. Students are to go directly home or to other places designated by parents after school. Students are not to loiter in or around private homes or businesses; and/or on the streets or on sidewalks by the school.
2. **RESPECT FOR OTHERS:** Be courteous to fellow students, teachers, other school employees, volunteers and visitors at all times.
3. **COMPLYING WITH DIRECTIONS:** Refusing to do things, which are reasonable, can cause disruption and interference in the teaching/learning process.
4. **HONESTY:** We believe in playing fair at Ben Franklin. This means we do not lie, cheat, steal, or cover up for others who do. This rule also covers acts of forgery and identifying yourself as someone else.
5. **TAKING CARE OF PROBLEMS IN A PEACEFUL WAY:** Violence, such as fighting, pushing, kicking, tripping, etc. has no place in school. Serious consequences may result for a violation of this rule.
6. **USING APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE:** Profane or obscene language whether spoken, on clothing, in notes, or through gestures has no place in school.
7. **REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:** It is against the law to skip school. Also, we live in a society that puts an emphasis on time and schedules. Being on time for school and class is important so that we can account for your whereabouts and provide a classroom environment free of disruption. (Refer to the section on "Attendance" for the definition of habitual truancy.)
8. **BEING WHERE YOU ARE EXPECTED TO BE:** It is very important to your family and the school that we are able to account for where you are during the school day. Always report to your assigned area on time and do not leave your assigned area/room or the school without permission from school officials and your parents.
9. **WEAPONS HAVE NO PLACE AT SCHOOL:** Any item that can be used to do bodily harm to yourself or others has no place at school. Serious consequences will result for a violation of this rule.
10. **BEING RESPONSIBLE:** Do your assigned work on time and display responsible behavior by attending assigned lunch detentions, regular detentions, Friday Night classes, 10th Hour classes, etc. as scheduled.
11. **GANG MEMBERSHIP:** Gangs are bad news. They engage in criminal activities and encourage kids who want to be in them to do the same. Do not wear gang emblems, draw gang symbols, or portray in any way gang membership at school. (Refer to section on "Gang-Related Activities".)
12. **TAMPERING WITH ALARM SYSTEMS:** Tampering with alarm systems jeopardizes the safety of others and is against the law.
13. **PUBLIC SHOW OF AFFECTION:** Students should not, under any circumstances, while on school grounds, anywhere in the building, or at any school function, show affection towards one another in any way that might create a scene or draw undue attention to themselves.
14. **PREPARED FOR SCHOOL AND CLASS:** It is important in the learning process that students come to school and class with all the necessary materials and supplies required by each classroom teacher (textbooks, uniforms, instruments, paper, pens, pencils, etc.) Students should not have to call home or go back to their lockers for learning materials.
15. **ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS ARE AGAINST THE LAW FOR STUDENTS TO HAVE, USE, TRANSMIT OR BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF:** We all have a responsibility to make our school and its students healthy and chemical-free. We ask all students to assist us by reporting students who violate this rule. Possession, use, or transmission of these substances or "look a likes" represented to be the real thing will result in suspension/expulsion.
16. **MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:** Students should obey all rules regarding safety. Inappropriate behavior that causes injury to another person will be considered a serious violation of school rules and may result in suspension/expulsion.
17. **USING COMPUTERS:** Computers are provided for staff and student use. The purpose is to provide Network (electronic mail and electronic bulletin board), electronic library services, and Internet access, herein after referred to as Network, for educational purposes. As such, this access will (1) assist in the collaboration and exchange of information, (2) facilitate personal growth in the use of technology, and (3) enhance information gathering and communication skills. Any misuse of a password access or Network will result in suspension or revocation of computer and/or Network privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by Valparaiso Community Schools. Misuse shall include the use of a home computer to interfere with the educational process.
18. **TOBACCO PRODUCTS:** Smoking and the possession of cigarettes or other tobacco products (lighters, matches, e-cigarette, electronic vaping device, cigar, pipe, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco) is prohibited at school and while attending school activities. Violators are subject to suspension and or expulsion.
19. **STUDENT E-LOCKER POLICY:** Students must have a signed Network and Internet Access Agreement on file in order to use their E-lockers. The E-lockers are the property of VCS, and the same rules that apply to regular lockers apply to the E-lockers (see Lockers). Students may not download any unauthorized programs such as software, music, mp3s, etc. to the E-lockers. Students are responsible for their E-lockers and their contents. Students should not share E-lockers or give out their passwords to others.

20. OTHER BEHAVIORS CONSIDERED TO BE INAPPROPRIATE

- a. gum chewing
- b. wearing a hat or scarf inside the building
- c. giving your locker combination to another student
- d. running in the hallways
- e. not covering your textbooks when asked
- f. bringing unnecessary personal items to school (e.g. electronic games, laser light pens, listening devices, toys, etc.)
- g. wearing or using "Heelys" or similar shoes, and in-line skates or skateboards on school grounds
- h. "horseplay" anywhere on school grounds, walking to and from school, or on the bus
- i. throwing food, snow, or other objects
- j. littering anywhere in the building or on school grounds
- k. spitting
- l. making excessive noise
- m. tampering with vehicles, to include bicycles
- n. tampering with another student's locker
- o. possessing matches and lighters
- p. false informing / accusing
- q. instigating a disruption
- r. vandalizing

A student may be disciplined for violating what school officials consider to be proper student behavior. The items listed under "Student Behavior" are not all inclusive. Other student acts may be considered a breach of student behavior and will be handled accordingly. Benjamin Franklin Middle School uses the following disciplinary tools in handling student breaches of proper behavior:

- Counseling
- Detentions
- Isolation
- Friday Night Class
- Community Service Assignment
- Assisted Alternative Instruction
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion
- Other methods as seen fit by school officials to assist students in modifying their behavior.

BUS TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

In order to bring about safe and orderly transportation of pupils to and from school, we are asking the cooperation of all parents in seeing to it that the regulations below are followed.

These regulations should be read to younger children and carefully explained to all students, keeping in mind that safety of all students depends on how well-behaved you child is on the bus.

1. Each student shall be seated immediately upon entering the bus.
2. No student shall stand or move from seat to seat at any time during the trip.
3. Students shall not enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the door has been opened.
4. No windows or doors will be opened except by permission of the driver.
5. School buses are school property and must be respected as such; therefore, writing on surfaces, mutilation of seats, or any attempt to commit vandalism shall be cause for denying the guilty party the privilege of transportation on the school corporation buses.
6. Students should be cautioned not to throw rocks, snowballs, or any other objects at the school bus before or after the trip.
7. Students should not throw any objects while riding on the bus, including articles of clothing, books etc.
8. Loud, boisterous, or profane language, or indecent conduct will not be tolerated.
9. All regular school rules apply while on the bus.
10. Students should understand that the driver is required by law to maintain good discipline on the bus, and this can only be accomplished with the cooperation of students, parents, and the driver.
11. Students are never to go between parked buses. Vehicles on Park and Campbell Streets cannot react quickly enough if students emerge from between parked buses.
12. Students who ride with any person other than their parents or on a bus other than their own must first submit a note from their parent and be granted approval through the office. This rule applies to students being dropped off or picked up.
13. Middle school students may not drive any type of motor vehicle to school.
14. Late buses are provided for those needing to stay after school (3:55 - north and 4:15 - south, every day but Friday).

DRESS CODE

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. As students mature and become adults, they will be required to meet certain dress standards for many occupational obligations and social functions. Student/staff health and safety, common decency, student schoolwork, and school and classroom order are all affected. This basic dress code does not infringe on students' rights of freedom of expression, but rather encourages students to "dress for success" and come to school properly prepared to participate in the professional, educational process. Students are expected to observe ordinary standards of good grooming, with attire appropriate to a comfortable, yet professional and working school atmosphere. In keeping with the above philosophy, and in order to reduce misunderstanding, the guidelines listed below have been approved by the VCS School Board.

1. The maintenance of common decency and classroom order requires adequate coverage of the person. Any clothing which reveals undergarments or the lack of undergarments will be considered inappropriate.
2. Cleanliness of person and apparel is required.
3. Pungent sprays, patchouli oils, and strong perfumes and like substances are not to be used or worn to school. These odors are disruptive to the educational process and harmful to the health of others.
4. Students will not be permitted to wear clothing which contains profanity or other suggestive inscriptions, advertises or promotes the use of death, suicide, destruction, gangs, cults, alcohol, drugs, or other substances which, if used by a minor, would be illegal. Additionally, clothing will not be permitted which advertises, promotes, or vie innuendo or double meaning, suggests inappropriate ideas or behavior not conducive to a positive school climate or is disruptive to the educational functioning of the school.
5. Students will not be permitted to wear garments such as halter tops, those which reveal bare midribs or backs, strapless tops, see-through tops, those which contain spaghetti straps, and garments with plunging or revealing necklines. Shirts and tops must be long enough to tuck in.
6. Pants must be worn on the waist without undergarments exposed. Skirts and shorts must have an inseam of four inches or greater. Any holes in pants must be below that four-inch guideline as well.
7. The maintenance of health and safety includes the wearing of shoes, sandals, or boots, and such additional items that may be required in special classes such as industrial technology, laboratories and physical education.
8. Unauthorized costumes will not be permitted.
9. Slippers and pajamas or other nightwear will not be permitted.
10. Attire that may cause property damage or personal injury is not to be worn (i.e., chains, shoes that may leave black marks or scuffs on the floor, etc).
11. Upon entering the building during the school day all students are to remove sunglasses, caps, hats and other head coverings.
12. A jacket or coat, which is normally worn outdoors, is to be placed in a locker during the school day. In addition, backpacks are to be stored in a locker during the school day.

The administration reserves the right to use its discretion in determining the type of clothing appropriate for the school setting. Wearing inappropriate apparel will result in the student's removal from class until the problem is corrected and/or may result in possible further disciplinary action.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are discouraged from bringing electronic devices such as cell phones, camera phones, Smart Watches, The school will NOT be responsible for these lost or stolen items. Students must leave these items in their lockers and NOT carry them on their person. If these devices are used or visible during school hours or disrupt the educational process, the student may face disciplinary consequences. Violation of this policy can result in discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion, and notification of law enforcement authorities. In addition, if a student violates this policy, his/her cellular telephone or electronic device may be confiscated. Under such circumstances, the cellular telephone or electronic device will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequence that is imposed. There is to be no unauthorized videotaping or photographing of any part of the building, grounds, students, and staff without the prior written consent of the Valparaiso Community Schools. This section is not intended to prevent parents or other interested parties from videotaping extracurricular activities.

BFMS Electronic Device procedure –

- 1st offense – warning – (Student picks up at the end of the day)
- 2nd offense – before school morning detention (parent notified)
- 3rd offense – Friday School (parent picks up phone at this point)
- 4th offense – administrative decision

*Any other violations past the 4th offense will be at the discretion of the administration. This can include suspension.

*If a phone is left on in a locker that is considered a violation.

*Parents pick up device after the 3rd offense.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS

"Sexting" or using a cell phone or other personal communication device to send text or email messages or possessing text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexually suggestive while at school or at a school related function is prohibited. In addition to taking any disciplinary action, phones will be confiscated and students should be aware that any images suspected to violate criminal laws will be referred to law enforcement authorities. I.C. 35-42-4-4

VALPARAISO SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

I. Mission Statement

The mission of the Valparaiso Community Schools is to create and maintain a safe learning environment to ensure that all students reach a high level of achievement as determined by local, state, national, and international standards. Valparaiso Community Schools will provide the necessary foundation for a safe learning environment through an ongoing system of preventions and interventions.

II. Statement of Purpose from the Board of Education

The Board of Education of the Valparaiso Community Schools recognizes that the use of drugs and alcohol will interfere with a student's ability to reach a high level of achievement and will compromise the safe learning environment that parents and students expect when students attend school. For the purpose of the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan and the administration of that plan, drugs will include but not be limited to the following: illicit and prescription drugs, drug related paraphernalia, substances represented to be illicit drugs, stimulants, inhalants, intoxicants, and/or any other product that produces an altered mental or physical state when used. To protect students and the learning environment, the Board prohibits the use, possession, concealment, and/or distribution of any drugs and/or alcohol at any time on school district property or at any school-related event, and students who violate this policy will be subjected to school disciplinary procedures and consequences. The Board further delegates the responsibility to the superintendent or designee (henceforth will be referred to as the superintendent) to develop guidelines that will discourage student drug and/or alcohol usage, and/or will detect student drug and/or alcohol usage at the earliest possible stage.

III. Drug usage in Valparaiso and Porter County

In 2005, the Community Action Drug Coalition and Porter-Starke Services jointly commissioned Roosevelt University to study drug availability and usage in Porter County. The Roosevelt Study determined that drug problems are no longer confined to the inner city. The close proximity of Porter County to the Chicago metropolitan area has increased the availability and usage of drugs. Particularly alarming was the fact that, per capita, Porter County ranked in the top five (5) in the United States in the use of heroin. This increased availability and usage of drugs combined with a growing concern that drug usage is a more accepted behavior by students led the study to conclude that young adult lives will be dramatically affected by drug and alcohol related problems over the next decade.

The Valparaiso Community Schools has seen the number of referrals for drug/alcohol related problems and/or symptoms spiral upward as the Roosevelt Study predicted. The focal point of the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan, since its inception in 1988, has been student assistance. Although some aspects of the Plan require punitive measures, identifying students in need of assistance and providing that assistance for them is the primary goal of the Plan. Parents, teachers, and students may refer anyone including themselves to the Student Assistance Team without fear of punishment. The Student Assistance Team has had 45 initial drug referrals during the first semester of the 2006-2007 school year. This number encompassed athletic violations, self-referrals, parent referrals, peer referrals, and other situations under the purview of the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan. The Student Assistance Team has also had 194 follow-up meetings with students during the same time period for the purpose of supporting the students' need to abstain from the use of drugs/alcohol.

Enhancing the awareness of the drug and alcohol issues within our community will certainly be one step towards eliminating the devastating effects drugs and alcohol have on the lives of the Valparaiso youth. This plan will outline strategies to prevent students from using drugs and/or alcohol usage at its earliest stage, and to provide the school district an opportunity to intervene before the young adult progresses to the more highly addictive drugs referenced in the Roosevelt Study.

IV. Prevention

The Board of Education believes the best way to solve drug related issues in the Valparaiso Community Schools is to develop a strong prevention plan that will discourage the use of alcohol and other drugs. The Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan focuses on class instruction, counseling, school climate, family and community, and a reasonable suspicion based drug testing procedure.

A. Classroom Instruction

1. All schools will have instructional programs which are designed to assist students in making responsible decisions about the use of alcohol and drugs. Current and accurate information about the effects of drugs on the body is only one component of an instructional prevention program. Other components include instruction and skill development related to self-esteem, setting goals, making responsible decisions, understanding feelings, managing conflicts, solving problems, learning refusal techniques, and improving communication.
2. Training in prevention strategies and new curriculum materials will be available to staff.

B. Counseling

Counseling and student assistance team personnel will assist teachers with the implementation of classroom instruction on alcohol and drug prevention activities. Counselors will work with students, individually and in groups, to supplement prevention instruction and skill development. Counselors will also work with staff and families to maximize the prevention efforts of the school.

C. School Climate

1. Prevention efforts will emphasize effective communication throughout all levels of the educational environment. Communication requires an audience ready to receive information. A receptive audience is dependent upon maintaining a positive and healthy school environment that daily encourages the student's positive self-concept, enthusiasm for learning, outlets for self-development and creativity, responsible decision-making, and problem-solving. Recognition of the needs of high-risk students and families is important.
2. The Valparaiso Community Schools is committed to the principles of the Creating a Safe Social Climate in Schools (CASS) program as a means to promote civility and a positive climate in all schools and the community.

D. Family and Community

Valparaiso's program for prevention of alcohol and other drug use will include a plan to involve families and community resources to increase awareness and knowledge of services available to them. Students, families, and community members should be actively involved in community and school partnerships.

E. Drug Testing Procedures Related to Reasonable Suspicion

The purpose of this program is to enhance the health and safety of all students and to deter the use of drugs and alcohol by Valparaiso students.

The administration shall have the authority to require any student to submit to a chemical test if the administration has reasonable suspicion to believe the student is using or under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Reasonable suspicion may arise from but is not limited to the following:

1. A student's physical appearance, odor, and/or behavior indicate the use of drugs and/or alcohol.
 - a. unusual drowsiness and/or sleepiness;
 - b. alcohol or chemical odors on clothes or breath;
 - c. slurred, incoherent speech;
 - d. difficulty in comprehending conversation and/or being confused;
 - e. change in speech or difficulty in expressing him/herself;
 - f. disorientation and/or difficulty in concentrating;
 - g. use of eye drops or sunglasses to hide redness of eyes;
 - h. frequent nosebleeds and/or constant redness of nasal membranes;
 - i. unusual swings in emotion or inappropriate behavior for the situation;
 - j. hyperactivity or euphoria;
 - k. unusually aggressive behavior;
 - l. lack of manual dexterity;
 - m. lack of coordination;
 - n. inability to stand relatively motionless, without leaning;
 - o. unexplained excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
 - p. unusual accident or injury; and
 - q. unusually rapid and marked increase in weight and/or strength.
2. Possession of drugs and/or alcohol.
3. Credible information communicated to an administrator by a teacher, parent or other adult, or student indicating that a student is using, possessing, or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
4. Violation of the Closed Campus Policy.

If the school administration determines that a student has violated any or all of parts of Section IV, Subsection E, Numbers 1-4 of this document, the parent or guardian (henceforth will be referred to as parent) of the student under suspicion will be contacted and asked to immediately attend a meeting with the principal and/or his/her designee (henceforth will be referred to as the principal). The parent will be informed of the evidence related to the facts connected to the reasonable suspicion and will be given an opportunity to respond to the facts and evidence presented. The principal will ask the parent to sign a release form to allow school personnel and/or a service provider to administer a breathalyzer test, an oral mouth swab test, and/or a urine test. A refusal of the parent to sign the release form will be viewed the same as a positive drug and/or alcohol result. The cost of the test(s) will be borne by the Valparaiso Community Schools. The principal will notify the parents of the test results within a reasonable time frame.

If a student tests positive, disciplinary action will be taken as outlined in the student handbook. A student's refusal to submit to the test is considered a "positive" result and will require appropriate disciplinary action.

V. Voluntary Referrals

If a student or the student's parent voluntarily refers the student to a school official (substance abuse coordinator, guidance counselor, the student's coach, extra curricular sponsor, teacher, director of athletics, or administrator) for a substance abuse problem and the self referral or parent referral occurs prior to any legal involvement and/or any school-initiated investigation, the student behavior penalty, the extracurricular penalty, and the athletic penalty will be waived during the time the student is enrolled and participating in the student substance abuse plan agreed to with the substance abuse coordinator and approved by the principal.

A voluntary self-referral by a student and/or a voluntary referral made by a parent seeking assistance for substance abuse problems concerning their child will be confidential. Anonymity will be maintained, except for those professionals who will be working with students in the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan who will be informed on a need to know basis. In the case of a voluntary self referral by a student, the parent of the student must be notified.

A student who participated in the plan will be required to submit to unannounced drug testing, as outlined in Section IV, Subsection E of this document, to determine if the student has stopped abusing substances. Drug tests shall be arranged by the substance abuse coordinator who is also charged with monitoring the results of the tests and reporting the results to the principal. Should a drug test show positive for substance abuse, the student and the parent would be required to meet with the substance abuse coordinator and the principal to discuss methods to more effectively meet the student's needs. The student and parent would be encouraged to participate in a more restrictive substance abuse plan recommended by the substance abuse coordinator and approved by the principal. Failure on the part of the student or parent to actively participate in the modified plan would result in the termination of services offered by the substance abuse coordinator. The parent would be encouraged to seek additional professional assistance outside the school environment and the school would provide no further assistance through a student substance abuse plan.

A student who violates or attempts to violate school rules, district policies, and/or guidelines with respect to substance abuse, during the student's participation in or at any time after the termination of a student substance abuse plan, will be considered in violation of the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan and will face the applicable consequences.

VI. Violations of the Substance Abuse Plan

A. Policy Statement

Students who possess or attempt to possess, use or attempt to use, sell or attempt to sell drugs, as defined in this plan, or alcohol to other students while on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event, including while being transported on school buses or in private vehicles, shall be subject to school disciplinary procedures and consequences.

The Board of Education has mandated that students who possess or who are under the influence of or in possession of alcohol and/or drugs shall meet with the substance abuse coordinator. The substance abuse coordinator will provide assistance to the student and/or the family by conducting an assessment, offering recommendations to the family for professional counseling or treatment, and assisting in developing a substance abuse program which must be agreed to by the student, parent, the substance coordinator, and approved by the principal. The substance abuse coordinator will not handle related discipline. Consequences, if any are assigned, will be assigned by the appropriate administrator in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes and established guidelines.

B. Violations

1. First Violation

Students who possess or attempt to possess, use or attempt to use alcohol and/or drugs, as defined in this plan, while on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event, including while being transported on school buses or in private vehicles the first time, shall be subject to the following disciplinary procedures and consequences outlined below.

The principal shall recommend to the superintendent that the student be expelled from school for a period of time as recommended by the principal and in compliance with applicable state and federal statutes and school policies, guidelines, and rules. The principal may recommend that the expulsion be deferred and a Probationary Continued Education Agreement be implemented if the student admits the truth of the allegations and the student and parent agree that the student shall not return to school until the student meets with the substance abuse coordinator for a preliminary assessment of chemical use and is in compliance with the recommendations made by the substance abuse coordinator and with the approval of the principal. If the student violates any of the terms of the Probationary Continued Education Agreement, the principal shall invoke the previously deferred expulsion.

2. Second Violation

If a student commits a second offense of the Valparaiso Substance Abuse Plan of any type, at any time while enrolled in grades six (6) through twelve (12), including submitting a drug test which shows no decrease in the levels of illegal substance (except when the previous test showed no drug usage), while enrolled as a student in the Valparaiso Community Schools while on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event, including while being transported on school buses or in private vehicles, the principal shall invoke the previously deferred expulsion if applicable or shall recommend to the superintendent an expulsion without an option for a waiver.

3. Providing, Selling or Bartering Offenses

If a student attempts to sell, provide or barter for alcohol and/or drugs to other students while on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event, including while being transported on school buses or in private vehicles, the principal shall recommend to the superintendent that the student be expelled from school. A waiver of the expulsion may not be offered to persons charged under this section of the guideline. The principal shall consult with the superintendent to determine if this section is applicable to a violation of the substance abuse plan.

Wellness Nutrition Guidelines:

School Wide

- All food and beverage sold during the school day (12 midnight to 30min after end of school day) must conform with Federal law 54-2006 and meet USDA nutrient guidelines.
- Campus defined as all areas of property under jurisdiction of the VCS that are assessable to students during the day.
- Sale of foods that compete with VCS reimbursable meal programs is prohibited.
- School sponsored events: open house, family night, athletic events, etc...will offer "smart snack" alternatives.

Student Info:-

- No sharing of food or beverages during meal or snack, due to concerns about allergies and other dietary restrictions.
- No outside "fast food meals" or soda will be permitted to be brought into or eaten in the school cafeteria during meal times. Food must be packaged and originated from home,
- Energy boosting drinks are not permitted.

Vending-

- 100 % smart snack vending items in machine during campus hours.
- After hour vending machines must contain 50% smart snacks.
- Vending machines must be off during the lunch hour/times.

DRUG PREVENTION MEMORANDUM TO PARENTS

In accordance with Federal Law, the School Board prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school-related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by State statute, or substance that could be considered a "look-a-like" controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in the student handbook, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by State Law, the District will also notify law enforcement officials. The District is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which s(he) receives help through programs and services available in the community. Students and their parents should contact the school principal or counseling office whenever such help is needed.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Education of the Valparaiso Community Schools declares it to be the policy of the Valparaiso Community Schools to provide an equal opportunity for all students to learn through the curriculum offered in the Valparaiso Community Schools regardless of race, color, creed, disability, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, place of residence within the boundaries of the school district, or social or economic background (Policy 2260).

A formal complaint may be in writing to the School Corporation's Compliance Officer listed below:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

(219) 531-3000

The complaint will be investigated and a response, in writing, will be given to the concerned person within ten (10) school days. The Compliance Officer may provide additional information concerning access to equal education opportunity. Under no circumstances will the Corporation threaten or retaliate against anyone who raises or files a complaint.

PARENT / STUDENT RIGHTS IN IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND PLACEMENT

In compliance with the procedural requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Valparaiso Community Schools shall utilize the following notice of parent/student rights identification, evaluation, and placement.

The following description of the rights granted by federal law to students with disabilities. The intent of this section is to keep you parent(s)/guardian(s) fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions. You have the right to:

1. have your child take part in and receive benefits from a public education program without discrimination because of his/her disabling condition;
2. have the Valparaiso Community Schools advise you of your rights under federal law;
3. receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. have your child receive a free appropriate education in academics, non-academics, and extracurricular activities. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. The provision of an appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual needs of handicapped persons as adequately as the needs of non-handicapped persons are met and are based upon adherence to procedures that satisfy the requirements of and implementation of an individualized education program developed in accordance with the Education of the Handicapped Act;
5. have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided non-disabled students;
6. have your child receive special education and related services that s(he) is found to be eligible for under the Education of the Handicapped Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
7. have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources, and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options;
8. have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you that would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district;
9. have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the district;
10. examine all relevant records relating to decisions made regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement;
11. obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to records;
12. a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's record;
13. request amendment of your child's educational records if there is a reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing;
14. request mediation and/or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and be represented by counsel;
15. ask for payment of reasonable attorney fees if you are successful on your claim; and
16. file a grievance by bringing forward a complaint to the Corporation's Civil Rights Coordinator verbally, in writing or both.
17. All 504 inquiries should be directed to the building principal or his/her designee.
18. All 504 appeals should be made in writing to:

Assistant Superintendent For Secondary Education
Valparaiso Community Schools
3801 Campbell St.
Valparaiso, IN 46385

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education record within 45 days of the day the School Corporation receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the principal to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the principal decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the principal will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by Valparaiso Community Schools as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School Corporation has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, Valparaiso Community Schools discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school corporation in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Valparaiso Community Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's family;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demanding behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent;
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and]
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and

3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

COMPUTER ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) provides students and staff with a variety of technology resources. This technology may include, but is not limited to: iPads, Chromebooks, iPods, desktop computers, netbooks, and laptops as well as network and internet resources. All technology must be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. It must also be used in accordance with the policies of Valparaiso Community Schools for the fulfillment of educational objectives. These expectations apply regardless of whether technology is accessed at school or remotely. All VCS-issued devices are the property of Valparaiso Community Schools and by using these devices; students agree to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy that follows. When used on campus or during school-sponsored events, use of personally owned technology resources must also adhere to these guidelines. The policies outlined in this document cover all available technologies now and into the future, not only those specifically listed or currently available.

Technology and Internet Use Policy

All students, parents, and VCS employees are responsible for their actions and activities while using VCS technology and network resources. This policy provides general guidance concerning the use of VCS devices and network resources (hereafter referred to as district technology resources). It provides examples of prohibited uses and does not attempt to describe every possible prohibited activity. Furthermore, all users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics as well as the spirit of this document: be safe, appropriate, careful and respectful, without attempting to get around technological protection measures instituted for the safety of our students and network. All users, regardless of age or affiliation with VCS, should use good common sense and if there are questions or concerns about whether a specific activity is prohibited they should clarify those concerns with a VCS administrator before taking such action.

Acceptable Use

- The district technology resources are provided solely for the educational purposes consistent with the district educational mission, instructional goals, curriculum, online learning, and data management systems.
- Students must comply with all policies, rules, and expectations concerning student conduct and communication when using district technology resources, whether on or off school property.
- Students must comply with all specific instructions from VCS staff and administration when using technology resources.
- Students must comply with individual school rules, policies or guidelines governing use of personal devices. Penalties for non-compliance may include confiscation of personal devices.
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.

Prohibited Use

Unacceptable uses of district technology resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Accessing or communicating inappropriate materials** - Students may not access submit, post, publish, forward, download, scan, or display defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying, and/or illegal materials or messages.
- **Illegal activities** - Students may not use district technology resources for any illegal activity or in violation of any district policy, procedure, or rules or in violation of any local, state or federal law. VCS assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using district technology resources.
- **Violating copyrights or software licenses** - Students may only copy, download, or share copyrighted materials (including music, film, images, photographs, artwork, software, or video) in accordance with applicable copyright law. Unauthorized use of copyright material is illegal and may subject the user to substantial civil and criminal penalties. VCS assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of users while using district technology resources.
- **Plagiarism** - Students may not represent as their own work any materials obtained on the Internet or by electronic means. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or works of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.
- **Language** - Students may not post information that could cause damage, harm, or a substantial disruption of the educational environment. Students may not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks. Students may not harass another person. If students are told by any person to stop such behaviors, they must stop. Students may not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization. District technology resources are an extension of the classroom and all language and behavior used must adhere to established classroom guidelines.
- **Misuse of passwords or unauthorized access** - Students may not share passwords, use another user's passwords, access another user's accounts, or attempt to circumvent network security systems and filters.
- **Malicious use or vandalism** - Students may not engage in any malicious use, disruption, or harm to district technology resources, including, but not limited to hacking activities and the creation or uploading of computer viruses.
- **Avoiding school filters** - Students may neither use nor attempt to use any software, utilities or other means to access content, network or Internet sites blocked by school filters.
- **Unauthorized access to social media** - During the school day, students may not access social media such as blogs or social networking sites except under the direction and supervision of VCS staff.

Compensation for Losses, Costs, and/or Damages

The students and their parents/guardians may be responsible for compensating VCS for any losses, costs or damages incurred through violation of VCS policies, procedures, and rules while the student is using district technology resources. The students and their parents/guardians may be responsible for the loss, theft, damage or neglect of any VCS computer, laptop, or mobile device issued to or used by the student.

Student Security

Students may not post or reveal personal contact information (including full names, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information) about themselves or other people on the Internet or network while using district technology resources. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Students may not agree to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation.

System Security

The security of district technology resources is a high priority. Students should immediately notify an administrator, network coordinator or other staff member if they have identified a possible security problem. Students may not demonstrate the problem to other students, access unauthorized material, or attempt to resolve security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.

Expectations of Privacy

Students should **not have any expectation of privacy** for any information on district technology resources. Students may be asked at anytime to surrender their personal or district device in use while participating in a school-related function. Failure to comply with any request for examination may result in immediate administrative disciplinary action.

Email

VCS may provide users with the privilege of email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies and infrastructure. If users are provided with email accounts, the account(s) should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by district policies or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage will be monitored and archived.

Recording or Taking of Pictures, Audio, or Video

There is to be no unauthorized videotaping or photographing of any part of the building, grounds, students, and staff without the prior written consent of the Valparaiso Community Schools. However, this is not intended to prevent parents or other interested parties from photographing or videotaping extra-curricular activities for their own private interest. VCS assumes no responsibility for media recorded by parents and other interested parties or its use.

Disciplinary Action

Violations of this agreement may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, loss or restricted use of any district technology resources or personal devices, further VCS disciplinary measures, or the involvement of law enforcement.

Limits of Liability

- To safeguard technology users from offensive and/or inappropriate material, access to online content via the network is filtered and monitored in accordance with VCS policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). However, users should be aware that no filtering system is failsafe and VCS makes no guarantees of their effectiveness.
- VCS makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- VCS will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, data, hardware, or files.
- VCS will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions or postings conducted over the school network.

Required Parental Consent

In consideration for the privileges of my child's using the Valparaiso Community Schools' technology resources and in consideration for having access to the information contained on or by the district technology resources, I hereby release the Valparaiso Community Schools, the Board of Education, the district technology resources, and their operators and administration from any all claims of any nature arising from my child's use, or inability to use the district technology resources.

INTERAGENCY INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT

The Valparaiso Community Schools is a member of a student services interagency agreement that allows for information to be shared with other agencies. These agencies include police, probation, juvenile court, and many other community agencies working with the youth of Porter County.

This sharing was made possible through the court order by the Honorable Judge of the Porter County Circuit Court and

signed by the Superintendent of Valparaiso Community Schools.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Valparaiso Community Schools has established the following information about each student as "directory information": A student's name; photograph; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation and awards received; listing on an honor roll; or scholarships.

The Corporation will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student notifies the Corporation Records Officer in writing within 20 days from the date of this notification that s(he) will not permit distribution of any or all of such information (Policy 8330, page 2 of 3).

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

If one (1) parent has been awarded custody of the student by a court order, the parent of custody shall provide to the principal of the school a copy of the custody order and inform the school in writing of any restrictions and/or limitations in the rights of the non-custodial parent.

A non-custodial parent, unless restricted by a court order, will be given access to all student report cards, student records, and disciplinary actions. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent will be permitted to participate in school conferences related to the student.

The non-custodial parent may not visit with the student during the school day, nor may the student be released to the non-custodial parent unless written permission is given by order of the court or by the custodial parent.

PEST CONTROL AND USE OF PESTICIDES

The School District is committed to providing a safe environment for students. It seeks to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. While pesticides protect children from pests that may be found in the school and its surrounding grounds, under some circumstances they may pose a hazard to children. Therefore, pest control practices may involve a variety of chemical and non-chemical methods that are designed to control pests effectively while minimizing potential pesticide exposure.

The District will post a notice on several exterior doors of the building at least two (2) school days prior to the date and time the pesticide application is to occur unless an emergency is declared. The notice will include the date and time of the pesticide application, the general area where the pesticide is to be applied and the telephone number to contact for more information.

In case of emergency pesticide applications, because of immediate threat to the public health, the school shall post written notice in a reasonable time after the application.

WORKS CITED (BIBLIOGRAPHY)

BOOKS

When citing books, list the following information:

Author's last name, first name. Book title. (possible additional info) . City of publication: Publishing company, publication date.

A book by one author

Dolan, Sean. Germany. Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999.

A book by two authors

Carter Sharon and Lawrence Clayton. Coping with Depression. New York: Rosen Publishing Group. Inc., 1995.

A book by three or more authors

Kane, Joseph, Steven Anzovin, and Janet Podell. Famous First Facts. Fifth edition. New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1997.

A book by a corporate author

Time-Life Books. The Spanish West. New York: Time-Life Books, 1976.

A book with no author

Shakespeare's England. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

A book with an editor

Smith, Jesse Carney, ed. Notable Black American Women. Detroit: Gale, Gale 1992.

An anthology or compilation

Tenner, Phyllis R., ed. The Dark and Bloody Ground: Stories of the American Frontier. New York: William Morrow & Co., 1963.

A work in an anthology

Benet, Stephen.. "Jacob and the Indians." The Dark and Bloody Ground: Stories of the American Frontier. New York: William Morrow & Co., 1963. 68-87.

A multivolume work

Nash, Robert. Encyclopedia of World Crime. 6 vols. Wilmette, IL: Crime Books, 1990.

Signed article in a reference book

Muscantine, L. "Jellyfish." The World Book Encyclopedia. 1999 ed.

An unsigned article in a reference book

"Diving." Academic American Encyclopedia. 1996 ed.

ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

When citing articles in periodicals, list the following information:

Author's last name, first name. "Article title." Periodical title Date: inclusive pages.

A signed article from a daily newspaper

Greenburg, Jan. "Justices to revisits Miranda." Chicago Tribune 7 Dec. 1999, sec. 1:1.

An unsigned article from a daily newspaper

"Polio injections urged to replace oral vaccines." Chicago Tribune 7 Dec. 1999, sec. 1:8.

An article in a monthly magazine

Powell, Corey S. "Tuning in to Deep Space." Discover Dec. 1990: 72-79.

An article from a weekly magazine

Gibney, Frank Jr. "Emperor of the Internet." Time 6 Dec. 1999: 70-79.

CD-ROMS

When citing information from CD-ROMs, list the following information:

Author's last name, first name. Publication for printed source or printed analogue (i.e., "Article title." Periodical Title. Date: inclusive pages.) Title of Database. Publication medium (i.e., CD-ROM). Name of vendor or computer service. Electronic publication date.

CD-ROM: Printed source (i.e., SIRS, EBSCO, Newsbank, Encyclopedia Americana)

Signed article from a CD-ROM

Sternburg, Steve. "America's Youth Dying at Alarming Rate." USA Today 4 Oct. 1998: n.p. CD-ROM. SIRS Mandarin, Inc. 1999.

Unsigned article from a CD-ROM

"Transcript of president Clinton's State of the Union Address." U.S. Newswire 19 Jan. 1999. Newsbank Newsfile 1999. CD-ROM. Newsbank Inc. n.d.

ONLINE DATABASES

Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." (in quotation marks) or Title of the book. (underlined) Publication information for any print version of the source. Title of the Database. (underlined) Version number of the source. Date of electronic publication or latest update or posting. Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the Web site. Date when researcher (YOU) accesses the source, <Electronic address, or URL of the source> (in angle brackets) or for a subscription service, the URL of the services main page (if known) or the key work assigned to the service.

Signed article from an online database

Miller, Karl. "Exercise and Weight Training." American Family Physician 1 Nov. 1998. Vol. 58, Issue 1:1655. Inspire. 1998, 1999. INCOLSA. 3 Jan. 2000 <<http://www.inspire-indiana.net>>

Unsigned article from online database

"Lung Cancer." Britannica Online. 1999. Encyclopedia Britannica. 3 Jan. 2000 <<http://www.britannica.com>>

A book from online database

Nesbit, Edith. Ballads and Lyrics of Socialism, London, 1908. Victorian Women writers Project. Ed. Perry Willet. Apr. 1997. Indiana University. 3 Jan. 2000 <<http://www.Indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/nexbit/ballsoc.html>>

Complete publication information may not be available for a Web site; provide what is given.

Entire Internet Site: Scholarly Project or Professional Site [5.9.2]

Title of the Site. Editor. Date and/or Version Number. Name of Sponsoring Institution. Date of Access <URL>.

Encyclopedia Mythica. 2004. 13 May 2004 <<http://www.pantheon.org/>>.

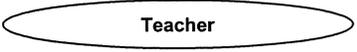
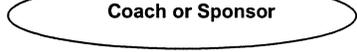
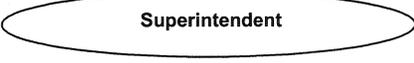
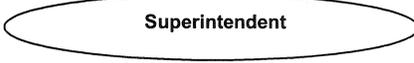
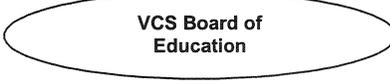
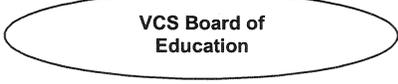
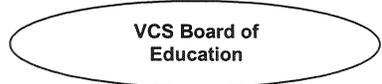
Document from a Web Site [5.9.1]

Author. "Title of Web Page." Title of the Site. Editor. Date and/or Version Number. Name of Sponsoring Institution. Date of Access <URL>.

Sherman, Chris. "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About URL." SearchEngineWatch. Ed. Danny Sullivan. 24 Aug. 2004. 4 Sept. 2004 <<http://searchenginewatch.com/searchday/article.php/3398511>>.



CHAIN OF COMMAND CHART

WHERE DO YOU GO WITH A QUESTION OR CONCERN?		
We believe the people closest to the problem have the best and quickest response for your questions. Please refer to the chart below to assist you.		
Academics	Transportation	Extracurricular
Step 1	Step 1	Step 1
<p>Questions or concerns regarding instructional practices or course work should be directed to your child's teacher.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Teacher</p>  </div>	<p>General questions about transportation for your child should be directed to the assistant principal.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Assistant Principal</p>  </div>	<p>Questions or concerns regarding extracurricular activities should be directed to the coach or sponsor.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Coach or Sponsor</p>  </div>
Step 2	Step 2	Step 2
<p>If more information is needed or you still have questions and/or concerns, a discussion should be scheduled with your child's counselor or building principal.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Counselor or Building Principal</p>  </div>	<p>If more information is needed, or there are concerns about a bus driver, a discussion should be scheduled with the Director of Transportation.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Director of Transportation</p>  </div>	<p>If more information is needed, a discussion should be scheduled with the athletic director, assistant principal or building principal.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Athletic Director, Building Principal, or Assistant Principal</p>  </div>
Step 3	Step 3	Step 3
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Assistant Superintendent in charge of Instruction</p>  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Assistant Superintendent in charge of Transportation</p>  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Assistant Superintendent in charge of Instruction</p>  </div>
Step 4	Step 4	Step 4
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Superintendent</p>  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Superintendent</p>  </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Superintendent</p>  </div>
Step 5	Step 5	Step 5
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>VCS Board of Education</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>VCS Board of Education</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>VCS Board of Education</p> </div>