



# **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2022-2023**

*Developing successful adults  
with skills to enrich their communities and the environment*

ISD 4207 • 1 Enterprise Drive, PO Box 629 • Tower, MN 55790

It is the policy of **Vermilion Country School (VCS)** to provide equal educational opportunities to all persons regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status and status with regard to public assistance or disability (except when sex and non-disability may be a bona fide consideration).

The information in this handbook is designed to familiarize students and parents with key school policies and procedures. We encourage you to read through this handbook, as well as refer to it as needed throughout the school year. The handbook and many other items can also be found on the website at [vermilioncountry.org](http://vermilioncountry.org).

## Staff

Vermilion Country School works on a hybrid teacher/staff led management structure. Staff meets weekly, to discuss day-to-day operations, address concerns, and conduct trainings.

- Laurie Kess, Interim Director
- Karla Lundstrom, Office Manager
- Al White, Advisor
- Karin Schmidt, Advisor
- Ashley Miller, Special Ed, Advisor
- Michele Maki, Paraprofessional
- Amy Heglin, Driver, Kitchen/Office
- Greg Dostert, Driver
- John Mrozak, Driver
- Cathy Anderson, Driver
- Doug Workman, Maintenance

## Schedule

### DAILY SCHEDULE

|             |                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 8:00 – 8:10 | Arrival                     |
| 8:10 – 8:25 | Breakfast                   |
| 8:25 – 8:30 | Announcements / Lunch Count |

A.M. CORE Class Schedule M,T,W,R,F

P.M. Student Success Services and FLEX Offerings M,T,R,F

| PERIOD | TIME          |                                     |                                |                                |  |
|--------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1      | 8:30 – 9:25   | 9-10 Geometry                       |                                | 7-8 Language Arts              | 11-12 Government (Sem1) Economics (Sem2) |
| 2      | 9:25 – 10:20  | 11-12 Algebra II                    | 7-8 Life Science               |                                | 9-10 US History                          |
| 3      | 10:20 – 11:10 |                                     | 11-12 Human Anatomy            | 9-10 Language Arts             | 7-8 US History                           |
| 4      | 11:10-12:00   | 7-8 Algebra I /Transitional Algebra | 9-10 Biology                   | 11-12 Language Arts            |  |
| L      | 12:00-12:30   | Lunch                               |                                |                                |  |
| 5      | 12:30 – 1:15  | Credit Recovery/ Study hall         | Reading and Math Interventions | Direct Services                | FLEX Offering                            |
| 6      | 1:15 - 2:00   | Credit Recovery/ Study hall         | Reading and Math Interventions | Direct Services                | FLEX Offering                            |
| 7      | 2:00 - 3:30   | FLEX Offering<br>FLEX Offering      | FLEX Offering<br>FLEX Offering | FLEX Offering<br>FLEX Offering | FLEX Offering<br>FLEX Offering           |

P.M. Wednesday Early Out

|   |              |              |                     |                     |                |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| L | 12:00-12:30  | Lunch        |                     |                     |                |
| 5 | 12:30 – 1:30 | Advisory/CCR | EE Project Learning | Assembly/Big Circle | Guest Speakers |

## Board of Directors

One of the unique and wonderful aspects of Charter Schools is their leadership – run entirely by staff, parents, and community members. Being on the Board of Directors is a chance to work together and make decisions that create opportunities for students.

A charter school board is the entity that is legally charged with governing a charter school and ultimately responsible to its community. Charter school boards govern by adopting a mission, vision, and goals and adopting policies.

The Board provides overall direction for the development and growth of Vermilion Country Schools, evaluates the Director, approves all significant educational and operational policies, and monitors compliance.

All members are elected to the Board, unless an opening occurs mid-term, in which case the Board has authority to fill that position by appointment. Board elections are held each year at the annual meeting in February. Eligible voters include parents/guardians of current students, school staff, and current board members.

## Purpose/Program Design

VCS delivers the state required Core courses (Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math) during the morning periods. Each student has an advisor who provides personal, academic and graduation guidance as part of their Individual Learning plans. The afternoon blocks of time are set as flexible learning options and student success services. Students choose elective credits using the JMC flex scheduler each quarter. Students also receive additional personalized services within the block schedule. Services may include Reading and/or Math Interventions, Credit Recovery, Focus Study, Special Education Direct Services and Mental Health Services. Students attend school Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. for breakfast until 3:30 p.m. On Wednesdays, students are released at 1:30 following their advisory period.

- Vermilion Country School provides a safe and supportive environment for students from 7th grade through age 21.
- We encourage the development of academic, social, and emotional maturity. We recognize that all students are on their own path and timelines regarding achieving their greatest potential.
- Our staff meets students where they are and encourages them to take the next steps in their development.
- Vermilion Country School actively looks for what makes each student special.
- Our students meet all the Minnesota Academic Standards for high school graduation.

In order to meet the mission and vision set forth by the Vermilion Country School's board of directors, the school and its staff will work closely with students and parents to develop an approach to learning that works effectively for each student, while incorporating proven instructional techniques.

- Standards-based curriculum
- Small class size to promote a safe, nurturing environment and lower student-teacher ratio.
- Small group work developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as students work together rather than compete against each other.
- Honoring life skills, stewardship and leadership opportunities through a habit of community service which includes scheduled events that benefit many in our community, young and old as well as meeting state standards and college and career readiness.
- Multi-grade 7-12 students use inquiry learning in a variety of collaborations with local agencies, community experts, volunteers and cross-curricular activities.
- Cohesive staff team teaching and layering curricular concepts to meet all student levels.
- An advisor-to-student ratio of approximately 1:10 in most academic settings takes place in open classrooms.
- Technology – Students use their own school-issued Chromebook and VCS uses school wide Google platforms including docs, sheets, calendar, classroom, forms, sites, and email. Grades and attendance are available online through JMC for students and parents to access at their convenience.
- School-wide team-building activities to strengthen emotional security and interdependence resulting in ready-to-learn culture.
- Student-led activities and student-led academics are offered, allowing voice and choice, along with built-in opportunities to make a difference in our school climate and our wider community.

## Application

Enrollment is on a first come, first served basis. In the event that VCS is full, a waiting list will be made and students will be added by a lottery process. The VCS school board reserves the right to limit enrollment to those students residing in

the Tower/Soudan attendance area, or siblings of students already in attendance. When registering, please provide VCS with all the necessary information requested so that we may better serve you. The State of Minnesota requires all students to have been immunized unless otherwise exempt by statute.

## VCS Graduation Requirements

VCS requires a minimum number of credits to earn a high school diploma.

|                | Required Credits |
|----------------|------------------|
| Language Arts  | 4                |
| Math           | 3                |
| Science        | 3                |
| Social Studies | 3.5              |
| Arts           | 1                |
| PE / Health    | 1                |
| Electives      | 7.5              |
| EE             | 1                |
| TOTAL          | 24               |

## Progress Reports

VCS uses an online program JMC as its Student Record Management Software. Parents, guardians and students will be able to access JMC to check grades, attendance, and lunch account balances. Login information is sent out at the beginning of the school year.

The link to the login page is: <https://vermilioncs.onlinejmc.com/>.  
If there are any questions, please contact the office or an advisor.

## School Events

Parent/guardian(s) are encouraged to attend school events as part of being in the VCS community.

- **Parent/Teacher conferences** are an opportunity to review your child's progress with their advisors.
- **School Board meetings** are an opportunity to have an input into the overall mission of the school.
- **TSAA Auction** provides funding to VCS for indoor/outdoor activities.
- VCS sponsors a **Holiday Craft Fair** for vendors to sell handmade goods.
- **Graduation** is an opportunity to honor our graduates as they begin the next chapter of their lives.

These dates and other special events will be published on the VCS website and posted in the building.

## COVID-19

VCS is closely monitoring news about the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Our decisions will be guided by MDE, health experts, including the CDC and local health authorities.

It is important that everyone in the school community take steps to reduce transmission, particularly to those at high risk, while balancing the need to maintain a strong education system that effectively supports staff, students, and communities.

Following all protocols in the **Back to School Reopening Guide** on the Minnesota Department of Education website is mandatory.

### Post-Secondary Option (PSEO)

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is a program that allows 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade students to earn college credit while still in high school. For information about qualifications for PSEO, see the VCS director.

### Transferring of Credits

VCS accepts credits and grades earned by students at other accredited schools. We will not accept any weighted credits unless they have been earned in International Baccalaureate courses. Credits will be awarded so they are equivalent to those given at the VCS. In transferring out of VCS, the school cannot make any guarantees as to how the next school will interpret credit amounts.

### Graduation

A senior student must meet all credit requirements to receive a diploma from VCS.

### Special Education Services

Students with special needs from birth to age 22 are eligible for special education and related services as defined in federal law, P.L. 101-476, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Minnesota State Board of Education Rules, Chapter 3525.0200. Parents/guardians can expect their referral to be processed by the child study team in a timely manner and according to due process requirements. The VCS Special Education Director and staff can provide further information and assistance.

## Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with a handicap in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);
2. Has a record of such an impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, VCS recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

VCS has specific responsibilities under the Act, which includes the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate education services.

If the parent/guardian(s) disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the School District he/she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FOREPAW) also specified rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent/guardian or guardian the right to:

- a) inspect and review his/her child's records;
- b) make copies of these records;
- c) receive a list of all individuals having access to those records;
- d) ask for an explanation of any item in the records;
- e) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights; and
- f) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact the Special Education Director.

## Pledge of Allegiance

Minnesota statute requires instruction in the proper etiquette, display, and respect for the United States flag. Students in a school district shall recite the pledge of allegiance one time per week during advisory time. Anyone may decline to participate in the recitation. Students must respect the individual's choice to recite or not recite the pledge.

## Attendance

VCS believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits the student socially, provides opportunities for important communications between staff and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. School attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent or guardian. Parents/guardians should notify the school in the morning by 8 a.m. if the student is going to be absent. **Absences of more than two days in a row will require written verification (doctor's note, appointment receipt, etc) in order to be excused.**

Absences will be excused for the following reasons: illness, serious illness in immediate family, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, counseling appointments, court appearances, family vacations (with prior notification) planned educational experiences, physical emergencies (flood, storm, etc.), official school sponsored outings, or suspension.

Please try to schedule appointments after school or during vacation days when possible.. **In general, all core classes are in the morning, we prefer if all appointments are scheduled in the afternoon or preferably Wednesday's.**

Absences considered unexcused are: truancy, being out of the building without signing out, leaving early, or any other absence not included in the excused section of this policy. Two tardies will be considered an absence. Staff will make

an effort to notify parents of unexcused absences as soon as possible, however JMC is always available for parents to check on attendance.

If a student should accumulate three unexcused absences, the parents will be notified by letter and after five unexcused absences a conference must be held. The school will continue to notify parents through the seventh unexcused absence during which a truancy petition will be filed with the county. Following 15 consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be dropped from the school attendance roll and will need to complete a school application in order to return at which time the application will be reviewed by the academic committee.

## Exiting of School Grounds

Juniors and Seniors are eligible to leave campus for lunch with a signed parent permission form.

## Trespassing and Building Access

All adults and minors on school property must have official business at VCS. All visitors must sign in. Please use only the main front doors located on the parking lot side.

## School Closings

In the case of inclement weather or public emergency, VCS may be closed or dismissed early. In addition to VCS' website, school alerts, emails, texts, and voice calls; the following media outlets will carry school cancellation announcements:

Television: KBJR, WDIO, VCS Facebook Page

## Student Conduct/Discipline Plan

The VCS School Board has the authority to adopt and enforce reasonable regulations to ensure the health and safety of staff, students, and visitors; as well as promote an environment conducive to learning. Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, the conduct of all students under 22 years of age attending this public secondary school is governed by a single set of reasonable rules and regulations approved by the VCS School Board.

Additionally, students are required to obey all federal, state, and local laws. These discipline policies apply district-wide, on and off school property, while being transported and at all school-related functions. The policies may be amended at any time and students will receive updated information.

This section does not nor is it intended to cover every potential discipline issue. Minimum disciplinary consequences are listed. However, at the discretion of the VCS Staff in compliance with statutory limitations, harsher penalties may be given. Disciplinary consequences do not necessarily proceed in a stepwise fashion and will be administered on an individual, case-by-case basis.

**Tennessen Warning:** All information related to a discipline investigation given by the alleged violator or witnesses is voluntary. The information is used to determine the facts surrounding a circumstance and for assigning an appropriate disciplinary response. Withholding information will mean that the disciplinary response will be determined with only available data. When an alleged violator withholds information, that person may face insubordination action.

The staff at VCS believes in the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) of discipline management, building a school culture of rewarding those who 'do the right thing.'

In the course of misbehavior VCS's discipline plan is detailed below. Please note that there are always exceptions to the rule and students are always considered on a case by case basis to ensure due process and mitigate discrimination. The offenses listed in the discipline plan are by no means a complete list, rather a guideline to the types of offenses considered on the same level. The staff are trained professionals with experience in dealing with behavior issues and will apply the plan in a consistent manner.

All staff will make efforts to reward positive behavior and celebrate 'doing the right thing' with students in order to create that welcoming school environment and a culture of living to high expectations. Part of this is also teaching correct expectations and making sure that expectations are consistent school wide. We strive for a proactive approach to head

off any behavior issues before they happen by communicating with students, taking an interest in them, and frequent contact with parents to stay informed.

| Offense Categories   | General Plan of Action (some variation might occur)   |
|--|---|
| Off-Task Behavior<br>Defiance/Insubordination<br>Inappropriate Language<br>Littering<br>Purposely Causing Messes<br>Purposely Distracting Students<br>Personal Displays of Affection | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff warning (verbal or written)</li> <li>2. Staff/Student short conference</li> <li>3. Bring to ACDC committee               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Action Plan Established</li> <li>b. Starting to Document Behaviors</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Referral to Director</li> </ol>   |
| Bullying<br>Harassment<br>Cheating<br>Gang Activity<br>Technology Violations<br>Chronic Dress Code Issues  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff/Parent/Student short conference               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Action Plan Established</li> <li>b. Starting to Document Behaviors</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Referral to Director</li> </ol>  |
| Fighting/Assault<br>Weapons<br>Drugs/Alcohol<br>Theft/Vandalism<br>Terrorism Threats<br>Legal Issues (local, state, fed laws)<br>Hazing  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff member who witnessed action taking place or were reported to by a student will immediately contact the school director to investigate the situation. Most likely scenario will result in referral to law enforcement and convening of discipline committee as soon as possible. Potential outcomes could include: Dismissal, Removal, Suspension, Expulsion, and Exclusion depending on the final decision by the school director.</li> </ol> |

**\*Potential consequences include, but are not limited to:**

1. Warning (verbal or written)
2. Meeting with advisor, counselor, and/or administrator
3. Loss of school privileges
4. Parent/guardian conference by telephone
5. Parent/guardian conference with school staff
6. Referral to school support services (social work, counseling, etc)
7. Referral to law enforcement
8. Removal from class/dismissal
9. Suspension from school
10. Expulsion/exclusion
11. Restitution

### Disciplinary Definitions

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Dismissal: | <p>Dismissal means the denial of the current educational program to any pupil including exclusion, expulsion, and suspension. It does not include removal from class. A pupil may be dismissed on any of the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) willful violation of any reasonable school board regulation;</li> <li>(b) willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, or the ability of school personnel to perform their duties, or school sponsored extracurricular activities; or</li> <li>(c) willful conduct that endangers the pupil or other pupils; or surrounding persons, including school district employees; or property of the school.</li> </ol> <p>All dismissals will be in compliance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.</p> |
|------------|--|

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Exclusion:          | Exclusion means an action taken by the school board to prevent enrollment or re-enrollment of a pupil for a period that shall not extend beyond the school year.   |
| Expulsion:          | Expulsion means a school board action to prohibit an enrolled pupil from further attendance for up to twelve (12) months from the date the pupil was expelled.   |
| Suspension:         | Suspension means an action by the school director, under rules promulgated by the school board, prohibiting a pupil from attending school for a period of no more than ten (10) school days. This definition does not apply to dismissal from school for one (1) school day or less, except as provided in federal law for a student with a disability. The school director may not impose consecutive suspensions against the same pupil for the same course of conduct, or incident of misconduct, except where the pupil will create an immediate and substantial danger to self or surrounding persons or property, or where the district is in the process of initiating an expulsion, in which case the school director may extend the suspension to a total of 15 days. |
| Removal from Class: | Students may be removed from the classroom to continue their course work independently in another area and not return until the following class period for:<br><br>(a) willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, including conduct that interferes with the teacher’s ability to teach or communicate effectively with students in a class or with the ability of other students to learn;<br>(b) willful conduct that endangers surrounding persons including school district employees, the student or other students, or property of the school; or<br>(c) willful violation of any rule of conduct specified in the discipline policy adopted by the board.  |
| Early Dismissal:    | When the nature or intensity of the behavior is such that the student’s continued presence significantly disrupts the educational process, or when removal from class is insufficient in halting an inappropriate behavior, a student may be dismissed for the remainder of the school day at the discretion of the staff member in consultation with the VCS School Director.   |

### Use of Tobacco and/or Tobacco Substitutes (including Vaping)

VCS is a tobacco free facility. There is a municipal fine for under-aged tobacco possession or consumption. Students can face disciplinary action for ignoring staff member instructions in this matter.

#### EXCEPTIONS TO TOBACCO POLICY

A. A violation of this policy does not occur for Traditional Native American Ceremonies as defined under Minnesota law.

B. A violation of this policy does not occur when an adult non student possesses a tobacco or nicotine product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug director for sale as a tobacco cessation product, as a tobacco dependence product, or for other medical purposes, and is being marketed and sold solely for such an approved purpose.

### Search and Seizure

The VCS School Director may initiate search and seizure if there is a “reasonable suspicion” that a crime or policy violation has occurred in which a search of a suspect or suspect’s belongings or vehicle may produce evidence. All students and vehicles within the “school zone” (the greater of 300 feet or one city block) are subject to search and seizure. Law enforcement officials may initiate search and seizure upon “probable cause”.

## Cheating, Plagiarism and Malpractice

Honesty and personal integrity are character traits valued at the VCS. When a student copies work, whether from a friend or from another source such as a book or the internet and turns it in as his or her own work, this is known as cheating or plagiarism. Students who knowingly let other students copy their work are also cheating. Advisors will generally indicate whether an assignment is to be done individually or cooperatively. If there are any questions about what is permissible, it is the student's responsibility to ask the advisor. Violations will result in a discipline plan going into effect.

## Use of Alcoholic Beverages, Prescription and Non-Prescription Drugs, or Controlled Substances

Students are prohibited from possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverages or controlled substances. Use or possession of illegal drugs, prescription drugs not prescribed to the student, or alcohol on school property will result in notification of law enforcement officials and the student's parent/guardian. Other disciplinary measures may also be applied. Verification that an initial chemical dependency assessment has been completed may be required before re-entry into the VCS program. Students needing to take prescription and non-prescription drugs during the school day should have a parent/guardian fill out the "Consent for the director of Medication" and return it to the VCS office. **VCS can not supply over-the-counter medications such as pain medication or cold/allergy remedies.**

## Insubordination

Students shall obey all reasonable directives of the VCS staff. Educationally valid requests to go to or accompany a staff member to a location within the school and directives to cease an activity should be followed. Refusal to comply with a reasonable directive is insubordination and will be addressed.

## Personal Displays of Affection

The school environment is a social one; however, there are still minimally acceptable standards of conduct when it comes to displays of affection. Examples of inappropriate displays of affection include but are not limited to: laying on another person, sitting on someone else's lap, kissing, graphic conversations, etc. Incidents of personal displays of affection will be addressed accordingly.

## Dress Code

VCS encourages students to dress appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards. Students and parents will abide by staff requests to alter clothing when it has a distracting or negative impact on the educational environment as determined **by the staff**. Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Short shorts/skirts, tank tops, tops that expose the midriff, visible undergarments and other clothing that is not in keeping with community standards.
2. Clothing which bears a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
3. Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
4. Objectionable emblems, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing communicating a message which is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory or which connotes gang membership.

Students will be asked to turn shirts inside out or to cover up that which is inappropriate. Failure to do so will result in a call to a parent/guardian to retrieve appropriate clothing or pick up their student. Additional or chronic incidents will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

Students are expected to dress appropriately for outside weather and inside building/classroom conditions.

## Gang Symbols and Graffiti

The display, use, or construction of gang symbols and graffiti on school property is prohibited.

## Profane/Abusive Language

Use of profane or abusive language is prohibited. When a student uses profane or abusive language, the staff will inform him/her that such behavior is unacceptable (warning). If the behavior continues, disciplinary action will result.

## Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

The school district prohibits real and look-alike weapons, including but not limited to:

- a) All firearms, whether loaded or not;
- b) Other guns of all types including pellet or BB;
- c) Paintball markers;
- d) Knives, including switchblades or automatically opening knives;
- e) Explosives, including live ammunition and fireworks; and
- f) Flammable liquids or combustibles.

Additionally, “weapon” means any device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use capable of threatening or producing great bodily harm or death, or any device or instrument that is used with an intent to harm. Some examples of weapons are non-functioning guns that could be used to threaten others, chains, clubs, metal knuckles, nunchucks, throwing stars, stun guns, etc. A student who finds a weapon on the way to school or in the school building or on school property and takes the weapon immediately to the school office shall not be considered in possession of a weapon.

Students and non-students, including adults and visiting youths, are forbidden to possess, store, transmit, or use any instrument that is considered a weapon or a look-alike weapon in school; on school grounds, at school activities, or at bus stops; on school buses, school vehicles, or school contracted vehicles; or entering upon or departing from school premises, property or events.

Further, the school district prohibits possession, utilization, and distribution of weapons or harmful or nuisance articles:

- a) Possession is defined as having control of or storing objects that may threaten and/or harm persons or property.
- b) Utilization is defined as the use of objects that may threaten and/or harm persons or property.
- c) Distribution is defined as transmitting objects that may threaten and/or harm persons or property.

Consequences for the above weapons violations include confiscation of the weapon or nuisance item, suspension from school, and, potentially, notification of law enforcement officials and expulsion.

THE GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT OF 1994 REQUIRES THE EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL FOR A PERIOD OF NOT LESS THAN ONE YEAR OF ANY STUDENT WHO BRINGS A FIREARM TO SCHOOL.

## Terroristic Threats

The manufacture, possession, or distribution of terroristic threats, are prohibited and taken seriously. Terroristic threats include, but are not limited to, all communications that imply harm or damage coming to persons or property. Such incidents are immediately referred to law enforcement and the perpetrator(s) will face disciplinary action up to arrest and expulsion.

## Harassment/Bullying Policy

**Religious, Racial, Sexual, and Disability\* Harassment, Bullying and Violence:** It is the policy of VCS to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment, bullying, and violence. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, advisor, administrator, or other personnel of the school to harass, bully, or commit a violent act against a pupil, advisor, administrator, or other personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion and race as defined in this policy.

A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses.

The school may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

A. Sexual Harassment Definition: Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

(i) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment, or of obtaining an education; or

(ii) submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or

(iii) that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

- unwelcome verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature;
- unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;
- unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical conduct;
- unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status;
- unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status; or
- unwelcome behavior or words directed at an individual because of gender.

B. Racial Harassment Definition: Racial harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct related to an individual's race when the conduct: (see i, ii, and iii below), **AND**;

C. Religious Harassment Definition: Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion when the conduct:

- (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment;
- (ii) has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
- (iii) otherwise affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

C. Bullying Definition: "Bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or

2. materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

The term, "bullying," specifically includes cyberbullying as defined in this policy. "**Cyberbullying**" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

D. Sexual Violence Definition: Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression or force or the threat thereof that involves the touching of another's intimate parts, or forcing a person to touch any person's intimate parts. Intimate parts, as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 609.341, include the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks or breast, as well as the clothing covering those areas.

Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:

- (i) touching, patting, grabbing or pinching another person's intimate parts, whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex;
- (ii) coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone's intimate parts;
- (iii) coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force sexual intercourse or a sexual act on another; or
- (iv) threatening to force or coerce sexual acts, including the touching of intimate parts or intercourse, on another.

E. Racial Violence Definition: Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race.

F. Religious Violence Definition: Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, religion.

#### Harassment Reporting Procedures:

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment, bullying, or violence by a pupil, advisor, administrator, or other personnel of the school, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or violence should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official.

VCS will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible consistent with the education district's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations.

All complaints of harassment will be investigated.

Students suspected or accused of religious, racial, sexual, or disability\* harassment and/or violence will be interviewed by the VCS School Director. If, upon investigation, he/she is found to have committed religious, racial, disability\* or sexual harassment and/or violence he/she may be warned, suspended, or expelled. \*(Physically, mentally or emotionally disabled)

## Technology Usage Policy

### ISD #4207 – Vermilion Country School Guidelines for Electronic Devices & Internet Use

Authorized school employees and students may use school-owned electronic devices with predetermined applications installed by VCS. All applications must support the curriculum and goals of VCS. Every student shall have electronic device privileges unless his or her parent/guardian requests a waiver to deny the student's access.

#### General Information

Student use of school-owned electronic devices in school falls under the guidelines of the school's Acceptable Use Policy for Technology. Access to the internet is monitored through our school's content filtering software and all rules and expectations are applied to the use of all electronic devices. All applications, activity, and documents stored on an electronic device are property of VCS and subject to regular review and monitoring.

#### Goals for Student Users

- To increase student's productivity in and outside of school when completing assignments, projects, and other activities assigned during the day.
- To capitalize on the convergence of academic resources such as textbooks, scholarly sources, content rich media, and best practices.
- To facilitate mobile learning and promote student ownership of projects by establishing access to educational resources and providing a host of tools to craft information in ways that support specific curricular areas.

#### Students Should Not:

- Modify any electronic device in any way other than instructed by school personnel.
- Synchronize any electronic device with computers from outside the school.
- Exchange devices with another student without permission by school personnel.
- Carry electronics around unsafely or carry electronics around when not academically necessary.

### Parent/Student Electronics Liability

Parents/Guardians and the student may be responsible for replacing school electronics that are in need of repair due to misuse.

### Phone Policy

While we live in a connected society, the school is placing a priority on students being engaged 'in the moment' and to connect better with the environment around them as opposed to tuning it out. Students are able to use their phones before school, during lunch, and after school, but not during instructional times.

Phones will be taken to the office if misused during class time with teacher discretion. Students refusing to comply may result in disciplinary action.

### Student Electronics Code of Conduct

As a student allowed to use this equipment, I agree to the following terms:

1. To never create, attempt to remove, or attempt to copy unauthorized content to or from the hard drive of any school computer.
2. To never try to "break" into any part of any security system on my computer or the school's computer network or assist someone to do the same.
3. To never alter, remove, or switch around any component of any computer, mouse, monitor, keyboard, cables or printer.
4. To never write on, draw on, or in any other way deface any piece of school computer or related equipment. This includes damaging keyboards or purposely popping off keys.
5. That all computer accessories (mice, flash drives, power cords, cases, etc) must be handled carefully. It is my responsibility to ensure equipment isn't damaged by carelessness, mistreatment, or lost entirely.
6. To never disturb someone else's computer without permission.
7. To report anything wrong with my computer. If I do not report it, I take responsibility for any problems with my computer.
8. To never have food, drinks, or candy around computers.
9. To never print any work until it is reviewed and approved by an advisor or another staff person.
10. To never play music or computer games unless specifically approved by my advisor.
11. To limit my web surfing to instructional and research purposes. This includes social media use (ie: Facebook).
12. To never send, read or respond to e-mail messages from a school computer unless specifically approved by my advisor in a project setting.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### Health

Students are not to come to school when they are ill nor should they expect injuries that occur at home to be cared for in school. If a student becomes ill or injured during the day, a parent/guardian will be contacted. In extreme cases, medical services might be called.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A minor student who becomes ill in school may not leave the VCS building until a parent/guardian arranges transportation. Once the student has been released from school, the parent/guardian is responsible.

### Health Guidelines to Promote a Healthy Environment for All Students and Staff

1. If your child becomes ill or is injured during the school day, the office will notify a parent/guardian so arrangements can be made for the student to go home. Emergency information cards are essential and must be kept current. Parent/guardian(s) home and work numbers are required. No minor or non-emancipated student will be allowed to walk or drive home without the permission of an adult listed on the emergency card. Please notify the school of changes.
2. Always keep your child at home if his/her temperature is 100 degrees or higher. Temperatures should be normal for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before he/she returns to school. Students with a temperature of 100 degrees or above cannot stay in school and parent/guardian(s) will be notified that they must provide transportation home.
3. Please notify the VCS office if your child develops a communicable disease such as strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo, scarlet fever, red and mattering eyes, etc. **NOTE:** If you take your child in for a throat culture, DO NOT send them back to school until the results come back negative or they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
4. If your child has been vomiting and/or experiencing diarrhea, please keep him/her home until 24 hours after the last episode.
5. If your child has a rash that you do not know the cause of and that might be disease related, please check with your family doctor before sending him/her to school.
6. If your child has activity limitations or needs to be excused from physical education for longer than 2 days, a doctor's excuse is necessary for their advisor to provide an alternate assignment.
7. In an extreme emergency, an ambulance will be called and your child will be taken to the nearest hospital. This will be billed to the parent/guardian.
8. Minnesota State Law will be enforced regarding required immunizations. Please contact your healthcare provider if you have any questions about your child's immunization status.
9. Parent/guardian(s) of students requesting that medication (either prescription or over-the-counter) be administered during school hours by school personnel are required to provide for the school:
  - a. A written parent/guardian release for the director of medication,
  - b. A signed statement from the licensed prescriber, and
  - c. Medication in the original container or pharmacy-labeled container.

## Driving, Parking, and Transportation

The school building is open from 8:00am to 3:45pm each school day. Students should make the best effort to arrive on time (weather permitting). Transportation provided to students beyond two miles within the Tower/Soudan attendance area and outside of the attendance area is a privilege and is provided at the discretion of VCS.

Students not transported by VCS should arrange to be transported promptly when school finishes at 3:30pm. Students who are receiving transportation from VCS will need to designate a pick-up/drop-off point that does not change (unless there is reasonable cause). Students will not be allowed to shift daily to other routes for non-approved reasons.

In addition, vehicles will only be stopping at pick-up points for 1 minute. Students are expected to be ready when the vehicle arrives. Vehicles will wait 1 minute but have a schedule to maintain and will leave students who are not on time.

Missing the bus is not considered an excused absence.

Students are expected to maintain the vehicles cleanliness throughout the year and to behave in a safe manner so as to not distract drivers. Any failures to follow directions while on the vehicles can result in a loss of transportation privileges.

## Personal Possessions

VCS is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged personal articles.

## Emergency Drills

It is important that students regard emergency drills seriously and know the procedure to follow in case of an actual emergency.

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH INFORMATION**

Families may apply for free/reduced meals anytime during the school year. Families that received meal benefits last year, must reapply prior to the start of the school year to continue receiving meal benefits with no disruption

Federal guidelines determine what constitutes a breakfast and lunch. Students are required to take a minimum of two breakfast items and/or three lunch items. At both breakfast and lunch one cup of fruit/veggies are required. Breakfast consists of: main entrée, protein or grain entrée item, fruit or juice, and milk. Lunch consists of: main entrée, fruit, vegetable, pasta or bread, milk, and occasionally a dessert. If your child cannot tolerate regular milk, lactose-free milk can be substituted upon receipt of a written statement from your doctor requesting this substitution.