



# Welcome Back to School!

August 29, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome you to a new school year in the Valley Grove School District. We are looking forward to a year full of growth, achievement, and lasting memories.

We hope this handbook will serve as a resource to answer many of the questions that you or your child may have concerning policies, procedures, and everyday practices of the district. Please take some time to review the information in this booklet with your child. This handbook will help to maximize the opportunity for all of our students to have a successful year. Being familiar with this booklet will save time for both you and the school, so that we can work together, as we strive to meet the needs of our students in a safe and efficient manner.

If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school throughout the year. Thank you for your support in achieving success for all of our students. We wish the Valley Grove community an exceptional school year! Go, Orioles!

Yours in Education,

Mr. Kevin Briggs, Superintendent

Mrs. Kelly Hart, High School Principal

Mr. Jacob Saullo, High School Principal

Ms. Cheryl Krachkowski, Elementary Principal

Mrs. Amber Nolan-Johnston, Special Education Director

## HANDBOOK REVIEW OF POLICIES FORM

2023-24

***Please sign and return this form to your child's first period/homeroom teacher by Friday, September 1.***

We hope that you take some time to review the content of the student handbook with your child because there is a lot of useful information as well as the policies that guide the district and explain the elementary school's Title I program. Please return this page acknowledging your receipt and review of this material. Your interest and support is greatly appreciated. We're looking forward to a great year in the Valley Grove School District!



Please view the handbook using the following link: <https://www.vgsd.org/Page/85>

**Commitment:** I have reviewed the contents of the Valley Grove School District Student Handbook and Title I materials (elementary student only) with my child.

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Parent/Guardian – Print Name

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Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date

**Commitment:** I have reviewed the contents of the Valley Grove School District Student Handbook and Title I materials (elementary student only) with my child.

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Student – Print Name

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Student Signature

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Date

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## SECTION I: Valley Grove School District's Philosophy of Education

### **VGSD MISSION STATEMENT** (Board Policy #101)

The mission of the Valley Grove School District, in partnership with the community, is to provide the opportunity for each student to obtain a comprehensive and quality education.

### **VGSD VISION STATEMENT** (VGSD Strategic Plan)

The Valley Grove School District believes that students will achieve proficiency on local, state and national assessments and complete high school with the values and skills necessary to be productive members of the local and global community.

### **VGSD EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS & SHARED VALUES** (VGSD Strategic Plan)

#### Beliefs

- We believe that each student can learn.
- We believe education is a shared responsibility of the student, the family, the school and the community.
- We believe the district will provide the environment and resources to enhance the learning capability of each student.
- We believe that learning is a life-long process.
- We believe that students can be motivated by making connections between learning and their future.

#### Shared Values

- *Respect* - Treat others and self fairly, with tolerance, affability, acceptance and equity.
- *Trustworthiness* - Keeping promises, fulfilling commitments and abiding by the spirit, as well as, the letter of an agreement.
- *Loyalty* - Support friends and their profession in good times and bad times on the basis of positive values.
- *Integrity* - Demonstrate honesty; understand, consider and accept the impact and consequences of personal actions and decisions.
- *Work Ethic* - Put forth an effort to be responsible and productive while striving for excellence. Reflect on accomplishments and apply what has been learned to future opportunities.
- *Citizenship* - Make a positive contribution to the community at large by being productive members of society.

### **VGSD NONDISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES** (Board Policy #103)

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. The district strives to maintain a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination. Discrimination is inconsistent with the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities and on any conveyance providing transportation to or from a school entity or school-sponsored activity.

## SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

### **BUS RIDERSHIP & STUDENT TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS** (Board Policy #810)

The Transportation Coordinator is responsible for establishing bus runs and assigning students to a particular bus. Children are not to ride any other bus (or van) than the one they are assigned. VGSD does not provide transportation to a student's place of employment. For high school students, parents/guardians wishing to pick-up or drop-off their child during arrival or dismissal times must pick them up or drop them off at the back of the building. The front of the high school building is reserved for school buses only. At the elementary, please follow the established traffic pattern. The district recognizes that parents/guardians may need to request changes due to child care purposes or emergencies; therefore, the district will make those changes according to the following guidelines:

**Emergency Change:** In the case of an extreme emergency, approval for stop and/or bus changes may be granted by the building principal in conjunction with the Transportation Coordinator. Emergency situations shall include sudden family illness or death, an accident that would result in no one being home to receive younger children or a natural disaster. Requests for visiting a friend or relative and other changes for mere convenience will not be considered an emergency situation and will not be granted.

**Child Care Situations:** The District recognizes the need for alternate pickups or drop-offs due to child care accommodations. Alternate transportation arrangements for child care purposes will be made with the following conditions:

- Changes made for child care purposes must be consistent. Child care pick-up and drop-off stops that occur regularly will replace originally assigned stops from the child's home.
- Parents/guardians must notify the school office in advance on days they will be picking up their child/children, when they are not attending child care. Notification of such changes must reach the school office by 12:30 p.m. If the call for this change reaches the office after 12:30, the request for change will not be honored and the child will be sent home on his/her regular bus assignment.

**After School Programs:** The District recognizes the need for alternate pickups or drop-offs due to after school programs. Alternate transportation arrangements for after school programs will be made with the following conditions:

- Parents/guardians are required to notify the school when their child will be transported to an afterschool program outside the district.
- Changes made for after school programs must be consistent. After school program pick-up and drop-off stops that occur regularly will replace originally assigned stops from the child's home.
- Parents/guardians must notify the school office in advance on days they will be picking up their child/children when they are not attending the after school program. Notification of such changes must reach the school office by 12:30 p.m. If the call for this change reaches the office after 12:30, the request for change will not be honored and the child will be sent home on his regular bus assignment.

**Custody Situations:** Transportation arrangements for custody purposes will be established based on the child's living arrangement with both parents/guardians, providing both parents/guardians live in the Valley Grove School District. Once the transportation arrangements are established, changes will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians or until the custody agreement is changed by the court. It will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide a copy of the custody agreement to the Building Principal and Transportation Coordinator prior to the establishment of pick-up and drop-off stops.

Requests for the above four situations will be granted in accordance with the following criteria:

- The requested stop is already designated on an established bus route.
- There is space available on the alternate bus.
- The student is already designated as a bus student and has an assigned seat on a bus for school transportation.
- Parents/guardians must notify the Building Principal and Transportation Coordinator using the approved district form at least 3 days before any change to the submitted schedule.

On the first day of a given change, the receiving adult will be required to be at the bus stop to pick up the child. The bus driver may not release the child if the receiving adult is not present and visible to the driver at the stop.

***There are rules that are designed for the discipline and safety of those riding the bus. It is the student's responsibility to obey these rules that have been established by the Valley Grove School District.***

#### **Bus Stop Regulations**

- Arrive at the bus stop on time, 5-10 minutes prior to when the bus is scheduled to arrive. When a school bus does not arrive at its scheduled time, due to a possible mechanical failure or weather conditions, a student is expected to wait for a reasonable amount of time (thirty minutes) for the bus to arrive.
- Wait for the bus in a safe place off the roadway. Bus riders must conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to board. Enter the bus single file; no crowding or pushing.
- Respect the property rights of others who ride or who are waiting at the stop.
- Be cautious while crossing the roadway to board a bus; look to see that all oncoming traffic has stopped.

#### **Bus Riding Regulations**

- Bus drivers will assign seats; students will remain in their assigned seats unless given permission otherwise.
- Observe the same conduct as in the classroom - Be courteous, no loud or profane language, and keep the bus clean.
- Do not throw objects in or outside the bus.
- Squirt guns and water bottles are not permitted on the bus.
- Keep hands and feet inside the bus.
- Open windows after asking permission of the driver.
- Damage to the bus in any form is prohibited.
- The use or possession of tobacco and/or paraphernalia in any form is prohibited on the bus and at the bus stop.
- The use or possession of drugs and/or paraphernalia in any form is prohibited on the bus and at the bus stop.
- The use or possession of any type of explosive materials or devices will be cause for a suspension of bus riding privileges.

#### **Bus Unloading Procedures**

- Students will exit the bus in a quiet, orderly manner and proceed directly to their homes or assigned area at the school.
- Students who must cross the roadway should cross ten feet in front of the bus.
- Be cautious while crossing to board the bus; look to see that all oncoming traffic has stopped; watch the driver for a signal to cross.
- Children walking alongside the bus should remain out of the bus's danger zones.

#### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

- All regulations/rules listed above apply to all school sponsored trips, events, or athletic trips.
- Students will respect the chaperones assigned to the trip.

#### **Emergency Procedures**

- Evacuation drills are scheduled so that students on the bus know exactly what procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
- The driver or assigned helpers must have the cooperation of the students.
- Students must remain quiet during drills or emergencies so they are able to hear instructions.
- Students are not to leave the bus unless instructed to do so by the driver or in the case of an emergency

#### **Bus Discipline Procedures [see also pg. 41, TRANSPORTATION POLICIES RELATED TO CONDUCT (Board Policy #810 & #223)]**

Children who become serious discipline problems on the bus ***may have their riding privileges suspended by their building principal***. The parent of a suspended child is responsible for transporting their child to and from school safely. The procedures for discipline while on the bus will follow the Student Code of Conduct in the back of this handbook. Bus drivers will report incidents to the principal of each building.

Depending on the severity of the incident, in accordance with district policy, the building principal may issue detentions or suspensions. Should the severity of the incident be severe, a three to ten (3-10) day suspension will be issued and/or possible expulsion. Alternative discipline up to a thirty (30) day suspension of riding privileges or the VGSD Board of Directors may suspend bus transportation privileges for the remainder of the school year.

**\*\*REMINDER TO ALL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES THAT ALL SCHOOL RULES APPLY ON THE BUSES TO INCLUDE DRESS CODE AND CODE OF CONDUCT\*\***

#### **TRANSPORTATION CONTACTS**

***In case of emergency or inquiry, please call 814-432-3861 ext. 2902. If after 4pm, please call bus contractors directly at the number below.***

Brenda Saali	Transportation Coordinator	814-432-3861 ext. 2902
John R. Lepley & Sons, Inc	Bus #'s: 4 & 7	814-374-4455 / 814-374-4624
Lepley's Bus Service	Bus #'s: 3, 5, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28	814-374-4212 / 814-432-7364
Phillips Busing	Bus #'s: 1, 2	814-670-9405

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Valley Grove School District, 429 Wiley Avenue, Franklin PA 16323 Phone: 814-432-4919**

**Fax: 814-437-1062**

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Special Education Director	3932	Amber Nolan-Johnston	<a href="mailto:ajohnston@staff.vgsd.org">ajohnston@staff.vgsd.org</a>
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**Fax: 814-437-1062**

### Teaching Staff

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### Office Contacts

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## Office Contacts

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	Attendance		
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Kevin Weisenfluh	Technology Director	1701	kweisenfluh@staff.vgsd.org

**SCREENING AND EVALUATIONS**

The Valley Grove School District uses the following procedures for locating, identifying, and evaluating specific needs of school-aged students requiring special programs or services.

**Child with a Disability:** A child with a disability means a child evaluated in accordance with IDEA §3000.304 through 300.311 as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf, blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

For children from three (3) years to Kindergarten entrance, the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) operates the preschool early intervention program. OCDEL provides early intervention services through MAWAs (Mutually Agreed upon Written Arrangements) typically with Intermediate Units or school districts. Legislative and regulatory guidance is provided through IDEA Part B, Pennsylvania’s Act 212, the Early Intervention Services System Act of 1990, Chapter 14, and the Basic Education Circulars related to early intervention. Regional services and programs are available through Riverview Intermediate Unit #6 including support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, parent education/supports and other family-centered services assist in child development and may be included in a family’s early intervention program.

**Child Find, Screening and Evaluation:** Valley Grove School District uses the following procedures for allocating, identifying and evaluating specific needs of school-aged students requiring special programs or services. These procedures, as required by law, are as follows: As identified in §14.121 Child Find of Chapter 14 Special Education Services and Programs State Regulations, each school district is required to adopt and use a public outreach awareness to locate and identify children thought to be eligible for special education within the school district’s jurisdiction. It also requires awareness activities to inform the public of its early intervention and special education services and programs and the manner in which to request services and programs. Written information is published in the Valley Grove School District handbook and is also available on our website.

Valley Grove School District routinely conducts screenings of our student’s hearing in Grades Pre K, K, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11; visual screenings in Grades Pre K-12; and speech and language screenings in kindergarten and as needed. Our classroom teachers routinely assess gross motor and fine motor skills. Results of these screenings are noted within the student’s school record. School records are always open and available to parents and only to school officials who have legitimate need-to-know information about the student. Information from these records is only released to other persons or agencies with appropriate authorization including signed permission by parents/guardians. Parents with concerns regarding their child may contact the building principals to request a screening or evaluation. Requests must be submitted through a written request and forms are available through the school building offices.

After the necessary evaluations are completed, an Evaluation Report or Gifted Written Report will be completed. This will be done with parent involvement and includes specific recommendations for the types of interventions needed to meet a child’s specific needs. Parents are invited to participate in a meeting where the results of the evaluation will be reviewed. An Individualized Education Program or Gifted Individualized Education Program will be created to address the specialized services that are needed for those students that are deemed eligible and in need of special education services through the evaluation process.

Valley Grove School District provides annual public notification through various forms such as newspapers and the school district website, to notify parents throughout the school district of child identification activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. For more information regarding these procedures, contact:

Special Education Department  
429 Wiley Avenue  
Franklin, PA 16323  
(814) 432-4919, Ext. 3902

**HOMELESS STUDENTS**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 ensures that homeless children have the right to a free, appropriate public education. Valley Grove School District’s Homeless Liaison is Kevin Briggs. He can be reached at 814-432-4919, ext. 3902. Valley Grove School District works in collaboration with local school districts ensuring that any homeless student is enrolled in school as soon as possible and provided with appropriate services. If you have any questions regarding identification and/or registration, contact the Homeless Liaison.

**FAMILY GUIDE TO MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT**

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), PA Distance Learning Charter School is attempting to identify all children within the district that may be experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied homeless youth.

The term homeless children and youth is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes individuals:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings;
- Living in substandard housing (no running water or working utilities, infestations, etc.).

VGSD attempts to identify homeless students during the initial enrollment process and on an ongoing basis. If a student or family has indicated they are homeless, or if a staff member has reasonable suspicion that a student or family is homeless, they are required to alert the Homeless Liaison. All procedures in place are designed to ensure this identification does not create or exacerbate educational barriers.



Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated nor stigmatized based on their status as homeless. To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the VGSD Homeless Liaison will consider the views of the students in determining where they will be enrolled.

The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to VGSD policies. However, VGSD may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The homeless liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous district. Homeless families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment.

VGSD may contact the district of origin for oral confirmation that the student has been immunized, but must not be a barrier to enrollment. Oral confirmation between professionals is a sufficient basis to verify immunization with written confirmation to follow within thirty (30) days. The instructional program should begin as soon as possible after the enrollment process is initiated and should not be delayed until the procedure is completed. The Homeless Liaison will assist the parent/guardian in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization and medical records.

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other VGSD students including but not limited to: programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Homeless families will also have access to all parent involvement activities and initiatives. Students automatically qualify for free lunch services. VGSD has staff members who will work with local community agencies to coordinate services in the student's community. The staff includes: (liaison, Social Worker, counselor etc) as well as those involved in the Student Assistance Program. Additionally, VGSD has certified nurses on staff that work to ensure necessary referrals take place to appropriate health care, dental services, and other medical services.

VGSD will ensure the student has transportation to school related events, such as, but not limited to testing and field trips.

Placement/Dispute/Complaints: If VGSD is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the school shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent/guardian/student will be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal. The parent/guardian/student will be referred to the Homeless Liaison who will carry out the state's grievance procedure as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied student, the Homeless Liaison shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

If disputes or complaints on noncompliance arise regarding the education of homeless students, the following steps may be taken:

- The person filing the complaint shall first contact the school's Homeless Liaison to present their concerns to the people closest to the situation and most likely to be able to resolve it quickly.
- If Step 1 is not successful or is not possible under the circumstances, contact should be made with the Homeless Project Education Liaison, or the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will accept complaints directly through the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.
- Individual cases may be referred to PDE's Office of Chief Counsel and the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, as needed, by the State Homeless Coordinator.

PDE will deliver a response within fifteen (15) business days of the receipt of the complaint. The complaint may arrive in the form of a copy of the school/district letter or on the Dispute Letter Form if given directly to a Liaison of the Homeless Initiative. Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance, with school supplies/materials, and/or tutoring so that they can remain in their school throughout the duration of their homeless episode. If you believe your child(ren) may qualify for this service, please contact the- Homeless Liaison at 814-432-3861

If your living situation changes during the school year, and you and your children become homeless, please be sure to contact the school. We will work with you so that your child(ren)'s education is disrupted as little as possible.

School Board Policy- <http://go.boarddocs.com/pa/vlyq/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CLQQGU69338D>

Family Guide to McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act- <https://www.vgsd.org/Page/2310>

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

To meet the special education needs of eligible students, the following program options are available:

- *Operated by District*
  - o Gifted Support
  - o Learning Support
  - o Speech and Language Support
- *Operated by Riverview IU 6*
  - o Speech and Language Support
  - o Multi Handicapped Support
  - o Autistic Support
  - o Emotional Support
  - o Hearing Support
  - o Vision Support
  - o Life Skills Support
  - o Physical Therapy
  - o Occupational Therapy

## **Approved Private Schools**

For information regarding the services, activities, programs and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact the Special Education Department, telephone (814) 432-4919, Ext. 3902.

## **Privacy Rights of Parents and Students**

The Valley Grove School District and its employees are required by Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights come from

federal legislation entitled, Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendments) and the 1997 Regulations. There are State Rules and Regulations dealing with regular and special education student's rights and privacy. All students are covered by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Student's Rights and Responsibilities, and Valley Grove School District Student Record's Plan.

The basic premise of the above-mentioned laws, rules and regulations is that information about students cannot be disclosed without written parental consent. There are different categories of information: Education Records, Personally Identifiable Information and Directory Information. Education Records consist of information directly related to a student which is maintained by an educational agency. Personally Identifiable Information includes the student's name, the name of the parent or other family members, a personal identifier or a list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable. Education Records and Personally Identifiable Information cannot be disclosed or released without parent consent or if a student is over eighteen, without student consent.

There is certain information that can be released without consent which is called Directory Information. Directory Information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The school district designates what information is labeled as Directory Information. It shall include the following: the student's name, address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Disclosure of Information means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of education records or the personally identifiable information contained in these records, to any party, by any means, including oral, written or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot even be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge of a student.

Written parental consent is necessary for disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information and education records. The consent must: (1) specify the records that may be disclosed; (2) state the purpose of the disclosure; (3) identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. Furthermore, the Valley Grove School District must maintain a written record of disclosure for the parents to inspect in case information has been released.

**Chapter 15/504 Protected Handicapped Students**

In compliance with State Chapter 15 regulations and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, the Valley Grove School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provisions of services to protected handicapped students, contact the building principal.

**RESOURCE DIRECTORY**

**Local Agencies**

Family Services & Children's Aid Society.....	(814) 432-3466
Venango County Children & Youth.....	(814) 432-9743
Venango County Substance Abuse.....	(814) 432-9744
Easter Seal Society of Venango County.....	(814) 437-3071
The ARC of Clarion & Venango Counties.....	(814) 226-7033
Venango County Assoc. for the Blind.....	(814) 676-1876
Venango County Human Services.....	(814) 432-9100
Community Services of Venango County.....	(814) 676-5011
Vocational Rehabilitation Services.....	(814) 871-4551
Regional Counseling Center.....	(814) 676-5614
Northwest Legal Services.....	(814) 437-3028
Venango County Offices.....	(814) 432-9500
Riverview Intermediate Unit 6.....	(814) 226-7103

**Statewide Hotlines**

Arc of Pennsylvania 301 Chestnut St #403. Harrisburg, PA 17101 (717) 234-2621	Education Law Center 429 Fourth Ave. #702 Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (412) 258-2120	Learning Disabilities Assoc. of America 461 Cochran Rd. #245 Pittsburgh, PA 15228 (412) 341-1515
United Cerebral Palsy 55 Utley Dr. Camp Hill, PA 17011 (717) 737-3477	PA Protection & Advocacy 1414 N. Cameron St. Suite C. Harrisburg, PA 17103 (717) 236-8110	PA 211 Northwest by the United Way (Information) 211
Disabilities Rights in PA 301 Chestnut St. Suite 300 Harrisburg, PA 17101 (800) 692-7443	Governor's Action Team (717) 787-8199	Parents Involved Network 700 E. Main St. #2 Norristown, PA (610) 279-8511

## **NATIONAL INFORMATION**

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)  
(704) 947-7779  
815 West Kenton Circle, Suite 230  
Huntersville, NC 28078

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf  
(202) 337-5220  
3417 Voita Place NW  
Washington, D.C. 20007

National Information Center for Children & Youth with Disabilities  
800-695-0285  
P.O. Box 1492  
Washington, D.C. 20013

Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services  
(202) 245-7468  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 202-245-7468

Mental Health Association of PA  
800-273-TALK  
4105 Derry St., Lower Level  
Harrisburg, PA 17111

Autism Society of Pittsburgh  
(412) 856-7223  
4903 Old William Penn Highway  
Monroeville, PA 15146

PA Association for the Blind  
(717) 766-2020  
555 Gettysburg Pike a300  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

National Runaway Safeline  
1-800-RUNAWAY  
3141B N. Lincoln  
Chicago, IL 60657

Easter Seal Society  
(312) 726-6200  
141 W. Jackson Blvd., 1400A  
Chicago, IL 60604

Parent Education Network  
(307) 684-2277  
599 W. Lott St. Suite A  
Buffalo, WY 82834

## **VALLEY GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY** (Board Policy #103)

It is the policy of the Valley Grove School District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. The district strives to maintain a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination. Discrimination is inconsistent with the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities and on any conveyance providing transportation to or from a school entity or school-sponsored activity. The district shall provide to all students, without discrimination, course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute handicaps and disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations. The School District's commitment to non-discrimination extends to students, employees, prospective employees and the community in accordance with state and federal laws including Title VI, Title IX and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **FERPA** - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

### **What is student data and what does it include?**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (see 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99) protects personally identifiable information (PII) from students' education records from unauthorized disclosure. FERPA defines education records as "records that are: (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution" (see 34 CFR § 99.3 definition of "education record"). FERPA also defines the term PII, which includes direct identifiers (such as a student's or other family member's name) and indirect identifiers (such as a student's date of birth, place of birth, or mother's maiden name) (see 34 CFR § 99.3 definition of "personally identifiable information"). For more information about FERPA, please visit the Family Policy Compliance Office's website.

Some types of online educational services do use FERPA-protected information. For example, a district may decide to use an online system to allow students (and their parents) to log in and access class materials. In order to create student accounts, the district or school will likely need to give the provider the students' names and contact information from the students' education records, which are protected by FERPA. Conversely, other types of online educational services may not implicate FERPA-protected information. For example, a teacher may have students watch video tutorials or complete interactive exercises offered by a provider that does not require individual students to log in. In these cases, no PII from the students' education records would be disclosed to (or maintained by) the provider (Source: PTAC)

## **Valley Grove School District Notification of Rights under FERPA:**

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. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School 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 school principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.
  - Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school 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.

- 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, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school 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 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, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Valley Grove School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

### **REASONABLE NOTICE FOR STUDENT RECORDS**

The following information is to notify you of your rights concerning student records in the Valley Grove School District. Each building administrator or his/her designee is responsible for the student records of his/her building and has available the District's policy regarding the reviewing, expunging, or challenging of a student's school records.

#### **Types of Records kept by the District:**

- Type A - Information shall include the minimum personal data necessary for the operation of the school system, such as (but not necessarily limited to) names and addresses of parents or guardians, home address, birth date, academic levels completed, grades, achievement test scores, and attendance.
- Type B - Information shall include verified data of clear importance but not essential to the operation of the school system, such as intelligence and aptitude scores, interest inventories, health data, family information, teacher or counselor observations and reports of behavior patterns.
- Type C - Information shall include potentially useful information not yet verified nor clearly needed beyond the present, such as legal or clinical findings, personality test results, unevaluated reports of teachers or counselors which may be needed in ongoing investigations or counseling action.

#### **School policy for reviewing student records:**

- Parents should request in writing to the appropriate administrator an opportunity to review the student's records.
- Arrangements will be made for the time and place of review. The school shall comply with the request within thirty (30) days for exceptional students and forty-five (45) days for regular students after the request is received.

#### **Expunging student records:**

- Type C information is to be examined at the conclusion of each school year and its continued usefulness ascertained. If a clear educational purpose is not met by any material in the Type C file, it is to be destroyed.

#### **Procedure for challenging the student records:**

- Notify, in writing, the District Superintendent of Schools.
- Specify in the correspondence the item(s) to be considered.
- The Superintendent will arrange an informal conference to discuss the problem.
- If the matter cannot be resolved, the Superintendent will arrange a hearing before the committee on student records. At the hearing all parties have the right to provide counsel, call witnesses, and to cross-examine.
- The decision of the committee on student records will be forthcoming through the Superintendent's office after five (5) days.

#### **Cost of reproducing records for personal use as per parent/guardian request:**

- Type A - \$ .20 per page
- Type B - \$ .20 per page.

Should you wish to examine your child's record file at any time, you may do so by calling the principal's office.

If a student has outstanding fines and leaves the district and does not continue in a Pre K-12 educational setting or graduates, educational records will not be released. However, educational records are still able to be viewed. If a student leaves the district and continues in a Pre K-12 educational setting, educational records will be released.

#### **Destruction of Records (Board Policy #800)**

The Valley Grove School District will hold all records, including special education files for six (6) years after the student's graduation or the student has turned 21. At that time, all records that are not educationally relevant or mandated by law to remain in the records will be destroyed. The parent/guardians and/or student may have access and copies of these records up to that point in time. These records continue to fall under the Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the privacy rights.

## TESTING NOTIFICATION

The Valley Grove School District has a district-wide and individual testing program designed to provide information concerning student ability through valid and reliable standardized tests of academic achievement and aptitude.

It must be remembered that tests are not infallible and that many non-measurable factors affect test scoring; however, test results are of definite assistance to the counselor and teacher when seeking out individualized instruction. During the coming school year the following tests may be administered at the various grade levels or to individual students with parent/guardian permission if required:

NAME OF TEST	GRADE LEVEL	PURPOSE
Test for Sound/Symbol Relationship	K-1	Measure Achievement
Screening of Integrated Body Awareness	K-1	Measure Orientation
Language Processing Assessment - R	K-2	Measure Language Skills
Gesell Preschool	K-3	Measure Development
Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (IQ)	K-4	Measure Ability & Achievement
Beery Test of Visual/Motor Discrimination	K-6	Measure Skills
Children Apperception Test	K-6	Measure Personality
Early Literacy Test for K-1	K-1	Language Skills
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III	K-12	Measure Ability
Reading and Writing Proficiency for grades 2-12	2-12	Measure Achievement
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-V	K-12	Measure Ability
Wide Range Achievement Test-IV	K-12	Measure Achievement
Bender-Gestalt	K-12	Measure Perceptual-Motor Skills
Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale-5th Ed.	K-12	Measure Ability
Keymath Diagnostic Arithmetic Test-revised	K-12	Measure Achievement
Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills (4 levels)	K-12	Measure Achievement
Learning Accomplishment Profile	K-12	Measure Development
Criterion Test of Basic Skills	K-12	Measure Achievement
Goodenough-Harris Drawing	K-12	Measure Ability
Leiter International Performance Scale	K-12	Measure Ability
Slosson Intelligence Test III	K-12	Measure Ability
Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales II	K-12	Measure Development
Blind Learning Aptitude Test	K-12	Measure Ability
Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence III	K-12	Measure Ability
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement	K-12	Measure Achievement
Basic Assessment Skills Individual Screener	K-12	Measure Achievement
Test of Nonverbal Intelligence-II	K-12	Measure Ability
Dolch	1	Measure Achievement
Slosson Oral Reading	1-3	Measure Achievement
Oral Language Proficiency Tests	K-12	Language Skills
Thematic Apperception Test	7-12	Measure Personality
Differential Aptitude	9	Measure Achievement
PSAT/NMSQT	11	Measure Achievement
Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery	10	Measure Achievement
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale III	--	Measure Ability
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test III	K-12	Measure Achievement
Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-R	K-12	Measure Achievement
Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery	K-12	Measure Achievement
Star Reader & Star Math	K-6	Measure Achievement
Brigance K & 1 Screening Test	K-1	Measure Achievement
Child Behavior Checklist	K-12	Measure Behavior
Curriculum Based Assessment	K-12	Measure Achievement
Benton Test of Visual Retention	K-12	Measure Visual Motor Skills
Child Clinical Interview	K-12	Measure Personality
Social Emotional Dimension Scale	K-12	Measure Emotions
Mental Status Exam	K-12	Measure Mental Status
The Instructional Environment Scale	--	Measure Environment
CELF Test	K-6	Speech/Language test
TOLD Test	K-12	Language test
Connor's Parent/Teacher Rating Scales	K-12	Measure Behavior
PSSA	3-8	ELA/Math Achievement Test
Keystone Algebra, Biology, Literature	8-11	Algebra, Biology, Literature Achievement Test
Classroom Diagnostic Tools	3-11	Measure Achievement
DIBELS	--	Reading
OHS Core Assessments	3-11	Measure Achievement
Leveled Literacy Intervention	K-8	Measure Achievement

Test scores are checked carefully and kept in the student's record. Should the student transfer to another school district, records will be transferred to the new district upon completion of a signed record release form. No individual or agency outside of the school system will be permitted to inspect your child's record without your permission.

## **TITLE I DISTRICT PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT** (Board Policy #918)

The Valley Grove School District is fully committed to the success of your child. We appreciate your partnership in our efforts to provide the best education for your child. The Valley Grove School District receives Title I funding and is included under the regulations of the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA) that was signed into law by President Obama on December 10, 2015.

### **Valley Grove Elementary School a Schoolwide Title I School Parents' Right to Know**

**As a parent or guardian of a child attending Valley Grove Elementary School, you have the right to:**

- Request the qualifications of your child's teacher; to ask whether he or she has been licensed by Pennsylvania for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Be notified if your child is taught for more than 4 consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not appropriately certified, or is teaching under emergency or other provisional status.
- Know your child's teacher's baccalaureate degree major and whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject of those degrees.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
- Request opportunities for regular meetings with staff in order to make suggestions.
- Participate in decisions relating to the education of your child; participate in meetings to plan the schoolwide program.
- Submit a written comment on the school-wide plan, when the school makes the plan available to the district (if you are not satisfied with the plan).

### **VGES TITLE I : SCHOOL - PARENT- STUDENT COMPACT**

The School-Parent Compact is jointly developed with parents and family members. It outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. It is the means by which the school and the parents/guardians will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the State's high standards (*ESSA, Section 1116(d)*).

#### **School**

The school understands the importance of the school experience to every student and their role as educators and models. Therefore, the school agrees to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of our abilities:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the challenging State academic standards
- Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum-
  - o parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement
  - o frequent reports to parents on their children's progress;
  - o reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class; and
  - o ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand. (*ESSA, Section 1116(d)(1-2)*)
- Treat each child with dignity and respect
- Strive to address the individual needs of the student
- Acknowledge that parents are vital to the success of child and school
- Provide a safe, positive and healthy learning environment
- Assure every student access to quality learning experiences
- Assure that the school staff communicates clear expectations for performance to both students and parents

#### **Parents and or Family Members**

The parent(s)/family members understand that participation in their student's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, the parent(s)/family members will continue to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of his/her ability:

- Volunteering in their child's classroom
- Supporting their child's learning
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time
- Create a home atmosphere that supports learning
- Send the student to school on time, well-fed, and well-rested on a regular basis
- Attend school functions and conferences
- Encourage their child to show respect for all members of the school community and school property
- Review all school communications and respond promptly

#### **Student**

The student realizes education is important. He/she is the one responsible for his/her own success. Therefore, he/she agrees to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of his/her ability:

- Get to school on time everyday
- Develop a positive attitude toward school
- Be responsible for completing homework on time
- Be cooperative by carrying out the teacher's instructions and ask for help when needed
- Do daily work that is neat and reflects the student's best effort

- Be respectful to all school members and to school property

## **VGES Family Engagement Policy 918.1**

### Purpose

The Board and district recognize that parent and family engagement contributes to the achievement of academic standards by students participating in Title I schoolwide programs. When schools and parents and family members form strong partnerships, all children's potential for academic success improves significantly.

### Authority

- In compliance with federal law, the district will involve parents and family members of students participating in the schoolwide Title I programs in the development of the schoolwide comprehensive plan and in the process of school review and improvement. [1]
- Title I parents and family members will participate in the joint development of the district's overall Title I plan and will be part of the school review and school improvement procedures.
- Title I parents and family members will serve on the planning committee for the Title I plan.
- The district shall provide technical assistance and other support necessary to its Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities.
- Develop activities that promote the schools' and parents' and family members' capacity for strong parent involvement.
- Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with appropriate programs.
- Assist the Title I schools in identifying clear and measurable goals for parent and family engagement.
- The district will build the schools' and parents' and family members' capacity for family engagement by offering programs to strengthen the school/family partnership by providing materials and training to school staff and parents and family members.

### The district shall:

- Involve parents and family members in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of schools served under Title I.
- Provide staff development for teachers, families, administrators, staff, and others on how to increase the level and quality of family involvement.
- Provide information and, if needed, assistance to schools and parents and family members in understanding state academic content and performance standards; state and local assessments; requirements of Title I and how parents and family members can assist in their child's education.
- Ensure Title I parents and family members with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, or other disabilities are given the same opportunities as other parents and family members. These opportunities may be structured, adapted or modified so that these parents and family members may receive the same benefits and services as the other Title I parents and family members.
- Use findings of annual evaluations to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement.
- Provide information to Title I schools and parents and family members on Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV Title I Parent Resource Center.
- The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate Title I parent and family engagement activities with other parent and family engagement activities.

### The school district shall:

- Coordinate Title I parent and family engagement activities with Head Start, Even Start and local preschools by providing mutual parent and family engagement training and information.
- Collaborate with community agencies to inform schools and parents and family members of literacy training and parent education.
- Delegation of Responsibility
- The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district's Title I parent and family engagement policy, plan and programs comply with the requirements of federal law.
- The building principal and/or Title I staff shall provide to parents and family members of students participating in Title I programs:
- Notification by letter that their child is eligible to receive Title I services.
- Notification at the beginning of the year of their right to know the professional qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Notification if their child is taught more than four (4) consecutive weeks by a teacher not meeting the definition of "highly qualified."
- Information on the level of achievement their child has attained on each of the state academic assessments as required by law.
- Description of the services to be provided.
- The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that information and reports provided to parents and family members are in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and family members can understand.[1][3]

### Guidelines

- An annual meeting of parents and family members of participating students shall be held to explain the goals and purposes of the Title I schoolwide program. Parents and family members shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program. Parents and family members shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs.[1]
- In addition to the required annual meeting, additional parent and family member meetings may be held at various times of the day and evening as well as at different locations within the community. At these meetings, parents and family members shall be provided:[1]
  - Information about programs provided in the Title I schoolwide plan.
  - Description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
  - Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children.
  - Opportunities to submit parent and family member comments about the program to the district level.
- If sufficient, Title I funding may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent and family engagement activities, including transportation, child care, or home visit expenses to enable parents and family members to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions. Opportunities shall be provided for parents and family members to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parents and family members may be given guidance as to how they can assist at home in the education of their child.
- The Board shall adopt and distribute the parent and family engagement policy, which shall be incorporated into the district's Title I plan and shall be evaluated annually.[1]

### School-Parent Compact

Each school in the district receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents and family members of students served in the program a School-Parent Compact outlining the manner in which parents and family members, school staff and students share responsibility for improved student achievement in meeting academic standards. The compact shall:[2]

- Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in the Title I program to meet the district's academic standards.
- Indicate the ways in which parents and family members will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time.
- Address the importance of parent-teacher communication on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents and family members, and reasonable access to staff.

**EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)** - The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a law that was signed by President Barack Obama on December 10, 2015. The purpose of this act was to replace and update the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) which was signed into law in 2002. Like NCLB, ESSA reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965. According to the statement of purpose in ESSA, *"The purpose of this title is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps."*

ESSA requires:

- Increased accountability for states and school districts.
- Greater choices for parents, especially those in low performing schools.
- Greater flexibility for state and local education agencies in the use of federal funding.

Under ESSA, parents have a right to request professional qualifications of their children's teachers or paraprofessionals. This letter is to inform you of your right to ask for the following information about your children's' classroom teachers or paraprofessionals:

- Whether Pennsylvania has licensed the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which Pennsylvania licensing criteria have been waived.
- The teacher's baccalaureate degree major and whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive specific information about your child's teachers or paraprofessionals, please contact your school principal.

### **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION** (Board Policy #716)

The Valley Grove School District uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for managing insects, rodents and weeds. Our goal is to protect every student from pesticide exposure by using an IPM approach to pest management. Our IPM approach focuses on making the district's buildings and grounds an unfavorable habitat for these pests by removing food and water sources and eliminating their hiding and breeding places. We attempt to accomplish this through routine cleaning and maintenance. We routinely monitor the buildings and grounds to detect any pests that are present. Pest sightings are reported to our IPM coordinator for evaluation and determination of appropriate pest management techniques to address the problem. Techniques used to correct the problem may include increased sanitation, modifying storage practices, sealing entry points, etc.

From time-to-time, it may be necessary to use chemicals to manage a pest problem. Chemicals will only be used when necessary, and will not be routinely applied. When chemicals are used, the district will try to use the least toxic products when possible. Chemical applications will be made only when unauthorized persons do not have access to the area(s) being treated. Notices will be posted in these areas 72 hours prior to application and for two days following the application.

Parents and guardians of students enrolled in the District may request prior notification of specific pesticide applications made at the District. To receive notification, you must be placed on the district's notification registry. If you would like to be placed on this registry, please notify the principal at your child's school in writing. Please provide a telephone number where a parent or guardian can be reached.

If a chemical application must be made to control an emergency pest problem, notice will be provided to any parent or guardian who has requested such notification in writing. Exceptions to this notification include disinfectants and antimicrobial products, self-containerized baits placed in areas not accessible to students, and gel-type baits placed in cracks and crevices or voids.

Each year the District will prepare a new notification registry. If you have any questions, please contact the building principal at your child's school.

### **CHILD ABUSE POLICY** (Board Policy #806)

The Board requires district employees, independent contractors and volunteers to comply with identification and reporting requirements for suspected child abuse, as well as the training requirement for recognition and reporting of child abuse in order to comply with the Child Protective Services Law and the School Code. School employees, independent contractors and volunteers shall make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse.

### **MEDIA RELEASE POLICY** (Board Policy #911)

From time to time, a student's picture and name may be taken and used on district social media accounts, in the local newspaper, in a district newsletter or on the VGSD website. In addition, a video involving a student may be streamed on the web for a performance, school project or athletic event. If you do not wish to have your child's picture or video released for these purposes, please write a letter to the school administration stating your objection. Each year, a new letter will need to be submitted for the student to be withheld from media information release.

### **REVIEW & EXEMPTION POLICIES FOR CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT** (Board Policy #105.1, #105.2, & #127)

The rights granted by these policies are granted to parents/guardians of students enrolled in this school district where the students are under the age of eighteen (18) and to the students themselves when the student is age eighteen (18) or over.

Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved,



instructional materials and assessment techniques. The Board adopts the policy of Exemption of Instruction to ensure that parents/guardians have the right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs.

The Board shall grant requests by parents/guardians to review the state assessments two (2) weeks prior to their administration, during regular district office hours. The district shall ensure the security of the assessment documents. The Board shall grant parents/guardians the right to have their child excused from state assessments that conflict with their religious beliefs, upon receipt of a written request to the Superintendent.

#### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE POLICY** (Board Policy #831)

The Valley Grove School District utilizes security cameras for surveillance in both the elementary school and the high school, and on certain buses. No video image shall be stored or maintained in excess of thirty (30) days, unless it is being maintained for use as evidence in a disciplinary matter, legal proceeding or as directed by the Superintendent. Only those individuals authorized by the building administration and/or the Superintendent shall be permitted to view and control video monitors and tape recordings. Video recordings may be used as a basis for any disciplinary action. If evidence is conclusive, the district may choose to show recordings to students and/or parents/guardians for disciplinary reasons only. Further, video recordings may be furnished to police in regard to possible criminal violations, per a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

#### **VISITORS TO THE DISTRICT** (Board Policy #907)

- **Adult Visitors**, both parents and community members, are always welcome. The administration requires that adult visitors obtain a visitor's pass from the main office when they first arrive. Any adult visitor that is visiting for a specified purpose outside the realm of routine school functions (parent conferences, student performances, awards assemblies, invited by a staff member, etc.) must request approval at least one day in advance of attending. Visitor passes are only issued to those who are visiting specifically to contribute to the academic program or extracurricular program. For reasons of safety and the smooth operation of the school, those not obtaining a pass, those who are on school grounds without permission, and those who have been denied permission to be on school grounds will be considered to be trespassing, and will be referred to the local Law Enforcement Agencies.
- **Student Visitors** (visitors of school age) will only be permitted if the student is interested in possibly attending VGSD in the future through moving to the district or transferring to the district from another program (private, cyber, charter, etc.). Requests must be received at least one day in advance. Visiting students from other school districts will not be permitted.

#### **WELLNESS POLICY** (Board Policy #246)

Valley Grove School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

Parents/guardians who wish to have input on the wellness policy should see the Wellness Committee meeting dates on the VGSD website under Parents and then Health and Wellness. Any questions should be directed to the Wellness Committee Leader, Principal Hart, by calling the high school.

### **SECTION III: Emergency Procedures**

#### **CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN**

The Valley Grove School District uses a Critical Incident Plan for emergency situations. The plan is reviewed annually and staff is trained periodically on handling emergency situations. Students are made aware of emergency preparedness plans at the start of each school year. The plan gives directions to the administration, faculty, and support staff in times of crisis. The plan covers the following situations: Preventative Measures, Weather Related Emergencies, Lockdown Procedures, Bus Incidents, Hazardous Material Spills, Gas Leaks, Suicide, Bomb Threats, Sniper, Outside Emergencies, Child Kidnapping, Missing Students, Hostage Situation, Suspected Weapon, and Media Procedures. The plan is not meant to cover every situation, however it is meant as a guideline for all staff members to be on the same page

#### **WORKPLACE SAFETY COMMITTEE** (Board Policy #705)

The district will provide facilities and equipment deemed necessary for the safe conduct of the educational programs and operations of the schools, including the provision of protective devices where needed for safety purposes. A workplace safety committee shall be established to promote the district's goals concerning safe schools.

#### **DRILLS** (Board Policy #805)

An effective emergency procedure/drill is governed by a few fundamental rules to ensure the safety of all participants, these are listed below. Drills will be conducted periodically as established by the state.

**Emergency Evacuation/Fire Drills** – When a fire alarm or signal is heard, the students are to:

- Move quickly, **quietly** (without talking), and in an orderly fashion (no running or pushing) to the nearest emergency exit and then proceed away from the building as directed by a faculty or staff member.
- Students from each class are to stay as a group with the supervising adult – students are not to loiter in order to be with friends.
- During a drill or emergency, an exit may be closed due to a condition of the fire, if so teachers will direct the students to the nearest available exit. The exit procedures will be posted near the door of each classroom; please be aware of these procedures.

High School students with temporary or permanent disabilities will exit the building utilizing the following procedures: Exit the second floor through the doors in front of the auditorium and take the sidewalk to the back of the building. Exit the first floor through the main lobby and proceed down the sidewalk to the church parking lot. Exit the basement through the Makerspace (G2) and follow the ramp to the back parking lot.

**Severe Weather Drills** – When a severe weather signal is heard, the students are to...

- Move quickly, **quietly** (without talking), and in an orderly fashion (no running or pushing) to the nearest hallway or restroom away from windows as directed by a faculty or staff member.
- Students from each class are to stay as a group with the supervising adult.
- Students should kneel, face the wall, and protect their head and neck with their arms or a book.
- Remain in place until the "All Clear" signal is given, at which you return to the classroom in a safe and orderly manner.

#### **School Safety & Security Guidelines/Procedures** (Board Policy #805)

A school security drill must be done within the first 90 days of the school year. In the event of an emergency/safety issue, or in accordance with certain drills, district facilities will

follow the ALICE procedures. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, & Evacuate ALICE authorizes and empowers individuals to utilize human action, building infrastructure, and communication options to increase their chances of being safe. **For more information, please check our districts ALICE page at <https://www.vgsd.org/domain/1081>**

### **INJURIES & ACCIDENTS**

Students should notify their teacher immediately in case of a school related injury or accident. Teachers will notify the nurse and/or administration as needed. Parents will be notified by school personnel as deemed necessary.

### **PARENT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

All students will be given a new emergency information form on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school. These must be returned within three (3) days. All students must have a parent/guardian emergency information form on file in the office. Parents and students are required to inform the office immediately of a change of guardianship, address, phone number, or other information required on the emergency information form for safety purposes. In lieu of returning the form to the office, parents may complete the online update for student information.

### **SCHOOL DELAY AND CANCELLATION (AND/OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS)** (Board Policy #804 & #805)

The Superintendent of Schools notifies local television and radio stations when there is a delay or cancellation. The District does not guarantee any announcements will be broadcast once decisions to cancel or delay are finalized. All delays are called for a two (2) hour period; therefore the regular schedule is delayed exactly two (2) hours – walking students should report two (2) hours later than normal and bus students will be picked up at their bus stops two (2) hours later than their regular time. Please monitor several sources to confirm any delay or cancellation. The district will distribute information through the website ([www.vgsd.org](http://www.vgsd.org)) and the automated calling service, please make sure your contact information is kept current with the school. The following stations are utilized to distribute information in the event that there is a school delay or cancellation:

Radio: Forever Northwest PA Media Group-Froggy100.3 & 98.5 and ESPN 1280 AM

TV: KDKA TV 2, WTAE TV 4, WICU TV 12, WPXI TV 3

## **SECTION IV: Attendance Regulations**

***Research has shown that there is a direct correlation between regular school attendance and student achievement, therefore students are encouraged to avoid absences from school at all costs. Punctual and regular attendance is extremely important and required by law. Unless it is absolutely impossible, students should be in school every day of the school year...***

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS** (Board Policy #200 & #201)

Children in the Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Minors are required by law to attend an approved educational institution until 18 years of age. Students may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 18 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as a student. Those responsibilities require students to follow and complete the course of study prescribed by the local school board. A child shall be considered a resident of the school district in which his/her parents/guardians reside.

Attendance in ALL grades Children need the following Immunizations before the first day of school

- 4 doses of Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Acellular Pertussis (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of Polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Varicella (Chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

For Attendance in 7th Grade the following Immunizations must be given before the **First Day of 7th Grade**

- 1 dose of Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV)
- If your child has a medical (Physician excuse in writing) or religious/philosophical exemption, it must be submitted in writing to the school nurse prior to the first day.

For Attendance in 12th Grade the following immunization must be given before the 1st Day of 12th Grade or risk exclusion:

- 1 dose of MCV (2nd dose)

Copies of up to date immunizations must be provided to the School Nurse prior to the first day of school.

**\*\*\*Students with incomplete immunization requirements will not be permitted to enter school.\*\*\***

### **AFFIDAVITS & TUITION** (Board Policy #202)

A child shall be considered a resident of the school district in which his/her parents/guardians reside. Any student not having at least one parent/guardian residing in VGSD and who is requesting permission to attend school in VGSD shall be admitted only through tuition payments, court placement, or due to exceptional circumstances which must be presented in writing to the Superintendent of Schools. In all cases, an affidavit of residence and responsible person shall be furnished and processed as required by the School Code. The Superintendent will consider each request for an affidavit on an individual basis. In the event of approval, tuition must be paid monthly and in advance. The rate of tuition shall be computed via the procedure mandated by the State Department of Public Education.

### **ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL** (Board Policy #204)

**Excused Absences – All students absent or tardy to school must have a written excuse signed by their parent/guardian.** All excuses which are not acceptable under the Pennsylvania Compulsory School Laws will be considered unexcused or illegal, regardless of a parent signature.

- The student is to obtain a written excuse on the day he/she returns to school. The excuse is to be submitted to the office.
- If the student fails to submit the written excuse within three days upon his/her return to school, the absence will be counted as unexcused, regardless of the reason for the absence. Excuses turned in after the three-day limit will not be accepted and the dates will remain unexcused.
- A student may be **legally absent from school for up to ten (10) days** due to reasons permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, such as sickness or other “urgent” reasons such as impassable roads, quarantine, or death in the family (specific requests for any absence over 1 day during a death in the family should go to the administration for approval).

- When documentation is received from a Health Care Provider of an appointment or other reason for absence, the absence will be considered **medically excused** and does not count toward the 10 days (documentation must have the day, date, time of appointment, and signature of the attending Health Care Provider).
- The excuse of "Family Emergency" will only be accepted once per school year.
- Absences for school approved and sponsored activities such as field trips competitions, public relations, projects, etc. will be counted as excused absences and will not count against the 10 days limit. Absences for Religious holidays as prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be recorded as legal/excused absences.

**Excuses** – To provide more convenience to parents/guardians, written excuses for the 2023-24 school year can consist of both handwritten notes from a parent or via email from a parent/guardian email (email must be on record). Emails may be submitted to [vgeattendance@vgdsd.org](mailto:vgeattendance@vgdsd.org) at the elementary school or [rgsattendance@vgdsd.org](mailto:rgsattendance@vgdsd.org) at the high school.

**Unexcused Absences** – Excuses such as hair appointments, shopping, fishing, hunting, oversleeping, etc. are considered unexcused absences and are not permitted. Unexcused Absences for a student under the age of eighteen is an unlawful (illegal) absence. When three (3) such absences have accumulated, the parents or guardians are notified and the School Attendance Improvement process begins, additional unlawful absences will result in legal action in the form of a citation to the local magistrate (typically leading to a fine) for a violation of the Pennsylvania Compulsory Attendance Laws. The Venango County Truancy Protocol addresses tardiness to school by using the accumulation of three (3) unexcused tardies as the equivalent to one unlawful absence.

**Excessive Absenteeism (over 10 days)** – Absenteeism presents a real problem for education and more so for the individual. Attendance in school is mandated under the Compulsory Attendance Laws and is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The District will not discriminate against any student including those who are married, pregnant, Chapter 14 eligible, or Chapter 15 eligible. After the tenth (10) day of non-medical absence in any given year, students are only permitted to miss school for medical reasons. If a student misses school, they will be required to provide a doctor's excuse for every absence the remainder of the year. The doctor's excuse must indicate that the child was seen in the doctor's office by a doctor, physician's assistant, or certified registered nurse practitioner. Failure to bring a doctor's excuse within the three (3) day period will result in an illegal/unexcused absence being issued. After 10 days, all excuses will be considered unexcused that are not medical. Periodically, parents are sent attendance update letters when students are missing school excessively. Please note seniors may be pulled from participation in graduation for excessive absences as defined in the eligibility for extra-curricular activities.

**Truancy (3 or more days of unlawful/unexcused absence)** – If it is necessary for a student to be absent from school, upon returning, the student will be required to provide the district with a written statement from his or her parents/guardians specifying the cause of absence. If a student fails to produce an excuse or has an excuse that is not permissible under district regulations it will be considered unexcused, which will turn into an unlawful absence. The Venango County Truancy Protocol addresses tardiness to school by using the accumulation of three (3) unexcused tardies as the equivalent to one unlawful absence. If a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences, the student and parent/guardian will be invited to school to a **School Attendance Improvement Conference**. Citations for Truancy will be filed with the District Magistrate when students accumulate six (6) days of unlawful absences; the citation will go against the parent if the student is under the age of fifteen (15) and the citation may go against the parent/guardian or the student if the student is age fifteen (15) or older. VGSD works in conjunction with Venango County Children & Youth Services and the Juvenile Probation Office regarding the enforcement of Compulsory Attendance. The District and these organizations have worked together to establish clear guidelines for attendance and addressing cases of chronic unlawful absences.

**Late Arrival (Tardiness – to school & class)** – One aim of the District is to help students develop good habits. Every student should form the habit of being on time. If a student arrives to school after the scheduled start time, parents are to bring the student to the office to sign in, then the student will receive an admittance slip and the student's attendance record will be adjusted according to the time of arrival and the reason for arriving late (see "excused" & "unexcused" absences above). Below are the specific times that will be used for determining the type of absence for arriving late. Please note, the start time for the high school is 7:30AM and for the elementary school it is 8:15AM. The earliest students can enter the high school is 7:15AM and the earliest students can enter the elementary school is 7:45AM; no student should arrive more than 5 minutes prior to the earliest entrance time.

<u>Type of Absence</u>	<u>High School Arrival Times</u>	<u>Elementary Arrival Times</u>
Tardy	7:30AM to 9:00 AM	8:15 AM to 9:30 AM (3 unexcused tardies = 1 unexcused absence)
½ Day AM Absence	9:01 AM to 11:00 AM	9:31 AM to 11:30AM
Whole day Absence	Arriving after 11:00 AM	Arriving after 11:30 AM

The pass for late to school is the only late pass the office will issue: late passes for between classes will not be issued from the office. If the office or a teacher detains a student, the student should ask for an excuse from the person who detained him/her before going to class, such a tardy will not be counted against the student as unexcused. Please note, every third tardy, to class or school, is an infraction of our Student Code of Conduct and will result in penalties as described in the discipline section of this handbook. **Also note, arriving late to school will be counted in Truancy proceedings by the accumulation of three (3) unexcused tardies being the equivalent to one unlawful absence, and may include legal action (fines through citations) being taken.**

**Leaving School Early** – Early dismissal from school will be granted for the same reasons allowable for legal absences. No student shall leave the school building unless granted permission by the office or faculty member in supervision of the student (this includes students who go to the parking lot without proper permission at the high school). Any student failing to check out properly will be considered illegally absent from classes and will be subject to discipline and truancy proceedings (3 unexcused = 1 unlawful absence just as tardies). Parents are to report to the building office for student pick-up and the office will call for the students in the classroom.

Once the student has arrived at school for the day, he/she shall not leave school grounds for any reason, unless a written request from a parent/guardian for early dismissal is presented to the office at the start of the school day. Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments with doctors and dentists after school hours if possible. Students returning to school after such an appointment will be required to submit the doctor's professional appointment card/form signed by the doctor or his/her designee that includes the day, date, appointment time, and time of departure from the appointment. If no such evidence is provided to the school, the time will be counted against the ten-day limit of excused days. Students must be transported to and from appointments by a parent or approved adult. At no time is a student permitted to ride with another student. Listed below are the specific times used for determining the type of absence when a student does not return to school:

<u>Type of Absence</u>		<u>High School Dismissal Times</u>		<u>Elementary Dismissal Times</u>
Early Dismissal	=	Leaving after 1:05 PM	=	Leaving after 1:15 PM
½ Day Absence	=	11:01 AM and 1:05 PM	=	11:31 AM and 1:15 PM
Whole Day Absence	=	Leaving at or before 11:00 AM	=	Leaving at or before 11:30 AM

\*When a student leaves school for an appointment and returns, the following times will be used to determine absence at both the Elementary and High School...

<u>Type of Absence</u>		<u>Time out of school</u>
Early Dismissal	=	2 hours or less
½ Day Absence	=	Over 2 hours, but less than 3½ hours
Whole Day Absence	=	3½ hours or more

**Educational Trips** – A student may legally take a trip of an educational nature with his parent(s) or guardian(s) if approved by the administration. There are some dates when trips will not be approved due to interfering with school operations. these dates are the first ten (10) days of the school year, the last ten (10) days of the school year, and during State Testing dates. To ensure that the student receives his/her assignments for the period of time to be missed, he/she must complete an educational field trip form before leaving on the trip at least five (5) days prior to departure. The forms are available to be completed online.. When this form is not on file, all absences due to trips will be marked “unexcused.” It is the student’s responsibility to make up all missed work. A maximum of five (5) days during an approved educational trip will not be counted toward the ten (10) maximum allowed absent days. As stated above, trips taken during the testing periods will be recorded as unexcused/illegal absences and will be subject to district truancy policies. The tentative testing dates set forth by the PA Department of Education are:

**PSSA TESTING CALENDAR (Grades 3-8)**

Spring April 22- May 10  
Testing dates include Math, ELA and Science

**KEYSTONE EXAM TESTING WINDOWS (Grades 8-11)**

Winter: January 3-17  
Spring: May 13-24  
All testing dates include tests in Algebra I, Biology, & Literature.

**Guidelines for Approval of Educational Trips**

- Students must have parental approval.
- Time restrictions:
  - Maximum of ten (10) days will be approved
  - Will not be approved during the first two (2) weeks of school
  - Will not be approved during the last two (2) weeks of school
  - Will not be approved during the State testing windows (PSSA and Keystone Exams)
- The trip must have an educational value.
  - Attend classes, seminars, programs, etc.
  - Historic sites
  - Museums
  - Foreign travel (different lifestyle)
  - College/University visitations
  - Business, industrial, technological visits
  - Religious educational activities
  - Cultural activities
- Valley Grove School District approval is required. You may complete the form and turn it in prior to leaving for your trip. If you fail to turn one in within 3 days of returning, the days missed will be considered illegal and no credit will be given for work completed.
- Students are responsible for assignments and all school work while absent. To guarantee getting assignments in advance of the trip, the expectation is that the form is submitted at least five (5) days prior to the trip. Students should not expect to complete all work upon return to school as they will fall significantly behind. See the VGSD make-up policy in the Student Handbook.
- Any days beyond the first five (5) days used for a trip, will count towards the ten (10) day maximum allowed for absenteeism.

**College Visitations** – The administrators recognize the importance of college visitations in preparation for higher learning. These absences must be pre-arranged by the following procedures: (1) Make an appointment with a postsecondary institution; (2) Obtain and complete a “Request for Legal Absence Form” from the main office – with parent and teacher signatures; (3) once approved, a “College Visitation” Form will be issued that must be completed by the college representative – this form must be obtained prior to leaving. Please note: a completed “College Visitation” form must be received within three (3) days of returning from the visit for legal absence. If the student follows the correct procedure for these trips, the day(s) will not count toward the maximum ten (10) allowed absent days. Failure to follow the correct procedures will result in an unexcused absence being assigned for that date(s).

**Job Shadowing Experiences** – The administrators recognize the importance of job shadows in preparation for career planning. These absences must be pre-arranged by the following procedures: (1) Make an appointment with a business or employer, (2) Obtain and complete the “Job Shadow Pre-Approval Form” from the main office, (3) once approved, a “Job Shadow Request for Legal Excuse” Form will be issued that must be completed by the business representative – this form must be obtained prior to leaving. These forms are also available on the VGSD website. Please note: a completed “Job Shadow Request for Legal Absence” form must be received within three (3) days of returning from the visit for legal absence. If the student follows the correct procedure for these trips, the day(s) will not count toward the maximum ten (10) days allowed for absence. Failure to follow the correct procedures will result in an unexcused absence being assigned for the date. Students will only be excused for the length of the job shadow and appropriate travel time. If the job shadow does not consist of the entire day, students are expected to attend their regular classes.

**DECLARATION OF EMANCIPATION**

“Minor children may be released from legal subjection to their parents by emancipation. Emancipation results not from any conduct of the child but from some juristic act, or other conduct of the parent from which the extinguishment of parental rights and filial duties may be inferred.” In compliance with the above opinion, emancipation of eligible students attending RGHS shall be determined or denied based upon the following information:

- A written statement from the parent(s) notarized or signed in the presence of the superintendent of schools, asserting that the minor is emancipated. In the absence of the parent(s) an affidavit, declared and signed by the minor before a licensed official of the courts, may be accepted.
- Verification of date of birth of the minor. (Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate, etc.).
- Evidence of financial independence.
- Written statement or some proof to show that there has been a “total severance of the filial tie,” such as:
  - Student’s residence
  - Student’s income adequate for full support
  - Parent(s) residence
  - Student’s marital status and/or responsibility as a parent, if appropriate.

- Student is no longer a dependent for tax purposes

A minor who is determined to be emancipated on the basis of the above procedure, shall be deemed responsible for his/her own affairs and does not have a guardian for school purposes.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & ATTENDANCE**

Students participating in extra-curricular activities or sports are required to be in attendance for the full day to participate in that day's activity, unless administratively excused or medically excused. Unexcused tardiness to school or absence following late night activities will result in the student being denied the privilege of participating in the next scheduled athletic competition or performance. Note: students must be in school on Friday in order to participate in an extracurricular activity or sport on Saturday, unless administratively excused. In addition, failure to comply with the Pennsylvania Health mandates and requirements, may result in your child being excluded from participating in extracurricular events.

### **MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS WHEN ABSENT**

In the case of extended illness, student assignments may be requested through the school office. Please allow time (24 hours) for this material to be compiled. Upon returning to school, students shall have THREE (3) days to make up all missed work, or to arrange for an extension if needed. If any examination was announced to the student prior to their absence, and the teacher is confident that the student was instructed in all facets of the material covered by the test, the teacher may have the student take the exam on the day of his/her return to school. If a student is on a field trip, it is the expectation that any work due that day is turned in prior to leaving for the day.

### **NEW STUDENTS (Transfer into VGSD)** (Board Policy #200)

All students who enroll new or transfer into the Valley Grove School District must register at Valley Grove Elementary with the central attendance secretary. Personal, emergency, academic, and health information will be obtained at that time.

### **WITHDRAWING STUDENTS (Transfers from VGSD)** (Board Policy #208)

The office should be notified at least one (1) day in advance of any student planning to withdraw from school. At this time the proper procedures will be explained to the student and he/she will be provided with the necessary forms. The return of a properly completed withdrawal form to the office, the return of all texts and materials, and payment of all fines and obligations will officially withdraw the student and permit us to forward transcripts and records to the new school.

## **SECTION V: Academics**

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

**Academic Awards** – Students who earn a weighted average of 92.5% or better in all major academic core subjects (English, History, Math, Science) after the fourth marking period will receive recognition at the awards ceremony. **Seniors grade point average will be calculated after the third marking period for the purposes of academic awards.** Students who transfer into this district and who become eligible for an award will be recognized at the first award level. Senior transfer students, in order to be eligible, must be enrolled at the beginning of school (a one-week grace period is recognized).

**Commencement Ceremony** – The Commencement Ceremony will be available to all qualified graduating seniors in good standing. A student who does not complete all requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Valley Grove School Board of Directors (classes, Career Action Plan, PSSA/Keystone, etc.) by the final due date will not participate in commencement ceremonies, as well as, all other extracurricular activities including the school prom. **Starting with the Class of 2023 must complete one of the “Five Graduation Pathways” in accordance with PDE policies. Seniors choosing to participate in this ceremony are required to attend all rehearsals unless previously excused by the administration.** Requests to be excused from rehearsals must be presented in writing to the administration prior to the day of the requested absence. Requests to be excused from practice should be only for extraordinary reasons and not for routine business or employment. Seniors absent from scheduled rehearsal will not be permitted to participate in Commencement. Twenty days of absence in a semester causes a student to become ineligible for extra-curricular activities, including commencement.

**Honor Roll** – A student who's GPA for a particular marking period is 3.0 to 3.99, and who has not earned any grades below a B in any course, will be elected to the Honor Roll. The GPA is calculated on whether the grade is an A, B, C, D, or F, not the numeric value.

**Principal's List** – A student whose GPA for a particular marking period is 4.0 or better, and who has not earned any grade below an A in any course, will be elected to the Principal's List. The GPA is calculated on whether the grade is an A, B, C, D, or F, not the numeric value.

**National Honor Society** – Additional recognition may be granted to students in grades 10, 11, and 12 by induction into the National Honor Society (NHS). Selection criteria for the NHS will follow the guidelines as established by the national organization and Rocky Grove High School policies. These guidelines focus on scholarship, character, service, leadership and citizenship. A committee of secondary faculty members and administration serves as the selection board under the supervision of the NHS advisor. The faculty selection board reviews all applications and makes the final selection.

### **Valedictorian and Salutatorian**

Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be recognized at graduation. One Valedictorian and one Salutatorian will be selected from each class on the basis of their accumulated weighted GPA, starting in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and ending after the fourth grading period of their 12<sup>th</sup> grade year (the top five students in the class will be alerted of their ranking after the third grading period for graduation speech preparation purposes, however the fourth grading period may change their ranking on the end transcripts). Only weighted numerical grade averages for core courses (English, History, Math, Science, and Foreign Language) are considered for class rank. All other courses/electives including do not count toward class rank. Weighted class rank GPA is equal to the total of weighted course grades divided by the number of required core courses taken. To be eligible, students must complete both their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years at RGHS. In the event of two or more students who receive the same class rank as first or second in the class, the administration will determine Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the graduation ceremony using the following methods to determine who is the top two students of the class (note, only one Valedictorian and one Salutatorian will be recognized at graduation):

- Recalculate the class rank of the students who have the equal class ranking using the End of Year grades to the nearest tenth of a percentage point for the senior year core classes.
- If still tied after step 1, recalculate class rank for all four years of high school using all credited coursework from grades 9-12 (not just core subjects, all subjects).

### **EDUCATIONAL PLANNING GUIDE**

Please refer to the **Educational Planning Guide** available online or through the Guidance Office for complete details on course offerings, grading policies, graduation

requirements, etc. To access it online, go to [www.vgsd.org](http://www.vgsd.org), highlight *Students*, click on *For Students*, and scroll down and find the *Educational Planning Guide* tab.

## GRADING POLICIES (Board Policy #212 & #213)

**Grading Scale** – The following grades are used in Valley Grove School District:

A = 93-100%	*Outstanding – shows excellence in meeting all course requirements
B = 85-92%	*Above Average – Clearly surpasses stated standards and shows above average success
C = 75-84%	*Average – Meets stated requirements with average success
D = 65-74%	*Below Average – Achieves minimum standards
F = less than or equal to 64%	*Failure – Fails to achieve minimum standards
I = Incomplete	*Course work is incomplete, if unresolved the student will receive a zero grade on the assignment(s)
O = Outstanding	*Used at the Elementary Level for showing excellence in meeting course requirements
S = Satisfactory	*Used at the Elementary Level for satisfying course requirements
U = Unsatisfactory	*Used at the Elementary Level for unsatisfactory completion of course requirements
P = Pass	*The student receives a passing grade without a numeric score
F = Fail	*The student receives a failure without a numeric score

**Course Weighting** – For the purpose of Honor Roll, NHS requirements and overall grade point average: all scheduled classes will be used. (Including designated weighting). For the purpose of calculating class rank and graduation honors: only the classes listed in the following departments will be used: (Math, Social Studies, Science, English, and Foreign Language). Non weighted electives will not be included in the class rank calculation. Weighted courses are indicated on the table below.

1.25		1.10		1.05			
413	DE English 12	113	Accelerated English 9	112	English 9	312	English 11
443	DE Economics/World Issues	233	Accelerated Biology	122	Algebra I	322	Algebra II
523	DE Calculus	213	Accelerated English 10	142	American Studies 9	325	Business Algebra
433	DE Human Biology	234	DE Chemistry	152	French I	332	Ecology
		243	Accelerated World Studies 10	157	Spanish I	342	American Government 11
		313	DE English 11	212	English 10	352	French III
		323	DE Algebra II	222	Geometry	357	Spanish III
		333	DE Physics	331	Earth and Space	412	English 12
		343	DE American Government 11	242	World Studies 10	422	STATS
		423	DE Pre-Calculus	252	French II	442	Economic & Personal Finance
		452	French IV	257	Spanish II	345	Psychology
		457	Spanish IV	232	Biology	434	DE Environmental Science

**Academic Honesty – Cheating and Plagiarism are strictly prohibited** and are considered a Violation of the Student Code of Conduct (see Section VIII: Student Code of Conduct Policies) in addition to receiving the failing grades listed below. If a student cheats or plagiarizes on an assignment, quiz, test, or project, the following will result:

- First Offense in a class will result in a zero on that assignment, test, quiz, or project & a Discipline Referral sent to the office.
- Second Offense, and Subsequent Offenses, in the same class, will result in a grade of 50% for the marking period & a Discipline Referral sent to the office.
- The progression of offenses listed above is treated separately for each class.

**Incomplete Grades** – An incomplete grade must be made up within fifteen (15) school days after the student's return to school. All incomplete work will receive a zero (0) and these grades will be averaged with all other completed work to give an official grade to replace the incomplete.

**Final Grades** – A final grade shall be given for all courses. The final grade shall be determined by averaging the percentage points received by a student for each nine-weeks grading period. The Valley Grove School District has adopted a policy that no student shall receive lower than 50% for a marking period grade on the report card at the high school level *for the first half of the course (the second half of the course the students will receive the grade they earn)* and 60% at the elementary level for the entire course.

**Report Cards** – VGSD operates on a nine-week grading period. Approximately one week after the end of a nine-week period, report cards will be sent home with each student. In addition to percentage grades, this report will include attendance and occasional teacher comments. Parents should pay particular attention to any major fluctuations in grades, and are encouraged to contact the school to schedule a conference to discuss concerns.

At the elementary level, the following Report Card Procedures are utilized:

- Parents or guardians must sign the report card envelope, which is then returned to school, confirming that they have seen the report – not necessarily meaning they agree with the report.
- Kindergarten students will receive regular communication throughout the year, therefore their individual student's report cards will be sent on a different schedule – end of the 12<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 36<sup>th</sup> weeks of school.
- Marking periods for the 2023-24 School Year (subject to change due to school cancellation)

Marking Period	Start Date	End Date
Marking PD 1	August 29th	November 1nd
Marking PD 2	November 2nd	January 22nd
Marking PD 3	January 23rd	April 3rd
Marking PD 4	April 4th	June 6th

**Progress Reports & Online Grading** – The purpose of Online Grading and Progress Reports are to inform the parents/guardians of the student's present status in his/her subjects. Online grades are available for each student and parent at any time and usually are current within a week (teachers update grades a minimum of once a week). To find the online grades, students and parents can log onto our website (<http://www.vgsd.org>) and find the quick link to the parent gradebook at the side of the page, please contact the school if you are having trouble or do not already have a login and password. Also, progress reports are often sent home with students at the mid-mark of any grading period in which the student's grade is a "D" or below or has dropped 10% or more from the previous grading period. Teachers may send progress reports at any other time they deem necessary. A parent may request progress reports at any time as well by contacting the Guidance Office.

**Course Withdrawals:** If a course is dropped beyond the first five (5) school days, it requires the signature of the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the principal, the counselor, and the teacher. A term failure (50%) will be recorded for the course if the course is dropped without the recommendation of the teacher and the administration.

#### **GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION** (Board Policy #215)

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for promotion and retention of students which assure that every effort will be made to remediate the student's difficulties before the student is retained. The recommendation of the classroom teacher shall be required for promotion or retention of a student. The building principal shall be assigned the final responsibility for determining the promotion or retention of each student.

A student shall be promoted when s/he has successfully completed the curriculum requirements and has achieved the academic standards established for the present level, based on the professional judgment of the teachers and the results of assessments. A student shall earn the right to advance to the next grade by demonstrating mastery of the required skills and knowledge.

In all cases of retention, the parents/guardians shall be fully involved and informed throughout the process. Parents/guardians and students shall be informed of the possibility of retention of a student well in advance. Academic achievement, attitude, effort, work habits, behavior, attendance and other factors related to learning shall be evaluated regularly and communicated to students and parents/guardians. The district shall utilize multiple measures of academic performance as determinants in promotion and retention decisions.

- In grades K-3, students may be retained for an additional year based on an individual review process through the Student Support Team (SST), involving parental and faculty input, and with administrative approval.
- In grades 4-6, students with an end of year average that is below 65% in 2 or more subjects may be retained. This will also be based on an individual review process through the Student Support Team (SST), involving parental and faculty input, and with administrative approval.
- In grades 7 & 8, if students fail a Keystone preparatory course or if students fail more than one course and do not remediate the course(s) through summer school (if offered) they may be retained.
- In grades 9-12, credits toward graduation begin to accumulate. Credits are awarded when a student successfully completes a course with a passing grade. To be promoted to grade 10, a student must have a minimum of 5 credits; to be promoted to grade 11, a student must have a minimum of 11 credits; and to become a senior, a student must have at least 17 credits.

#### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** (Board Policy #217)

The current graduation requirements can be found in the **Educational Planning Guide** for each track (Vocational, Traditional, and Accelerated). The **Educational Planning Guide** is available through the Guidance Office or the District Website. In grades 9-12, students need 24.5 credits and must fulfill requirements in subjects. These differ based on the students' educational tracts (see Educational Planning Guide).

#### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION** (Board Policy #117)

Whenever a student contracts a disability or an extended illness, a parent may request homebound instruction through the school office – up to five (5) hours per week. A form to request homebound can be obtained through the school office and must be completed by a physician or psychiatrist. The principal will review all requests for homebound instruction and those meeting the state required criteria will be forwarded to the Superintendent for approval.

#### **PARENT CONFERENCES** (Board Policy #917)

Teachers, Counselors, and Principals are available to meet with parents/guardians and students regarding academic, behavioral, emotional, and social problems or concerns. If parents desire a conference, they should contact their child's teacher via note, email, or phone call to the office; then arrangements will be made at the earliest possible time.

#### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION ADAPTATIONS**

Students are required to participate and pass physical education classes, as mandated by the state. All students are required to dress for Physical Education class in grades 7-12. Participation in class is mandatory. Students who come to class unprepared will be required to participate. If a student is required not to take Physical Education due to a medical reason, a **Physical Education Adaptation Request** form must be completed by a doctor, signed by the parent/guardian, and submitted to the teacher. Students will be excused from class only under extreme circumstances. Please note, students who have an injury or illness may be excused from certain activities, but it **does not** exempt them from class altogether and participation in physical education, often alternative assignments will be assigned. To be excused for more than one class, the instructor must receive the Physical Education Adaptation Request form completed by the physician. If your doctor doesn't want you to participate at all, then he/she must indicate that on the adaptive P.E. request form. Otherwise your doctor should indicate what you can do in P.E. class (walk, bike, etc). Parent notes will not be accepted as an excuse from participating in P.E.

#### **SUMMER SCHOOL** (Board Policy #124)

While there is no guarantee, it is possible that a summer school program may be offered. This program is designed for remedial work and the courses offered depend upon the needs of the students and the availability of the staff. If the program is offered, it will provide an opportunity for the student to make up credit for failed courses. A fee may be charged to the student for each course taken in Summer School. Please note, the highest possible grade to be earned on a transcript during summer school will be 65%. Any subject passed by attending summer school will be accepted for credit only and will be recorded as a passing grade through summer school.

### **SECTION VI: Extra-Curricular Activities / Athletics** (Board Policy #122 & #123)

#### **ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**

As a member of a Rocky Grove Athletic Team or Extracurricular Activity in Valley Grove School District, a student has a more visible role and therefore is expected to maintain a level of behavior that is representative of the school. For more specific details regarding athletics and extracurricular activities, please refer to the guidelines found in the Athletic Policy (available on our website or through the athletic office) and the PIAA Handbook (available on the PIAA website). A parent who has any reason to question the physical condition of his/her daughter/son shall assume the responsibility of a physical examination from their family physician. All participants in athletics are required to supply proof of insurance. In addition, any student who is listed as having a physical handicap of any kind will be asked to bring a release from their family doctor. Questions can always be directed to the athletic director or principal. Any student assigned to an alternative school may not participate in extracurricular activities at RGHS during that time.



Eligibility requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Meet the requirements as outlined by the PIAA or other governing body. These may include being the appropriate age and maintaining amateur status.
- Pass the physical examination if required for the activity (**see PIAA Athletic Physicals by clicking "Athletics Information" on the Athletics page**).
- Receive parental permission to participate.
- Maintain passing grades equivalent to a minimum of four credits and be failing no more than one class.
- Attend a full day of school to practice or compete on that day.
- Maintain regular school attendance. **Twenty days of absence in a semester causes a student to become ineligible.**

Student representatives will:

- Not use non-prescribed drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.
- Not use profanity.
- Treat game/event officials courteously and accept their judgment with sportsmanship.
- Maintain academic eligibility.
- Maintain an acceptable attendance according to District Truancy Policy.
- Abide by all school rules as well as league and PIAA and event rules.
- Represent our school well when visiting other schools or events.
- Participate in all practices and contests in a competitive and sportsmanlike manner.

## **ADVERTISING**

**Announcements** – Student announcements are made daily over the public address system. If a student wishes to have an announcement made regarding school activities, he/she must have the announcement initiated by the advisor. **Posters and Signs** – The principal must approve all posters and signs. Generally these will be restricted to advertising school functions. Persons posting the signs and posters are responsible for their removal and for cleanup of the area used. Candidates for school or club officers should check with the administration concerning the number and size of signs to be posted. Any non-school sponsored information must have a visible stamp indicating it has been registered with the principal.

## **DANCE REGULATIONS** (and other events of this nature – Concerts, Rock-a-Thon, etc.) (Board Policy #231)

Any student organization planning a dance must work with their advisor to obtain approval for the dance through the principal, superintendent, and school board. It is important that this procedure begin early (2 months minimum) to allow for all necessary approvals prior to the date of the dance. There must be approved adult chaperones at each school-sponsored dance. The activity advisor will be in attendance and may have parents and/or other teachers to assist him/her. Students' guests, who are not RGHS students, may attend if they have been properly registered by completing the student guest form prior to the dance. All school regulations, especially those dealing with smoking, alcohol, and drugs will be strictly enforced. Students leaving the dance will not be permitted to re-enter. Any student misconduct may result in exclusion from further extra-curricular activities. Students who are 21 years of age or older and not enrolled in VGSD may not attend a dance (including homecoming and prom).

## **FIELD TRIPS** (Board Policy #121)

School sponsored field trips are held as part of the educational program. It is the expectation that any work due that day is turned in prior to leaving for the day. All trips will be chaperoned by a member or members of the faculty. In addition, a permission slip signed by the parent or guardian will be required of all students participating. Students are expected to use common sense and follow instructions from their teacher and adult chaperones. While on field trips, all school rules apply. Students not in good standing in terms of behavior, attendance, or grades may lose the privilege to attend a field trip.

## **FUNDRAISING & SELLING ITEMS AT SCHOOL** (Board Policy #229 & #618)

Before a school-sponsored activity can sell any product in the school or community, it must secure approval from the School Board. No products are to be sold by individuals during school time without prior administrative approval. No food items may be sold in or near the cafeteria immediately prior to or during lunch periods. In accordance with the District's Wellness Policy, no individually wrapped food items may be sold during the school day. For more information regarding the Valley Grove Wellness Policy, go to [www.vgisd.org](http://www.vgisd.org) (School Board Policy #246).

## **INSURANCE** (Board Policy #211)

- **Athletic Insurance** – It is required that any students participating in athletics carry some form of accident insurance. Students must provide proof of accident insurance coverage or an equivalent medical insurance policy prior to participation in any interscholastic athletic or extra-curricular activity. Head coaches are responsible for ensuring that all participants demonstrate proof of coverage before an athlete is permitted to practice or engage in athletic competition. Any student without insurance will need to purchase the Student Accident Insurance (see below) in order to participate.
- **District Insurance Policies** – VGSD does provide a \$25,000 maximum of benefits for accidental medical expense for the interscholastic sport of senior high football; and VGSD provides a \$1,000,000 medical expense benefit for interscholastic sports, cheerleaders, gym classes, student managers/trainers, coaches, intramural sports, and non-extra-curricular activities. This policy has a \$25,000 deductible amount prior to payment of claims. Both policies will pay the first one hundred dollars of the eligible expenses incurred, subject to the deductible amount and coinsurance percentage (if any). Additional expenses will be paid only when they are in excess of amounts payable by any other Health Care Plan. Claim payments are subject to the terms and conditions of each policy.
- **Student Accident Insurance** – VGSD annually selects one insurance company to make available to interested students an accident insurance policy. The selection of this company does not represent the district's endorsement of the company's product, but rather makes available the purchase of group accident insurance at group-discounted rates. The enrollment packets are posted online on the district website. Students wanting to purchase this insurance must follow the instructions in the enrollment packet and return the packet to the homeroom teacher or school office. Upon notification from the insurance company, a letter acknowledging acceptance of enrollment will be mailed to the parent of the student applying for the insurance. If notification is not received within a reasonable period of time, parents should call the District Business Office (814-432-4919) to inquire into the status of their child's enrollment.

## **VOLUNTEERS AND CLEARANCES** (based on Act 153 of 2014)

All position volunteers in the Valley Grove School District are required to obtain Act 34 and Act 151 clearances, plus either the Act 153 Volunteer Affirmation Form or Act 114 (FBI) Clearance and prior school board approval. The clearances must be kept updated in order to participate as a position volunteer and have direct contact with children. Direct Contact is defined as the possibility of care, supervision, guidance or control of children or routine interaction with children. A position volunteer is defined as an adult holding an unpaid position with the school as a person responsible for the child's welfare or having direct volunteer contact with children.

All guest volunteers need Act 34 and 151 clearances as well as prior administrative approval and are to be supervised at all times in the building. Guest volunteers are defined as an adult who voluntarily provides services to the district, without compensation, who (1) works directly under the supervision and direction of a school administrator, teacher, or other member of the school staff, and (2) does not have care, supervision, guidance, or control of students and routine interaction with students.



**SCHOLASTIC RE-EDUCATION PROGRAM (SRE)**

Placement in the Scholastic Re-Education Program will be considered when a student is not in good standing in two or more of the following areas: behavior, attendance, and academics. Typically, if a student displays excessive levels of behavior they will be referred to the SAP team for evaluation. Those students who have been assigned to the program may not participate in extracurricular activities at RGHS.

**CYBER SERVICES PROGRAM** (Board Policy #124)

Please refer to the Cyber Services Program Handbook for specific guidelines (available through the school offices). The Valley Grove School District operates a cyber program by using a series of providers (Edgenuity, etc.). Anyone interested in this program should contact the school principal to set up a meeting to discuss the program.

**FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM** (Board Policy #808)

**Compliance Statement** – In the operation of the National School Lunch Program, no child shall be denied benefits or be otherwise discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

**School Meal Program (Free & Reduced Applications)** – Prior to the beginning of the school year, students qualifying under the Direct Certification Program will automatically be approved for free meals. Applications for Free and Reduced Meals can be made online on the VGSD website using the Food Service Information link under the parents tab (Hard copy applications are available by request in each school's nurses office). A household is required to complete only one application listing all of the students in the household who attend Valley Grove Schools. Read and follow the detailed instruction sheet that accompanies the application. If you experience a decrease in your income status or increase in household members you may fill out an application at any time during the school year. Once the application has been submitted and reviewed, the school will notify the parents/guardians, in writing, of the results (free, reduced or denied). National School Lunch Program guidelines require students who received free or reduced meals in the previous school year to submit a new application within the first 30 days of the following school year. If a new application is not submitted within this time period the student will return to a full paid status.

**Nutritional & Emotional Development** – The school cafeteria has been provided in the interest of the nutritional and emotional development of students. Meals provided meet the requirements of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. In an effort to promote good health habits and to adhere to the district's Wellness Policy, lunches brought from home should reflect this same nutritional value; therefore, students are discouraged from bringing only foods of minimal nutritional value such as pop and candy to school. Meals should contain not greater than 30% total fat and 10% saturated fat. Daily caloric intake for lunch and breakfast has been established for various grade levels as follows:

**Lunch (33% of RDA) Breakfast (25% of RDA)**

<b>Grades Pre K-5</b>	550-650 calories	350-500 calories
<b>Grades 6-8</b>	600-700 calories	400-550 calories
<b>Grades 9-12</b>	750-850 calories	450-600 calories

**Point of Sale**

**Identification Cards** – An identification swipe card will be provided to each student. Students may use the swipe card or enter their six digit identification number manually at the cashier station. Please remind your child not to divulge their identification number to others. A safeguard to our system is the inclusion of a student picture to protect the student's account.

**Payment of Meals** – Students are encouraged to prepay several meals at a time rather than pay for individual meals daily. It is not necessary to prepay in cost per meal increments. The system will handle a check in any amount. Please keep the following in mind when making prepayments: Credit/debit card payments made online will generally be available to your student's account within 20 minutes. Depending on the payment source and your bank, there may be a delay of 1-2 days before the transaction appears on your bank statement. If only the negative balance is prepaid, the account becomes negative again at the next meal purchase. Payment for meals can be accomplished in the following three ways with method 1 and 2 being the preferred methods of payment:

- Prepayment prior to classes in the cafeteria prior to classes. Checks are the preferred method of payment for tracking purposes.
- Prepayment on the Internet ([www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com)) for secure online pre payments via credit/debit card. This is a 24/7 self-service access to balances and transaction history and low balance email notification based on your pre-set levels.
- Payment at cashier. This method should be used as a last resort because it slows down the lunch line.

**Student Account Balances** – Student account balance can be obtained by two methods.

- Via the Internet ([www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com)). Six months of transactions can be viewed as well as the current balance.
- Request to cashier or Food Service Director.

**School Meal Charges and Accounts**

To ensure the effective operation of the district's food service program, the district establishes the following guidelines for payment of student school meals:

- The district shall assign individual accounts to each student for the purchase of meals served in school cafeterias, which ensure that the identity of each student is protected. The district utilizes PrimeroEdge Point of Sale software in the School Nutrition Program where individual student accounts are created. Each account has a unique PIN number and student photo to ensure accuracy in managing the collection of payments.
- The district shall notify parents/guardians when the student's account reaches a negative balance. Parents and/or guardians of students with a negative account balance are notified by Robocall two (2) times per week. If funds are not received in a timely manner, individual phone calls are placed by the Food Service Director to arrange payment.
- The district shall provide parents/guardians with information on payment options and free and reduced-price meals and/or free milk.

**Legal Recovery of Funds** – The school district reserves the right to file a complaint via the legal system to recover negative account balances that are inactive and where no effort has been made to satisfy the negative balance. If the student's household is experiencing financial problems, please complete an application for the Free and Reduced Price Household Meal Benefit. This will allow the district to determine if the student qualifies for the program.

**Special Conditions:** Cashier pop-up warnings can be entered into student accounts with pop-ups such as diabetic, allergic to peanuts, or meal only-no snacks. Please contact the Food Service Director if a pop-up is required.

**Educational Trips** – A brown bag lunch, meeting the nutritional guidelines, is available to students when they are away on a school-sponsored educational field trip. Students should order the brown bag lunch the day before the field trip so it will be ready for pick up in the cafeteria the next morning before the trip

**Disposition of Account Balances** – Positive account balances at the end of the school year are automatically rolled over to the next school year. If a student is withdrawing or graduating, parents/guardians should contact the Food Services Department of their child's school prior to the last day of attendance to reconcile their child's account.

**Bonus Meals** – Upon making a payment (\$50 regular priced meal/\$9 reduced priced meal) a bonus meal will be added to the student account. When an account shows a negative balance at the time of payment this negative balance will reduce the amount of the payment below the amount that is necessary to receive a bonus meal. To receive the bonus meal when an account is showing a negative balance the negative amount must be added to the amounts listed to receive a bonus meal.

**School Breakfast Program** – The school breakfast program operates each school day. Breakfast is served beginning at 7:15 A.M. at the high school and 7:55AM at the elementary school. Students are not permitted to use "eating/getting breakfast" as an excuse for being late to class. There are three pricing categories for breakfast: paid, reduced-price, and free.

**Insufficient Funds** – Payment by checks that are returned to the district due to insufficient funds, result in penalty charges to the district by the bank. These penalty charges are the responsibility of the person issuing the check and will be invoiced to the issuer of the check by the school district. Therefore if you issue a bad check to the school district, you will receive an invoice for the amount of the check plus penalties and fees charged by the bank.

#### **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST** (Board Policy #112, #113, & #146)

School psychologists provide a range of services to assist children and adolescents in their learning, growth and development by providing supportive services to help students meet academic and emotional challenges. School Psychological services consist of direct and indirect interventions that require involvement with the entire educational system, including the students, teachers, counselors, administrators, other school personnel, families, community agencies, and a variety of others that may be important on an individual basis. School Psychologists tailor their services to the particular needs of each child/adolescent and each situation. Some of the core services of a School Psychologist include: Consultation Assessment Intervention Education and Prevention. School psychologists provide psychoeducational evaluation and facilitate mental health support in the schools, while at the same time supporting the learning process, child development and the understanding of educational systems. School psychologists work closely in conjunction with school counselors, nurses and administrators in the delivery of services to address the educational, emotional and social needs of students and families.

#### **GUIDANCE SERVICES PROGRAM** (Board Policy #112 & #146)

The purpose of the Guidance Services Program is to assist students in obtaining the maximum value from school attendance. Students have, in addition to his/her classroom teachers, counselors who they see for counseling and assistance. The mission of the guidance counselor is to provide students with effective services that will maximize student learning.

**Elementary School Counseling** – The elementary school counseling program is designed to address the emotional, social and personal development of students alongside the academic growth that is taking place in the classrooms. This program is collaborative with all educational services in order to provide additional support to the students of Valley Grove. The school counseling program is implemented through three main service areas: classroom guidance lessons, small group counseling and short-term individual counseling. Classroom guidance lessons reach 100% of the student population and teach students a variety of topics including character education, technology use and safety, bully prevention, diversity and tolerance, career awareness and many more. Small group counseling is available to students who are experiencing similar concerns on a given topic (grief and loss, parent separation/divorce, anxiety, social skills, anger management, etc.). Parent/guardian permission is required for students to participate in these groups. Students may also be referred for short-term individual counseling as deemed necessary by parents/guardians and teachers. If additional services are needed beyond the scope of the school counseling program, or as a cooperative function, a Student Assistance Program (SAP) referral may be made. The school counseling program is for all students, and is developmental, preventative and proactive.

#### **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM**

The Student Support Team (SST) at the elementary school is designed to collaboratively plan for students identified by their teachers as struggling in the educational setting in a variety of ways - including, but not limited to, academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. Members of this team include the school principals, school psychologist, school counselor, the identified student's teacher, Title I support, and Student Assistance Program (SAP) trained personnel. This team meets regularly to discuss particular needs of students and to provide them with the type of academic, behavioral, communication, social, and emotional support and interventions essential for their success. Parents are valuable members of this team since they know their child best. Throughout the SST process, the team forms a communication bridge between the school and the home.

**Secondary School Counseling** – Students may make an appointment to see the counselor during study hall. When the counselor is not in the office, students may leave a note for the counselor or register for an appointment by alerting the office secretaries. Students are encouraged to visit the Guidance Department for assistance regarding college selections and applications, scholarships, national testing programs, academic problems, registration for the coming year, and vocational and career information. Counselors may require students to come for an appointment when it appears that achievement or behavior is such that there may be problems of adjustment or placement. Conferences are designed to help students make wise decisions regarding peer relationships, academic planning, and future/college planning. The Guidance Department furnishes students with a variety of career materials. Students are encouraged to use the Career Resources available through the district (VTDC Career Counselor, Vo-Tech, ASVAB, Transition Coordinator, etc.). From the time they enter high school, all students are encouraged to think seriously about vocations and are urged to use the wealth of material provided for them. Below is a list of a few items the guidance counselor can assist with at the high school (please note the guidance counselor is not limited to just working in these areas):

- Assistance in scheduling and planning a student's curricular program
- Assistance in making plans for after high school
- Assistance in vocational planning
- Scholarship Information
- Counseling for students who need help with personal, social, and educational problems
- Individual & group testing
- Parental conferences regarding student progress
- Referrals to outside agencies
- Assistance and coordination of services through SAP

#### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)** (Board Policy #236)

The purpose of the SAP program is to help identify students who may be struggling and provide them with appropriate support services through school resources and outside agencies. This program is mainly focused on the high school level and consists of many people working together as a team to assist students who are struggling academically, socially, behaviorally, or with attendance. This team of people meets regularly (typically twice a month) and includes the administration, school psychologist, teachers, guidance

counselor, school nurse, and a liaison from Venango County Children, Youth, and Family Services. Each member of the team has received formal training in understanding adolescent chemical use, abuse, and dependency, as well as adolescent depression and suicide.

Certain students in the district can be classified as being “at risk” relative to expected performance in school when measuring their achievement against their abilities. The district recognizes that these students may need some form of intervention in order to prevent, ameliorate, or deviate from harmful behaviors. The SAP Liaison from Venango County Family Services and Children’s Aid Society will perform an initial evaluation on students referred to the program and will then make a recommendation to the team on how to proceed with interventions, utilizing resources both inside and outside the school setting. The SAP team collects data throughout the school year, tracking each student’s success in academics, attendance, behavior, and social relationships. The SAP team evaluates referrals made to them by faculty, parents, students, or any other source. Should a need be established, then the team serves as a referral source to assist the student in getting appropriate help as soon as possible. This help could consist of individual counseling or follow-up, participation in one of the various “groups” that meet at the school to address common problems, or referral to an outside agency. If you feel like your child could benefit from this program, please contact the guidance counselor immediately.

### **SCHEDULING GUIDELINES**

The scheduling of classes for the upcoming school year at the high school level generally begins early in the spring. Students have an opportunity to meet with the counselor on an individual basis and plan an appropriate schedule of classes based upon State and District guidelines, and individual needs. We urge all students to discuss course selections with their current teachers. Students having conflicts are requested to submit their problems in writing to the guidance counselor on the schedule change form, with parent/guardian and teacher, and changes will then be considered. Requests should be submitted in accordance with the timeline as established in the cover letter from the guidance office. Students desiring schedule changes which impact their curricular focus, and hence their graduation requirements, should make an appointment with the guidance counselor any time prior to the first day of the new school year. If the counselor is not available during the summer months, the student should leave a message with the office secretary. The administration reserves the right to make schedule changes deemed to be in the best interest of the student(s), the school class schedule, to meet graduation requirements, or as an attempt to balance class sizes. Below is a list of guidelines that will be followed in regards to changes in schedules:

- Classes will not be changed to accommodate requests to be in specific periods, rooms with friends, or to have specific teachers.
- Requests to change lunch periods will not be honored.
- In any event, requests to drop/add a course should be completed by the end of the second week of the school year/course.
- The dropping of a course during the regular school year (after the second week) will be handled on an individual basis and normally will result in a failing grade being entered on the student’s record if after the second week of the course. Permission to drop the course will require parental, faculty, and administrative approval.
- The addition of courses may be accomplished contingent upon how much time has elapsed from the beginning of the course, the current enrollment numbers, and will require parental, faculty, and administrative approval.

A form is available online on the RGHS Guidance page for requesting a schedule change. No schedule changes will occur during Open House or on the First Day of School.

### **EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES (WORKING PAPERS)**

The PA State School Code states employment certificates are of two (2) classes: General Employment and Vacation Employment. General Employment Certificates entitle a minor, 16 to 18 years of age, to work during the entire year. Vacation Employment Certificates entitle a minor 12 to 14 years of age to work as a caddy and minors 14 to 16 years of age to work any day except as such times he/she is required to be in school. Students who are 14 years of age may apply. To obtain an employment certificate, a parent/guardian must appear at the office of the high school with a Birth Certificate to request the issuance of an employment certificate. The application must be signed by the parent/guardian in the presence of the issuing officer. Further procedures will be explained at that time.

### **HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM** (Board Policy #146, #203, #203.1, #209, #210, #210.1, #234, & #246)

#### **HEALTH FORMS**

Student Health Information forms are distributed to students the first day of school and must be returned to the health room the next day of school. Special Health issues or limitations must be accompanied by medical documentation in order to keep health records current.

#### **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

As mandated by **Pennsylvania School Code Section(s) 23.1 – 23.11**, Growth, Dental, Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis Screenings are provided to students as follows:

- Dental – Grades Pre K, K/1, 3, and 7 or age equivalent.
- Growth – Grades Pre K, K/1, 6, and 11 or age equivalent
- Scoliosis – Grades 6 and 7 or age equivalent as long as no severe injuries or illness
- Hearing – Grades Pre K, K, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11 or age equivalent
- Vision – All grades

You may choose to have the growth and/or dental exams completed by the School Physician and School Dentist or by your child’s health care provider. If documentation is not submitted by your child’s health care provider and/or dentist; your child will be scheduled to have the required exams completed by the school physician and/or school dentist. You may submit a written request to the school nurse if you do not want your child to receive the exams listed above.

#### **ATHLETIC PHYSICALS**

Athletic exams are scheduled in coordination with the School Physician and the PIAA calendar. All athletic exams must be completed on the CIPPE – PIAA form, which is located on the RGHS website, under student forms, or through the nurse’s office. Students who have a documented athletic physical exam for the current school year will be re-certified for subsequent sports, unless an injury has occurred since the original exam which will need clearance from a physician to be recertified. Students are not permitted to begin practice until approval has been granted by the passing of an athletic exam, and the exam is on file with the Athletic Director.

#### **MEDICATIONS**

The school nurse is **ONLY** permitted to administer medications that are prescribed by a licensed provider. Those medications may include asthma inhalers, epi-pens and antibiotics. The following is a list of medications that can be administered at school with parent permission by grade level:

- **Grades Pre K-3:** Medications will **ONLY** be administered as prescribed by a physician. Cough drops are not dispensed.
- **Grades 4-6 Only:** Acetaminophen (Tylenol) Adult and Children’s and non-mentholated cough drops may be administered to students **ONLY** if a parent/guardian has indicated permission on their child’s health information form.
- **Grades 7-12 Only:** Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), non-mentholated cough drops, and Tums may be administered to students **ONLY** if a parent/guardian has indicated permission on their child’s health information form.

**\*\*\*In order for any medication (not from the School) to be administered to a student by the nurse during the school day, the following guidelines must be followed:**

- The parent/guardian **must** submit a written order from the prescribing physician which includes the purpose of the medication, the dosage, the time at which to administer, the length of the period in which the medication is to be administered, and the possible side effects.
- The parent/guardian **must** grant written permission through a signature for the medication to be administered.
- The medication **must** be in the original pharmacy labeled container, which indicates the child's name, name of medication, dosage, frequency.
- The medication **must** be brought to the school by the parent/guardian and delivered to the nurse.
- Students are **not permitted to carry medication** on their person, with the exception of Asthma Inhalers. Students are permitted to carry and use inhalers in a responsible manner as needed. Asthma Inhalers must be registered at the health room with appropriate paperwork.
- Medication forms **must** be renewed each school year.

**LICE (PEDICULOSIS) INFESTATION POLICY**

The ultimate goal of this school district is to have all students attending our schools be free from both head lice and nits by adopting a "NO NITS " policy. Our immediate goal is to contain the problem before it becomes widespread and to minimize any disruption to the students' education. Under these guidelines, a student who is found to have head lice or nits **will be sent home immediately** for treatment and removal of nits. The student will NOT be permitted to return to school until he/she is nit and lice free as determined by the school nurse. Students may not ride the bus until determined to be lice/nit free. Parents must accompany the student or make arrangements to be checked **before** he/she reports to class. Parents will be instructed as necessary regarding identification of nits and adult lice, proper treatment, and the need for daily hair inspections by parents. Additional school inspections may occur as necessary to assure the student does not become reinfected. **Three (3) days maximum** are permitted to treat this condition and in most cases the student should be able to return the next school day following treatment. Additional days will be considered illegal absences. Extensions may be granted one day at a time with daily inspections by the school nurse or other designee. After the third day of illegal absence, the absenteeism will be referred to the district magistrate for further truancy action. **Six (6) days maximum (2 occurrences)/semester are permitted to treat this condition.**

**ILLNESS**

Please report all cases of illness to your child's school. Below is a list of illnesses and the exclusion period that is required by the school district in order to contain the disease from spreading. If you have any questions concerning this list please contact the school nurse.

Illness	Exclusion Period
Chicken Pox	5 days from the appearance of the first crop of vesicles/when all lesions have dried and crusted whichever is sooner.
Measles (9 day) Rubella	4 days from onset of rash
Strep Throat (Includes Scarlet Fever)	Doctor's Release/24 hours from start of appropriate therapy/no fever.
*Whooping Cough	3 weeks from onset or 5 days from the start of appropriate therapy.
Acute Conjunctivitis	24 hours after the start of antibiotic/NO discharge.
*Rubella (3 day)	4 days from onset of rash.
*Mumps	9 days – No fever/no swelling
Ringworm	First application of medication and covered
Impetigo	24 hours after starting appropriate therapy
Scabies	After treatment
Pinworms	After completion of dose prescribed medication.

**Passes to the Nurse's Office** – A student becoming ill during the school day should report to the nurse **after first reporting to their assigned area**. All students reporting to the nurse must have a pass. When the nurse is not available, students who are ill should report to the office. Parents/guardians will be notified at the judgment of the nurse/office. Students are not permitted to loiter in the nurse's office or leave the building without written permission. If a student leaves without permission, he/she will be considered illegally leaving school and face discipline and truancy proceedings. Students returning to class must have a pass signed by the nurse or by the office.

**SECTION VIII: Student Code of Conduct Policies**

*The Valley Grove School Board acknowledges that student conduct is closely related to learning; an effective instructional program requires a wholesome and orderly school environment. The efficiency of the educational program is reflected, in part, in the behavior of students and employees. The policy of VGSD is that strict and impartial discipline is essential to: (a) insure the effective performance of the school's primary function of education and (b) promote the development of responsible, well-behaved, courteous, and honest young people who have respect for the rights and property of others.*

The Board shall require all members of this district to adhere to the rules and regulations established by the Board and administration, and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of those rules. As provided by Section 510 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, the Student Code of Conduct and applicable consequences apply to student behavior when students are going to and returning from school and school-sponsored events.

Such rules shall require that students:

- conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior;
- respect the rights, person, and property of others;
- have themselves well-groomed and neatly dressed at all times;
- preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged; and
- obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

Teachers are expected to handle their own discipline problems as much as possible. Every effort will be made to secure the cooperation and interest of parents or guardians in serious or persistent disciplinary situations. Administration should be alerted, and conferences shall be arranged with the parents or guardians as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct section below.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS)** (Board Policy #113.2)

The Valley Grove School District continues to promote appropriate behaviors through the adoption of the school-wide Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Program. Both the high school and elementary school administration and staff have been working for the past several years to support the implementation of the program. Both

schools continue to train and develop their model of the program to best meet the needs of each individual student. If you are interested in helping this cause, please contact the school administration to serve on a committee, donate resources, or provide feedback. The District's PBIS Program is an important, positive, component of the District's response to inappropriate student behavior. However, the disciplinary provisions of the Student Code of Conduct are nonetheless enforceable when necessary to address more severe or consistent patterns of inappropriate student behavior.

**Grades Pre K-6 Procedures** - The Elementary PBIS Team has worked to develop a rewards-based system to encourage positive behavior. When any elementary employee notices that a student is displaying SOAR behaviors (Safety, Ownership, Attitude, Respect), he/she will give the student a "Nest Ticket." These tickets are collected by grade levels. One "Nest Ticket Winner" is selected each week from each grade level to choose a prize from the "SOAR Store." Other rewards may be given out to individual students, classrooms, and grade-levels throughout the school year, based on their positive behavior and as deemed appropriate by the PBIS Team and administration. Students who are not displaying positive and/or appropriate behavior will be redirected using a variety of means, including, but not limited to, reteaching, reparation, loss of privilege, or another form of redirection. When necessary, the teacher will make a recommendation to the Student Support Team (SST) regarding the student's negative behavior. The SST will then support the classroom teacher and student by utilizing and monitoring positive behavior support techniques, strategies and interventions. When necessary, the SST will reconvene to monitor and review the student's progress and to determine if additional or other supports are necessary.

**Grades Pre K – 6 PBIS Team Rules** - Safety, Ownership, Attitude, and Respect (SOAR) - Please refer to the behavior matrix at the end of this handbook.

**Grades 7-12 Procedures** - The High School PBIS Team is working to develop a rewards-based system to encourage positive behavior. Other rewards may be given out to individual students, classrooms, and grade-levels throughout the school year, based on their positive behavior and as deemed appropriate by the PBIS Team and administration. Students who are not displaying positive and/or appropriate behavior will be redirected using a variety of means, including, but not limited to, reteaching, reparation, loss of privilege, or another form of redirection. When necessary, the teacher will make a recommendation to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) regarding the student's negative behavior. SAP will support the teacher(s) and student by utilizing and monitoring positive behavior support techniques, strategies and interventions. When necessary, The SAP Liaison will monitor and review the student's progress and to determine if additional or other supports are necessary.

### **3 STRIKES RULE**

The 3 Strikes Rule is part of the PBIS process where minor disruptive behaviors are attempted to be corrected with warnings (strike 1) & alternative classroom management techniques (strike 2), prior to the student receiving a discipline referral resulting in detention. This technique is not a requirement to use; it is an option that grants students some leeway to correct problem behaviors prior to being referred to the office.

If any component of the PBIS process is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct, the District has the right to enforce the Code of Conduct consequences against the student.

### **PROCEDURES & POLICIES RELATED TO CONDUCT**

**Assembly Procedures** – The purpose of assemblies is to provide the students with an enjoyable educational experience. The student's responsibility is to enjoy the presentation and show respect to those people making the presentation. The procedure for reporting to assemblies will be announced before the assembly. Students are required to sit with their assigned class/homeroom (this is vitally important so that students can always be accounted for in case of an emergency situation).

**Cafeteria Procedures** – Time spent in the cafeteria can provide pleasant, social, and emotional outlets. In order to provide a positive atmosphere, students should respect the rights of others and use manners and common sense while in the cafeteria. Students will use the cafeteria facilities in a mature manner and will meet the following standards of responsible behavior:

- Students must report to the cafeteria during assigned lunch periods and may not leave without proper authorization.
- Vo-tech Students must report to the cafeteria within 5 minutes of their arrival on returning to RGHS.
- Students must follow procedures as instructed by the cafeteria staff and teachers/monitors on duty.
- It is expected that all students will maintain the cleanliness of the cafeteria by placing refuse (not utensils) in the proper receptacles.
- Students are responsible for the cleanliness of the area and are to clean up all litter/food on or around their table in which they eat.
- Students are also expected to return all materials used to the proper location, including returning their own tray and disposing of trash.
- Students must obtain permission from the teacher/monitor on duty and sign-out properly before using the restroom, reporting to a classroom, or going to the main office.
- Students are to talk in a conversational tone, and are not permitted to make excessive noise (yelling, pounding tables, clapping, etc.).
- Students may be assigned seats for disciplinary action. Misconduct may result in loss of other cafeteria privileges as well.
- No food or drink (except bottled water) is to be consumed outside of the cafeteria during the school day without prior authorization and/or unless required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Outside deliveries from any outside vendor, parents, or guardians are against our wellness policy and violate our Federal Lunch Program Regulations and are therefore strictly prohibited!
- Students are not permitted to be in the cafeteria during any lunch period that is not on their schedule, unless administratively approved.

**Care of School Property** (Board Policy #224) – Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, lockers, equipment (including computers/software, and other computer equipment), and furniture supplied by the school. Students found responsible for destruction, vandalism, defacing, or losing school property will face both disciplinary consequences (according to this handbook) and replacement/cleaning costs for restoring the school property to its prior state. The property may include, but is not limited to the following items:

- **Textbooks** – All students must assume full responsibility for the care of the books lent to them. Books are issued by the subject teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the school year or withdrawal from school. Responsibility for textbooks rests with the student to whom the textbook is issued. If a book is damaged, the student is required to pay damage charges up to the original price of the book, depending on the degree of damage and the condition of the book when it was issued. Students will be assessed \$10.00 for each book assigned to them that requires it be rebound in order to be used the next year. If a textbook is misused, a fine will be imposed. If a textbook is lost, the student will pay the current cost of replacing the same textbook. Loss of a book due to theft or other circumstances will not be accepted as an excuse for non-payment.
- **Computers** – Damage or unauthorized use of software or hardware on the computer system could result in students being asked to pay for the cost of correcting the system. Students should only be using the software provided by the school.
- **Furniture, Walls, & Windows** – Students shall not mark, break, or damage school furniture, walls, windows, ceiling, floors, or equipment with pen, pencil, paint, or any other instrument.
- **Tampering with Emergency Equipment** – Students shall not tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems.

*\*Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students will be referred to the proper law enforcement agency.*

**Classroom Sign-Out Procedures** (Grades 7-12) – Anytime a student leaves the classroom, he/she is required to sign out via the e-hallpass system. No one is to be excused from class except in case of an emergency. Only one person at a time is to be excused from a room at a time.

The list of guidelines below outlines the procedures for using the restroom:

- Students will be permitted to use the restroom during class in case of emergency only. It is assumed emergencies happen rarely.
- Students are to use the restroom nearest their classroom.
- Restrooms are to be used only for the purpose intended – Any other usage such as smoking, loitering, use of cell phones, or hiding from school personnel will be subject to disciplinary action ranging from detention up through referrals for expulsion, depending on the severity of the behavior.
- Restrooms can be used by signing out of study halls with permission from the teacher as long as only one student is signed out at a time.
- Remember, the restrooms are there for your convenience, so please report any restroom damage or malfunction immediately to staff.

**COMPUTER NETWORK & INTERNET USE GUIDELINES/ “ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY”** (Board Policy #815 & #815.1) – Internet and computer network access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional networks. The operation of the internet and the computer network relies heavily on the proper conduct of the users, who must adhere to strict guidelines. Internet and computer network access is a privilege, not a right. If a district user violates any of the acceptable use provisions outlined in this document, his/her account will be terminated and future access will be denied. Some violations may also constitute a criminal offense and may result in legal action. Any user violating these provisions, applicable state and federal laws, or posted classroom and district policies, is subject to loss of access privileges and any other District disciplinary options. The following list guides computer network and internet use by all members of Valley Grove School District:

- **Acceptable Use**
  - Must be in support of education and research consistent with district policy.
  - Must be consistent with the rules appropriate to any network being used/accessed.
  - Unauthorized use of copyrighted material is prohibited.
  - Accessing or forwarding threatening or obscene material is prohibited.
  - Distribution of material protected by trade secrets is prohibited.
  - Use for commercial activities is prohibited.
  - Product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- **Privileges**
  - Access to the internet and computer network is not a right, but a privilege.
  - Unacceptable usage will result in cancellation of account.
  - Training will be provided for each individual applying for an account, as necessary.
- **Etiquette**
  - Be polite.
  - Do not use vulgar or obscene language.
  - Use caution when revealing your address or phone number (or those of others).
  - Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.
  - Do not intentionally disrupt the network or other users.
  - Abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette.
- **Security**
  - If you identify a security problem, notify a system administrator immediately.
  - Do not show or identify a security problem to others.
  - Do not reveal your account password or allow another person to use your account.
  - Do not use another individual's account.
  - Attempts to login as another user will result in cancellation of privileges.
  - Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.
  - Users must notify the district system administrator of any change in account information.
  - Users may be occasionally required to update registration, password and account information in order to continue Internet access.
- **Vandalism/Harassment**
  - Use of the system to engage in vandalism and/or harassment as defined in this section will result in the cancellation of the offending user's account.
  - Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data, or another user, the Internet or other networks. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and/or uploading computer viruses.
  - Harassment is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user or the interference in another user's work. This includes, but is not limited to, the sending of unwanted mail.
- **Penalties**
  - Any user violating these provisions, applicable state and federal laws or posted classroom and district rules is subject to loss of network privileges and any other District disciplinary options, including criminal prosecution.
  - School and district administrators will make the final determination as to what constitutes unacceptable use and their decision is final.
- **Access to Information.** Students are prohibited from accessing the following categories of material or information on the Internet or World Wide Web:
  - material that is profane or obscene;
  - material that is pornographic, expressly including child pornography;
  - material that is harmful to minors (i.e., pictures or visual depictions which, taken as a whole, appeal to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or perverted or lewd acts);
  - material that advocates or condones the commission of unlawful acts; or
  - material that advocates or condones violence or discrimination towards other people.

Students are advised that the Valley Grove School District utilizes a Technology Protection Measure that blocks or filters Internet access to the above categories of material/information, as well as other categories of material or information which the District has deemed inappropriate for viewing by students in the educational setting.

The Valley Grove School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The Valley Grove School District will not be responsible for any damage a user may suffer, including loss of data. The District will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this internet connection. All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to all users of the network. These provisions reflect an agreement of the parties and shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the United States of America.

\*\*\*NO USER OF THE VGSD COMPUTER SYSTEM SHOULD HAVE ANY EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY IN ANY ASPECT OF ITS USE.\*\*\*

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE REGULATIONS** (Board Policy #237) (Cell phones, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, digital game players, digital cameras, laptops, etc.)

At Valley Grove School District, we recognize that students have powerful learning tools in the electronic devices they carry; however these devices can also be a major distraction to the learning environment. Our goal is to utilize the resources available to help prepare students for the future while minimizing disruption and distraction to the learning environment. Bringing any electronic device for a non-educational purpose to school is strongly discouraged.

Student use of electronic devices, both District-owned and personal, while at school, school-sponsored events and on District transportation shall conform with the District's Acceptable Use Policy and all other applicable District policies and local, Pennsylvania and federal laws. A student's use of a District-owned or personal electronic device that violates this policy, other District policies or any other law and/or in a manner inconsistent with the instructions or directives given by any district official shall result in the confiscation of the electronic device. The device, if personally owned, shall only be returned directly to the student's parent or guardian.

Student may use their personal electronic devices for educational purposes in the Valley Grove School District according to the following guidelines:

- Electronic Devices must be turned off during the school day unless they are being used under a teacher's direction for a class activity. Personal electronic devices may be used for academic purposes only with the permission and supervision of the teacher.
- Electronic Devices are NOT permitted to be OUT or ON without teacher consent, this includes but is not limited to classrooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, gym, stairwells, and auditorium.
- Students may NOT, at any time during the day, TEXT, FILM, or TAKE PICTURES of other students or teachers (without their express written consent).
- Students may NOT, at any time during the day, PLAY GAMES on their personal electronic devices unless part of a teacher directed instructional activity.
- Students may NOT TALK on their cell phones during school hours; if students need to use a phone, in the case of an emergency, they may get a pass to the main office and use the school phones.
- Study hall use with headphones is at the discretion of the supervising teacher (games are not permitted).
- The VGSD wireless network may provide filtered internet access. VGSD is not liable for student access to any other network, including internet service provided by an individual's phone company.
- If school officials have reasonable suspicion that this Policy, other relevant District policies, regulations, rules, procedures, and laws are violated by the student's use of district-owned or personal electronic devices and/or that the use of these devices materially and substantially disrupt the educational process, the devices may be lawfully searched in accordance with applicable law, and/or the personal electronic device may be turned over to law enforcement, when warranted. The scope of the search shall be limited to finding evidence of the specific suspicion of a violation of rules, policies or laws. **School officials shall contact the Superintendent or his/her designee prior to searching any personal electronic device.** By using personal electronic devices on school property, students and employees consent to those devices being searched for evidence of violations of District policies regarding technology and network use. Employees and students not willing to submit their devices for such examination are prohibited from bringing them onto school property and should not do so.
- When students are not using their devices, they should be turned off and kept in a safe, locked place. High School students should have locks on their lockers at all times. VGSD is not responsible for any physical damage, loss, or theft of personally owned devices.
- VGSD will not be held liable for either texting or internet usage charges that occur from the use of a personal electronic device. Parents must make sure that students understand the limitations of their cell phone plan, including the number of texts and internet access.
- VGSD will not be held liable for the content already existing on student-owned devices, including but not limited to apps, music, movies, pictures, games, books, etc.
- ALL STUDENTS must follow additional guidelines put forth by individual teachers in their classrooms.
- Students are prohibited from using District-owned or personal electronic devices to access, download, receive, create, send, share, view, sell, purchase or otherwise disseminate obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal materials, images, photographs or video content, including but not limited to sexually explicit images or images portraying nudity. **This prohibition shall be strictly enforced and students found to be in violation of this policy provision shall face discipline up to and including expulsion from the District.**
- If a student refuses to comply with a request from a District official/employee to hand over his/her District-owned or personal electronic device, that student shall have committed an act of "insubordination" within the meaning of this Code of Conduct and the student may be assigned disciplinary consequences relative to that violation.

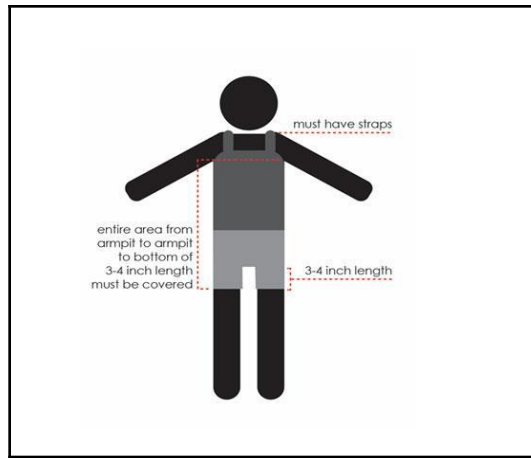
**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT** (Board Policy #218) – The Valley Grove School Board of Directors prohibits the use of corporal punishment to discipline students for violations of district policies, rules, or regulations. Reasonable force may be used by teachers and school authorities under any of the following circumstances: to quell a disturbance, obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, for the purpose of self-defense, and for the protection of persons or property.

**DRESS CODE** (Board Policy #221) – Valley Grove School District respects students' rights to express themselves in the way they dress. All students who attend VGSD are also expected to respect the school community by dressing appropriately for a Pre K-12 educational environment. Student attire should facilitate participation in learning, as well as, the health and safety of students and the adults that supervise them. This policy is intended to provide guidance for students, staff, and parents.

**Minimum Requirements:**

- Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thighs (see images below). Rips or tears in clothing between the armpit and down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thigh are not permitted. Tops must have shoulder straps at least 2 fingers in width.
- Shoes must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment (bedroom shoes/slippers shall not be worn, except for school activities approved by administration; flip flops are not permitted at the elementary only).
- See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
- Headgear including hats, hoodies, and caps are not allowed unless permitted for religious, medical, or other reasons by school administration.
- Pajamas and blankets shall not be used on school transportation or in the building unless explicitly permitted by administration and/or staff.
- Specialized courses may require specialized attire to safely participate.





#### Additional Requirements:

- Clothing may not depict, imply, advertise, or advocate illegal, violent, or lewd conduct, weapons, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict or imply pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not display or imply vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
- Clothing may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
- Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building (without a written doctor's order or if required pursuant to a student's IEP or 504 Plan).
- Clothing and accessories that endanger student or staff safety may not be worn.
- Apparel, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, or manner of grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang that advocates illegal or disruptive behavior is prohibited.

***The administration at each school reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress.*** Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or the student refuses dress-code appropriate clothing.

#### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY RULES** (Board Policy #122)

All student athletes, cheerleaders, and club and activity members must not only follow the rules and regulations as printed in this handbook, but must also follow any guidelines and regulations that are established for their particular activity. These additional regulations and guidelines shall be pre-approved by the Superintendent and will be printed and distributed to each student at the beginning of his/her activity. The guidelines and regulations are written and approved through the efforts of the administration, advisors, athletic director, and coaches.

#### **FOOD AND DRINKS** (Board Policy #246)

The Wellness Policy Committee will review this policy annually to verify the policy is meeting the needs of student health, custodian concerns, and discipline guidelines. Students are not permitted to have food outside the cafeteria with the exception of grab and go breakfast or if necessary pursuant to a student's IEP or 504 Plan. Students may store food properly in their locker (packed lunch style) for use at breakfast, lunch, or after school, but they are not permitted to eat food at their lockers, in the hallways, or in classrooms (unless a teacher permits food for some special reason, i.e. an activity in Chef's class). Students are granted the privilege of carrying and using a water bottle (clear container with clear liquid is recommended) or water purchased from our cafeteria. All other drinks (soft drinks, energy drinks, coffee, etc.) are not permitted and are a violation of our Wellness Policy. If a student packs one of these items for lunch, they are not permitted to have it opened (seal broken) at any other time during the school day. The administration reserves the right to search any drink at any time if the administration has reasonable suspicion the drink substance is in violation of any District policy or applicable law, confiscate inappropriate drinks, and to revoke the privilege of carrying a bottle if problems persist.

#### **LOCKERS** (Searches, Valuables, & Backpacks) (Board Policy #224, #226, & #708)

Students may be given the privilege of being assigned a specific locker in which to store school materials and personal property during school hours. Students are allowed and are encouraged to keep their assigned lockers secure and locked to safeguard their belongings from other students. However, students must understand it is not the intent of the Valley Grove School District to relinquish its exclusive control over the lockers.

**All lockers are and shall remain property of the Valley Grove School District. Accordingly, students shall have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers. Students are hereby notified that all authorized school district employees and officials may inspect students' lockers at any time, for any reason.**

Each student is assigned his/her own locker. Students are not permitted to share lockers with any other student. It is recommended that lockers be used infrequently during the school day in order to prevent students from being late to class. An appropriate schedule might be before class in the morning, at lunch, and at dismissal time.

#### **SEARCHES**

The school has an obligation to ensure that the locker is properly used and that no item placed in the locker jeopardizes the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the students, faculty, school property, and the educational process. To fulfill this obligation, school officials have the right to conduct locker searches at any time. Students are not to expect privacy from school searches of lockers as outlined in the handbook under *Right to Search*. Locker searches may be conducted without regard to any individualized suspicion. Should any item that violates school policy be found in a locker, the item(s) will be immediately confiscated, and appropriate disciplinary proceedings will be instituted as defined in this handbook. These items that violate school policy may include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Knives, firearms, ammunition, firecrackers, smoke bombs, or any other incendiary or explosive device.
- Tobacco products, "look-alikes", and paraphernalia.
- Drugs (controlled substances) or "look-alikes" in any form.
- Alcohol (in any form).
- Obscene material.



- Stolen property.
- Drug use paraphernalia.

School officials have the authority to search a student and/or his/her belongings, including their motor vehicles when parked on school property, when they have reasonable suspicion that a particular student has violated or is violating the rules of the District or any local, Pennsylvania or federal law and the school official has reasonable suspicion evidence of that violation could be found as a result of the search. Suspicionless searches (examples: random school-wide or classroom student and locker searches, wandering with a metal detector every 3rd student entering a school building, etc.) may be authorized by the Superintendent on a case by case basis and shall conform to all relevant Pennsylvania and federal laws.

- If a student refuses a search of his/her belongings the district will assume that the student was in possession of suspected items that violate school policy. Disciplinary action will be issued as if the student was in possession of the suspected items that violate school policy.

#### **VALUABLES/BACKPACKS/PURSES**

- It is recommended that students not bring large sums of money or valuables to school. **Combination locks are available for the student's use for a \$5.00 deposit (HS ONLY). The deposit will be returned to the student when the lock is returned to the office in good operating condition. The District urges students to lock their locker.** If a student uses a lock other than the "school lock", the student must provide the office with the combination or key to their lock. The school will not be responsible for materials left in the locker nor for items removed by other individuals. Safeguarding valuables is the responsibility of the student. Students are advised that items of value should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for articles that are lost or stolen from the individual or his/her school locker.
- Backpacks & purses are permitted to be used before and after school. They will not be permitted to be used during the school day. Backpacks & purses are to be stored in the student's locker.

#### **LOCKER ROOM USE**

Only varsity athletes that are in season or P.E. students that are actively taking class may have a lock on their gym locker at any time. If you are a varsity athlete, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure your lock is secured. If you share a locker and combination with someone, make sure you trust that person. The instructors and school are not responsible for any clothes, shoes, or belongings left in the locker room, secured or unsecured. You may use a gym locker for storage for your P.E. clothes ONLY during the time you have P.E. During class and when the instructor is not present in the locker room, the door will be locked. You will need supervision to enter the locker room as needed. Money and valuables may be placed in the instructor's office, as their office door is locked as well.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (AND OTHER OPENING EXERCISES) (Board Policy #807)**

Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem and to salute the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious conviction. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do participate.

#### **RECEIVING GIFTS(Flowers, Balloons, etc.)**

The schools of Valley Grove School District will not take the delivery of balloons, flowers, or other gifts for students. Plan on having these items delivered to the student's home.

#### **RIGHT TO SEARCH (Board Policy #226)**

At no time does VGSD relinquish control of hallways, lockers, physical education lockers, or any other part of the school building or property. School officials reserve the right to search any and all school property at any time. These searches may encompass any and all items stored in lockers or in any other area of school property. In addition, school officials have the right to search students, their direct possessions, and automobiles parked on school property if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of any school rule or policy, or poses a threat to themselves or others while on school property. Searches may include, but are not limited to, the utilization of a certified police drug detection dog, metal detection units, alcohol detection devices, or any other device deemed useful in protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the school population when so authorized by the Superintendent and in conformance with applicable Pennsylvania and federal laws. Students will be notified and given the opportunity to be present for locker searches unless authorities deem under reasonable suspicion that contents are a threat to health, welfare, and safety of others. Parents may be notified when a student's locker has been searched. Please be aware that seized illegal and/or prohibited materials can/may be used in disciplinary hearings.

#### **STUDENT CONDUCT AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

Students will exercise the best discipline possible at all school events. All school rules must be followed during the activity. If violations occur, the discipline code will be enforced. In addition, a student may be suspended from attending or participating in events if his/her conduct is not appropriate. Courtesy must be shown toward all opponents and officials at all sporting events. Booing opponents and/or officials is unacceptable behavior. Students who leave a school activity early must leave the school grounds. Students will not be permitted to leave the school building and re-enter.

#### **STUDY HALL**

Study hall is for studying. Therefore, all students must have appropriate study or reading material. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All work will be done individually, except by teacher permission. Students desiring to see a teacher other than their study hall teacher must have previously obtained a work pass from that teacher and must have the pass filled out completely. The student must deliver the pass to his/her study hall teacher at the beginning of the study hall period. Cell phones are not permitted to be used in study hall for playing games and being off task. Students must be working on school assignments to use cell phones as a resource for music.

#### **SAFE & DRUG FREE SCHOOL POLICIES**

##### **BULLYING POLICY (Board Policy #249 and further information in the )**

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students. **Bullying**, as defined in this policy, includes cyber-bullying. **Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with a student's education.
- Creating a threatening environment for any specific student or groups of students.
- Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Further information about the Bullying Policy is set forth below in the Student Disciplinary Guidelines.

## **DRUG & ALCOHOL (UNAUTHORIZED SUBSTANCES) POLICY** (Board Policy #227)

The Valley Grove School District recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community. This policy, including its regulations and guidelines, is a coordinated effort to openly and effectively respond to the potential and current uses and abuses of alcohol, other drugs, and mood altering substances by students of the Valley Grove School District. Through the use of a drug and alcohol awareness curriculum, classroom activities, community support and resources, strong and consistent administrative and faculty efforts, and rehabilitative and disciplinary procedures, the Valley Grove School District will strive to educate, prevent, and intervene in the use and abuse of alcohol, other drugs and mood altering substances by our students. Further information about the Drug and Alcohol/Unauthorized Substance Policy is set forth below in the Student Disciplinary Guidelines.

## **HAZING POLICY** (Board Policy #247)

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for persons and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited at all times. (Refer to Board Policy 247 "Hazing" for the full text of the Policy.)

### **Definitions**

- **Hazing** occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:
  - Violate federal or state criminal law.
  - Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
  - Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
  - Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
  - Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
  - Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.
- **Aggravated hazing** occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:
  - The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
  - The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.
- **Organizational hazing** occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether: (1) The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or (2) The conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

- **Student activity or organization** means any activity, society, corps, team, club or service, social or similar group, operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the district, whose members are primarily students or alumni of the organization.
- For purposes of this policy, **bodily injury** shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.
- For purposes of this policy, **serious bodily injury** shall mean bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.

### **Authority**

- The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours. No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or district employee shall engage in, condone or ignore any form of hazing. The Board encourages students who believe they, or others, have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

### **Discrimination/Discriminatory Harassment**

- Every report of alleged hazing that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination and discriminatory harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the District's Compliance Officer. If, in the course of a hazing investigation, potential issues of discrimination or discriminatory harassment are identified, the District's Compliance Officer shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged hazing.

### **Complaint Procedure**

- A student who believes that s/he has been subject to hazing is encouraged to promptly report the incident to the building principal or designee.
- Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.
- The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of hazing shall be provided to the building principal or designee, who shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee of the allegations and determine who shall conduct the investigation. Allegations of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventive action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of hazing brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be hazing under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

### **Interim Measures/Police**

- Upon receipt of a complaint of hazing, the building principal or designee, in consultation with the Superintendent or designee, shall determine what, if any interim measures should be put in place to protect students from further hazing, bullying, discrimination or retaliatory conduct related to the alleged incident and report. Such interim measures may include, but not be limited to, the suspension of an adult who is involved, the separation of alleged victims and perpetrators, and the determination of what the complaining student needs or wants through questioning.
- Those receiving the initial report and conducting or overseeing the investigation will assess whether the complaint, if proven, would constitute hazing, aggravated hazing or organizational hazing and shall report it to the police consistent with district practice and, as appropriate, consult with legal counsel about whether to report the matter to the police at every stage of the proceeding. The decision to report a matter to the police should not involve an analysis by district personnel of whether safe harbor provisions might apply to the person being reported, but information on the facts can be shared with the police in this regard.

#### Referral To Law Enforcement and Safe Schools Reporting Requirements

- For purposes of reporting hazing incidents to law enforcement in accordance with Safe Schools Act reporting, the term incident shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.
- The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents, as defined in the Safe Schools Act, committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.
- The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in a defined incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.
- In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

#### Confidentiality

- Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

#### Retaliation

- Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of hazing or participation in an investigation of allegations of hazing is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Consequences for Violations

- *Safe Harbor* – An individual needing medical attention or seeking medical attention for another shall not be subject to criminal prosecution if s/he complies with the requirements under law, subject to the limitations set forth in applicable Pennsylvania law.
- *Students* – If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the investigator shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity or organization. The fact of whether a student qualified for and received safe harbor under a criminal investigation shall be considered in assigning discipline.

#### **HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT/TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY** (Board Policy #103, #248)

It is the policy of the Valley Grove School District to maintain an environment for learning and working that is free from harassment, sexual harassment and Title IX sexual harassment, as defined herein, and such conduct is prohibited. It is also the policy of the Valley Grove School District to comply with federal law and regulations under Title IX prohibiting sexual harassment, which is a form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex. Such discrimination shall be referred to throughout this policy as Title IX sexual harassment. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX to the district may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both. The District's Title IX Coordinator is: Kevin Briggs, Superintendent, 814-432-4919, kbriggs@staff.vgsd.org, 429 Wiley Ave. Franklin, PA 16323.

#### • **Definitions**

- *"Discrimination"* shall mean to treat individuals differently, or to harass or victimize based on a protected classification including race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy and/or handicap/disability.
- *"Harassment"* is a form of discrimination based on the protected classifications listed above consisting of unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance when such conduct is:
  - sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive; and
  - A reasonable person in the complainant's position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the service, activities or opportunities offered by the District or a school.

It shall be a violation of this policy to harass a student or District employee. Bullying can be a form of harassment. A student's sending, sharing, viewing, selling, purchasing or otherwise disseminating of obscene, pornographic, lewd, sexually explicit or nude images, photographs or video content of another student may be considered harassment.

*"Title IX Sexual Harassment"* - means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A district employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or district service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, commonly referred to as *quid pro quo sexual harassment*.
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a district education program or activity.
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.
  - *Sexual assault* means a sexual offense under state or federal law that is classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
  - *Dating violence* means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship is determined by the following factors:
    - Length of relationship.
    - Type of relationship.
    - Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
  - *Domestic violence* includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim,

by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving federal funding, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

- *Stalking*, under Title IX means stalking on the basis of sex, for example when the stalker desires to date a victim. Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:
  - Fear for their safety or the safety of others.
  - Suffer substantial emotional distress

Such conduct must have taken place during a district education program or activity and against a person in the United States to qualify as sexual harassment under Title IX. An education program or activity includes the locations, events or circumstances over which the district exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs. Title IX applies to all of a district's education programs or activities, whether such programs or activities occur on-campus or off-campus.

Violations of this policy, including acts of retaliation as described in this policy, or knowingly providing false information, may result in disciplinary consequences under applicable Board policy and procedures.

#### **Reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination and Retaliation:**

The Board encourages students and third parties who believe they or others have been subject to Title IX sexual harassment, other discrimination or retaliation to promptly report such incidents to the building principal, even if some elements of the related incident took place or originated away from school grounds, school activities or school conveyances. A person who is not an intended victim or target of discrimination but is adversely affected by the offensive conduct may file a report of discrimination.

The student's parents/guardian or any other person with knowledge of conduct that may violate this policy is encouraged to immediately report the matter to the building principal.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the building principal, as well as properly making any mandatory police or child protective services reports required by law.

If the building principal is the subject of a complaint, the student, third party or a reporting employee shall report the incident directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

The complainant or the individual making the report may use the Discrimination/Sexual Harassment/Bullying/Hazing/Dating Violence/Retaliation Report Form which has been developed for purposes of reporting an incident or incidents in writing; however, verbal reports of an incident or incidents shall be accepted, documented and the procedures of this policy and the relevant attachments followed.

The building principal shall promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator of all reports of discrimination, Title IX sexual harassment or retaliation. The Title IX Coordinator shall promptly contact the complainant regarding the report to gather additional information as necessary, and to discuss the availability of supportive measures as defined by Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator shall consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall conduct an assessment to determine whether the reported circumstances are most appropriately addressed through the District's Discrimination Complaint Procedures or if the reported circumstances meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment and are most appropriately addressed through the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures and Grievance Process for Formal Complaints. Those procedures are lengthy and copies of the procedures are not reproduced in full in this Student Handbook but will be given to the complainant and the respondent upon the filing of complaints. They can also be accessed on the District's website under Harassment/Sexual Harassment/Title IX Sexual Harassment.

#### **SMOKING/TOBACCO POLICY** (Board Policy #222)

The Board recognizes that tobacco use/vaping by students presents a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for both users and nonusers and the safety and environment of the schools. The Board prohibits tobacco use/possession and vaping by students at any time in a school building and on any property, buses, vans and vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district. The Board prohibits tobacco use and possession by students at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. Further information about the Smoking/Tobacco Policy is set forth below in the Student Disciplinary Guidelines.

#### **WEAPONS POLICY** (Board Policy #218.1)

The Valley Grove School Board recognizes the importance of a safe environment and its effect upon the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school environment is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Further information on the Weapons Policy is set forth below in the Student Disciplinary Guidelines.

#### **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES RELATED TO CONDUCT** (Board Policy #810 & #223)

##### **BUS DISCIPLINE & STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

Parents will be notified regarding discipline problems through a bus slip, letter, or telephone call. Discipline concerns should be directed to the building principals.

##### **STUDENT DRIVERS**

The School Board provides bus transportation for all students. All students are urged to use these buses for a variety of reasons including convenience, socialization, and the shortage of parking spaces available. However, the School Board recognizes that students may have a need to drive cars to school. Students who drive to school must be registered through the office. Students who drive a motor vehicle to school must know and obey the following rules:

- Each student must register his/her vehicle each school year. Registration blanks may be obtained in the office.
- Each student must display a parking permit for the current year, in the designated place on his or her car. Cars not displaying a valid permit will be towed off school property **at the expense of the owner**.
- Students may not enter the parking lot during the school day unless permission has been obtained from the office.
- Each student must park in the area assigned to that student. Violators will be towed away **at their own expense**.
- Driving from the school grounds during school hours without permission is prohibited.

- Students must leave their car immediately upon arrival to school and enter the school building.
- Sitting in a car during the school day is not permitted.
- Speeding (in excess of 10 mph) or careless driving on the school grounds is not permitted.
- Permission to drive to and from Vo-Tech must be secured from the Vo-Tech Administration and High School Principal or designee. At no time will a student be permitted to transport another student to or from the vocational school.
- If a student drives to school while his/her driving privileges have been suspended or revoked, the car will be towed off school property **at the expense of the owner.**
- With reasonable suspicion administrators may search a student's car.

*\*The student's driving privileges may be revoked for violations of the above rules or any school rules.*

### **VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

The bus transporting the vocational-technical students to the Venango Technology Center will leave the home high school at the conclusion of first period. The buses will load from the front doors near the main entrance. It is the policy of both VGSD and the Venango Technology Center that all students attending the vocational-technical school will be transported by bus to and from the vocational-technical school. The only exception permitted is when the conditions of number 9 above are met and the form is on file in the high school office. Disciplinary action resulting in suspension from the bus will result in the parents/guardians being required to provide transportation (students will not be permitted to provide their own transportation or to ride with another student if they are suspended from riding the Vo-Tech bus).

### **STUDENT DUE PROCESS RIGHTS AND EXPULSION POLICY**

#### **DETENTION**

Detention does not exclude a student from school. Detention is when a student is required to report to a certain location, as a disciplinary consequence, at a designated time (ex., during lunch, during recess, after school, etc.). Prior to a detention, a student shall be informed the reason for the detention and given an opportunity to respond.

- **Afternoon detention** – Afternoon detention will convene at 2:40 P.M. Students are to bring work while in detention and to utilize the time for study. Sleeping will not be permitted. Students are dismissed at 3:40 P.M. and are to leave the school through the main front doors. They are not to go to their lockers or any other part of the building upon dismissal from detention.

#### **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)**

In-school detention runs concurrent with the school day. Students will be isolated in a time-out situation for the entire day with

three restroom breaks, one in the morning, one at lunch time, and one in the afternoon. Students will be required to work independently for the entire day without talking or leaving the room.

#### **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)**

Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days.

- No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. However, prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- The student's parents/guardians shall be notified immediately, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, in writing when the student is suspended.
- When the suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student and/or parents/guardians to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. (NOTE: When a student is referred for expulsion, the informal hearing is used to make the determination of whether the student's presence in his/her normal class during the period of time after the 10 day suspension has run but prior to the Board of Directors making its final determination on expulsion would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others.)
  - The student has the following due process rights in regard to the informal hearing:
    - Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents/guardians and to the student.
    - Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
    - A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
    - A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
    - The District shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five (5) days of the suspension.

#### **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board of Education for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls.

- Students referred to the Board of Directors for expulsion are entitled to a formal hearing.
- Formal hearings may be held before the entire Board of Directors, or before a committee of the Board.
- Formal hearings shall be scheduled during the ten day suspension period whenever possible. A student will not be excluded from school for longer than fifteen school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by the District and the student, although the formal hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
  - Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
  - Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his/her rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §1400-1482).
  - In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
- When a student is referred for expulsion and after the ten day suspension has run, but before the formal expulsion hearing has been held and/or a final decision has been rendered by the Board of Directors, the student shall be placed in his/her normal class except when it is determined that the student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others. Such determination shall be made at the informal hearing. When it is determined that the student may not be returned to his/her normal class during this interim time period, the student shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home tutoring.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to formal hearings:
  - Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians by certified mail.
  - Sufficient notice, given at least three days prior to the hearing, setting forth the time and place of the hearing must be given. A copy of this

expulsion policy and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice, as well as notice that legal counsel may represent the student. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.

- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent/guardian requests a public hearing.
- The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
- The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses to the extent permitted by federal law.
- The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript, although a copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

### **FORMAL HEARING PROCEDURE**

At the formal expulsion hearing, the committee of the Board of Directors sits as judge and jury and the Administration presents evidence of the Student Disciplinary Guidelines violation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors and the Administration are represented by separate counsel. The formal hearings are bifurcated proceedings. The Administration presents evidence of due process and of the alleged Student Disciplinary Guidelines behavior violations in the first stage of the hearing. If the Board of Directors feels the Administration has shown substantial evidence exists to support the student's alleged behavior violations, then the second stage of the hearing will commence, at which the Administration recommends a disciplinary consequence. The Administration may present evidence pertaining to the student's prior academic achievement, attendance, discipline history and any other extenuating circumstances it feels relevant to support its recommendation. The student will have an opportunity to cross examine District witnesses in both stages of the hearing, and will be given the opportunity to present his/her own evidence at both stages of the hearing. The committee of the Board of Directors shall make a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding the outcome of the hearing, which recommendation must be approved by a vote of the Board of Directors at a public meeting.

### **WAIVER OF EXPULSION HEARING**

Sometimes, the student, the student's parents/legal guardians and the Administration are all in agreement that a specified disciplinary consequence is appropriate, agreeable and may be put into effect without a formal expulsion hearing. In such situations, the student and parent/legal guardian may voluntarily consent to expulsion, without going through an expulsion hearing before the Board of Directors, when the Administration is confident that such consent is being made voluntarily, knowingly and intelligently by the student and parent/legal guardian. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to enter into a written agreement with the student and parents/legal guardians, in which the student and parents/legal guardians waive their rights to the expulsion hearing and stipulate to the material facts on which the expulsion is based. Such expulsion agreement shall not become final and binding until three (3) business days after execution of the parent/legal guardian. If the parents/legal guardians determine they would prefer to exercise their child's right to have an expulsion hearing during that interim period of time, they shall notify the District in writing and the Administration shall schedule said expulsion hearing within ten (10) school days from receipt of that notice. Such expulsion agreements are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, which fact shall be explained to the student and parent/guardian. In the event the Board refuses to approve an expulsion agreement, the Board shall schedule a formal expulsion hearing in an expedited manner but in no event more than ten (10) school days from the date the Board refuses to approve an expulsion agreement. The student will be provided a form of alternative education throughout this period of time.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES – THE “STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT”** (Board Policy #218)

The goal of the “Student Code of Conduct” is to enable the student to progress through the school system in an orderly manner while developing an understanding of responsibility as a student of VGSD as well as to prepare the student for his/her place in the community and the world of work.

Student Code of Conduct infractions are described and defined below. Code of Conduct infractions are divided into three categories:

**LEVEL I INFRACTIONS-** Those of a less serious nature that do not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare or property of any person or the District. District staff must use appropriate forms of discipline intervention to correct misbehavior manifested in less serious infractions. Students may not always be referred to an administrator for minor Level I infractions, although repeated Level I infractions may be treated as Level II infractions and be assigned Level II consequences. Level I infractions include:

- Detention, failure to report
- Disrespect
- Dress Code violations
- False Identification
- Minor violations of Electronic Devices and Computer/Internet Acceptable Use policies
- Insubordination
- Loitering
- Profane/vulgar language or gestures

**LEVEL II INFRACTIONS-** Those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare or property of any person or the District. Discipline up to and including expulsion is authorized for most Level II infractions, although the building principal may use discretion as to whether to assign that level of consequence. Level II infractions include:

- Bullying
- Cheating/plagiarism/forgery
- Classroom/Laboratory/School Safety
- Computer Use
- Disorderly Conduct
- Disruptive Behavior
- Endangerment
- Extortion/stealing/robbery
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Harassment (including Sexual Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment)
- Hazing
- Inappropriate touching
- Indecent exposure

- Retaliation
- School Safety
- Sexual Conduct
- Serious violations of Electronic Devices and Computer/Internet Acceptable Use policies
- Smoking/Tobacco
- Threats to staff or students
- Trespass
- Vandalism
- Level I infractions which are severe or where more than one offense has occurred

**LEVEL III INFRACTIONS**- infractions of a very serious nature which always pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare and/or property of District staff, students or other persons. Building Administrators must assign Level III Infractions the consequence of expulsion unless otherwise recommended by the Superintendent (and approved by the Board of Directors for weapon violations) on a case by case basis for extenuating circumstances. Level III infractions include:

- Assault/physical act of violence
- Terroristic threats/terroristic acts
- Unauthorized substances/illegal drugs
- Weapons

The range of consequences and other interventions which may be assigned to a student for a Code of Conduct infraction are listed in the "Infraction Consequences" charts located after the Code of Conduct list of infractions. The range of consequences that may be utilized are as follows:

- Verbal warning
- Parent Notification
- Parent Conference or Informal Hearing when required
- Teacher Detention
- Administrative Detention
- In-school suspension/detention
- Assignment Learning Center ("ALC") (ALC is a form of discipline in which daily privileges typically enjoyed by students will be revoked. Students will be monitored in either a classroom or the office. Classroom teachers will supply all missed assignments, tests, projects, etc.)
- 1 – 10 days out of school suspension
- SAP Referral
- Internal or external evaluation or counseling
- Behavior Management contract
- Exclusion from school activities or loss of privileges
- Referral to alternative education placement
- Referral for expulsion
- Referral to local law enforcement and/or District Judge
- Suspension of Transportation privileges
- Restitution when applicable
- Safe Schools Act notification
- Receipt of no credit/"0" for assignment/test
- Voluntary Community Service\*

\*Voluntary Community Service explanation: The Superintendent (for expulsion referrals), building administrators (for out of school suspension referrals) and the Board of Directors (in cases of weapon violations) may use their discretion to offer students the option of voluntarily performing a certain number of hours of community service in lieu of imposing other disciplinary options. In providing this option, the following applies:

- The District does not sponsor nor endorse any specific volunteer community service program and the District does not engage in any review of any volunteer community service site.
- The student is responsible for identifying and participating in an appropriate volunteer community service program/s which is generally intended to benefit issues of poverty, homelessness, hunger, education, the elderly, public health/safety/welfare, and/or any other service work that similarly benefits the community.
- The District reserves the right not to accept specific community hours if they do not generally fall within the general description set forth above. If the student has a question about the eligibility of any of the community service opportunities he/she wishes to engage in, he/she may ask the building principal of his/her home school as to eligibility prior to commencing the service.
- The student may not receive payment or any other form of remuneration for his/her performance of the community service hours in order to be eligible to count toward his/her expulsion reduction. The student will be provided with a "Volunteer Community Service Program" form. The student must provide these forms to an individual in charge of the organization for which he/she is performing community service, and said individual must attest to the type of community service the student has performed, the number of hours he/she performed and the date, time and location those hours were performed. The individual attesting to such information must include contact information so the District may contact said individual to verify the information set forth on the form if/when deemed necessary by the District. It is strongly suggested that the student periodically submit these forms to the building principal of his/her home school prior to the end of the expulsion period to ensure the community service hours he/she is performing are eligible to be applied toward his/her discipline consequence reduction.

In the event that multiple Code of Conduct infractions are committed during the same incident, consequences will be administered based upon the most serious infraction. These measures will not only create and maintain a safe environment within the school building for all students, but will also ensure the safety of students coming to and going from school.

Those infractions which are in violation of federal, Pennsylvania or local law which may not be included in the Code of Conduct infractions are subject to the consequences set forth in the Infraction Consequences charts and could result in adjudication by various law enforcement agencies.

The following general rules are applicable to each/every Code of Conduct infraction:

- The level of disciplinary consequence assigned by the building administrator or Superintendent to a Code of Conduct infraction will be contingent on a number of factors, including but not limited to: the age and developmental level of the student, whether this was a first, second or subsequent offense, the level of seriousness, severity or disruption of the incident, and any other extenuating circumstances.
- The Code of Conduct is applicable to students while on school property, at any school sponsored activity (including school dances, field trips, etc.), regardless of whether occurring on or off of District property and on any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school sponsored activity. The Code of Conduct is also applicable, when relevant, to students receiving their instruction through virtual, online or distance-learning platforms offered by the District. For example, a student participating in online instruction (google classroom or a zoom lesson) with other students and a teacher could violate the insubordination provisions for failing to comply with directives from the teacher during the lesson and/or could violate the disruptive behavior provisions if the student acts in a manner that is distracting or disruptive to the online program or to other participants.
- The Code of Conduct is applicable to students going to and returning from school.
- Chronic patterns of any Code of Conduct infractions, or a combination of infractions, will result in the student being referred to the alternative education program or, if warranted, expulsion.
- Any violation of the Code of Conduct may be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials who may file subsequent criminal charges against the student when warranted.
- Students who are on out of school suspension, referred to the alternative education program, or expelled, may not participate in any school-sponsored events including, but not limited to, athletic programs, dances, field trips and may not enter school property during this period of time. This rule applies to weekends which occur during the suspension period. Violation of this rule shall be considered defiant trespass and criminal charges may be filed

### **SAFE SCHOOLS ACT NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act, the Administration shall immediately notify, as soon as practicable, the parent or guardian of a victim or suspect directly involved in an incident listed in 24 P.S. §13-1303-A(b)(4.1) and (4.2). In making the notification, the Administration shall inform the parent or guardian as to whether the local police department has been, or may be, notified of the incident. Those student offenses which fall under this mandate are designated in the Infraction Consequences as "Safe Schools Act notification" (or "SSA Notification"). A full listing of those offenses which must be reported to parents and guardians of victims or suspect students are listed in Appendix A in this Student Handbook.

### **DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

Students eligible for special education services pursuant to IDEA and Chapter 14 of the Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations must comply with all District rules and regulations. However, eligible students will not be discipline for behaviors which are deemed to be manifestations of their disabilities, within the meaning of IDEA and Section 504, and they will be afforded all procedural rights granted to them under state and federal law, as outlined more specifically in the Procedural Safeguards Notice which includes a full explanation of all of the rights available to parents of a child with a disability ages 3-21, including an explanation of their rights in relation to discipline of special education students. Copies of the Procedural Safeguards Notice are available at every District school and also may be reviewed online on the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education website.

### **DESCRIPTIONS OF CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS**

**Assault/Physical Act of Violence** - the deliberate or reckless attempt to cause or the actual causing of physical pain or injury to another or the deliberate or reckless attempt by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent physical pain or injury. Students are prohibited from assaulting or committing physical acts of violence on another student or school personnel.

**Bullying** – intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

- directed at another student or students;
- which occurs in a school setting;
- that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
- that has the effect of doing any of the following:
  - substantially interfering with a student's education; or
  - creating a threatening environment for any specific student or groups of students; or
  - substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

"School setting" shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Bullying is prohibited in the school setting. Bullying may also rise to the level of "Harassment," "Sexual Harassment" and/or "Title IX Sexual Harassment." "A student's access, downloading, receipt, creation, sending, sharing, viewing, selling, purchase or dissemination of obscene, pornographic, lewd, sexually explicit or nude images, photographs or video content of another student may be considered bullying.

Students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to school officials. Students shall report incidents of bullying to the assistant principal/s in each school. If investigation shows the bullying has implicated a student's protected class, the assistant principal shall notify the District's Title IX Compliance Officer and Section 504 Compliance Officer who shall determine if Title IX, any other state or federal law prohibiting discrimination/harassment or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is implicated and shall respond accordingly.

Copies of this Bullying Policy shall be posted in each classroom in the District, on the District's website, and shall be posted at a prominent location within each school building where such notices are usually posted.

**Bus Infractions** – All District rules apply to students while they are on school-provided transportation. Poor student behavior will result in suspensions from school and/or loss of bus privileges. Discipline assigned will coincide with offense. For example, if the student is fighting on the bus, the disciplinary consequence for fighting will be assigned.

**Cheating/Plagiarism/Forgery** – "*Cheating*" is to violate rules dishonestly, or to deceive, deprive by fraud, pretend, or obtain property/information, answers by distortion of truth, swindle, to copy or plagiarize another student's work or aiding and abetting another student in copying or plagiarizing another's work or all of the above. Cheating includes the use of technologies such as text messaging, cellular telephones, palm pilots, hand held computers, etc. in a deceptive or dishonest manner in the classroom or educational setting.

"*Plagiarize*" – to steal or pass off as one's own the ideas or words of another; to present as one's own idea or product derived from an existing source.



"Forgery" is the false or fraudulent making or altering of a writing or other document.

**Classroom/Laboratory Safety** – any actions which endanger oneself or others through the use or misuse of classroom and/or laboratory equipment, or any other object found on school property. Examples of this offense include inappropriate and dangerous use of chemicals in a science laboratory, intentional inappropriate use of tools in a technical lab, etc.

**Computer/Internet Acceptable Use** – A student's use of the District's computers and Internet resources is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in the District's "Computer/Internet Acceptable Use Policy," as outlined in this Student Handbook.

**Conspiracy** – A student commits a conspiracy to violate any provision of the Student Code of Conduct when:

- The student agrees with another student or person or persons that they or one or more of them will engage in conduct which constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Conduct or an attempt or solicitation to commit such violation of the Student Code of Conduct, or
- The student agrees to aid such other student or person or persons in the planning or commission of such violation of the Student Code of Conduct or of an attempt or solicitation to commit such violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Any violation of the Conspiracy infraction will carry with it the same consequence as the underlying Student Code of Conduct infraction.

**Disorderly Conduct** – Fighting, threatening, engaging in violent behavior, making unreasonable noise, using obscene language or gestures, creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition for no legitimate reason, for the purpose of creating or resulting in public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm.

**Disrespect** – A lack of respect or deference shown by a student to the authority or position of a District official or employee.

**Disruptive Behavior** – Student behavior, including verbal, physical, written, etc., actions, which is distracting, detrimental or not conducive to the learning environment of other students while in school. Disruptive behavior may include (but is not limited to), or may be a combination of, behavior defined as assault/physical act of violence, disorderly conduct, disrespect, profanity, fighting, endangerment, and/or insubordination. It will be considered "disruptive behavior" when a student participates in a fight, and that fight results in the gathering of other students and resulting in disruption to the school. Disruptive behavior may also occur through a student's use of his/her cellular telephone during class.

**Dress Code** – Students are required to abide by the District's Dress Code Policy as defined in this Student Handbook. The Administration may impose additional limitations on dress and/or appearance if the attire or appearance causes a material disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard.

**Electronic Devices** – are devices with voice, data, text, and/or navigation capabilities that are able to access the Internet, transmit telephone calls, text messages, email messages, instant messages, video communications (such as iChat and Skype), perform word processing and other computer and online applications (apps), and provide location information. The devices are capable of electronically communicating, sending, receiving, storing, recording, reproducing, and/or displaying information and data. Examples of Electronic Devices include smartphones (iPhone, Android, Blackberry), cellular phones, mobile phones (with recording and/or camera/video and other capabilities and configurations); traditional telephones; pagers; global positional system (GPS) instruments; computers; portable game units; graphic calculators; MP3, music, and media players or recorders; personal digital assistants ("PDAs"); traditional cameras, video cameras, and digital still cameras; tablet and laptop computers; and other similar devices. Electronic Communication Devices may also be referred to as electronic devices in other publications and district policies. Electronic Devices also include devices that are not capable of transmitting telephone communications (such as iPads, Android tablets, radios), and devices that may or may not have Internet access (such as Kindles, Nooks, or other eReaders), are lasers, are capable of recording still and video images, are capable of recording audio, and/or are radar communication devices. Electronic devices include those owned by the District or owned by the student.

Any use of electronic devices, District-owned or personal, is prohibited except as authorized in the Electronic Devices policy and the Internet/Computer Acceptable Use Policy, as set forth in this Student Handbook.

**Endangerment (Arson, Bomb Threat, Riot and Other Related Actions)** – Deliberate conduct which recklessly causes another person to be placed at risk of death or serious injury, including but not limited to:

**Arson** – The deliberate starting of a fire or explosion, or helping, asking, or telling another person to start a fire or explosion, which could or does place property in danger of being damaged or a person (including a firefighter) in danger of injury.

**Bomb Threat** – A threat to detonate an explosive device or a statement that such a device is located in a place where an explosion may cause injury to people or damage to property, made to public or school authorities, regardless of whether such an explosive device exists. (NOTE: This does not include informing public or school authorities of such threats or statements made by another person for the purpose of allowing such authorities to take appropriate safety precautions.)

**Riot** – Disorderly conduct by two or more persons for the purpose of committing or facilitating the commission of a crime, for the purpose of preventing or coercing official actions, or when the actor knows a firearm or deadly weapon will be used.

**Creating a Dangerous and Unruly Atmosphere** – when a student chooses to engage in a fight or other altercation with another student or students while at school or at a school sponsored event, which engagement directly results in the attraction and gathering of a number of students and creates dangerous and unruly situation in the school setting.

**Setting Off False Fire Alarms**

**Tampering with Fire Extinguishers**

**Extortion/Stealing/Robbery -**

- Extortion - obtaining money, property, or articles by threats or force.
- Stealing - defined as follows:
  - Taking the property of another without the intent of returning the property to the owner.
  - Obtaining possession of the property of another by deception, extortion, or blackmail without the intent of returning the property to the owner.
  - Failing to return or make reasonable efforts to return property to its owner, or to turn found property in at an appropriate "lost and found".

- Taking possession of property one knows or has reason to know is stolen, without the intent of returning it to the owner.
- Robbery – when, in the course of committing a theft or stealing, a person inflicts bodily injury on another, threatens another with or intentionally puts him in fear of immediate bodily injury, or physically takes or removes property from the person of another by force, however, slight.

**False Identification** – intending to deceive by giving wrong identification to school authorities.

**Fighting** – Any physical conflict between two or more persons.

*Interference* – Any student who interferes with a staff member trying to stop a fight will be treated as fighting.

*Agitate, Instigate, Intimidate, Rumor, Leaving Assigned Area to Watch* – Any student provoking a fight – that is, agitating, instigating, intimidating, or spreading rumors so as to cause a fight, or leaving an assigned area or classroom to watch a fight – will be dealt with in a similar manner as if fighting.

In certain circumstances, an incident which may have begun as a fight could escalate into an act of assault/physical act of violence (an expellable offense). Examples of situations where this occurs is when an individual student refuses to stop fighting or engaging the other student after repeated orders from district staff to do so, or when one student is clearly aggressing on another student after that other student has de-escalated.

**Gambling** – the making of any bet or wager and/or the organization of or participation in any lottery, numbers game, cards, dice, pool, or bookmaking for money or property.

**Harassment (including Sexual Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment)** – It is the policy of the Valley Grove School District to maintain a learning environment that is free from the intimidation, bullying and/or abuse of students and District employees that rises to the level of “harassment.” Students are prohibited from harassing other students and District employees.

“*Harassment*” is a form of discrimination based on the protected classifications listed above consisting of unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person’s school or school-related performance when such conduct is:

- sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive; and
- A reasonable person in the complainant’s position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the service, activities or opportunities offered by the District or a school.

It shall be a violation of this policy to harass a student or District employee. Bullying can be a form of harassment. A student’s sending, sharing, viewing, selling, purchasing or otherwise disseminating of obscene, pornographic, lewd, sexually explicit or nude images, photographs or video content of another student may be considered harassment.

“*Title IX Sexual Harassment*” - means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A district employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or district service on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, commonly referred to as *quid pro quo sexual harassment*.
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a district education program or activity.
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.
  - *Dating violence* means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship is determined by the following factors:
    - Length of relationship.
    - Type of relationship.
    - Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
  - *Domestic violence* includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving federal funding, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
  - *Sexual assault* means a sexual offense under state or federal law that is classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
  - *Stalking*, under Title IX means stalking on the basis of sex, for example when the stalker desires to date a victim. Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:
    - Fear for their safety or the safety of others.
    - Suffer substantial emotional distress

All forms of harassment – including sexual harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment – and retaliation associated thereto, are prohibited.

Students are encouraged to report to school officials any incidents of harassment. In investigating and responding to complaints of harassment, the District’s Title IX Coordinator will determine whether it utilize its Discrimination Complaint Procedures or its Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures.

**Hazing** – The Valley Grove School District supports only those activities which are constructive, educational and that contribute to the intellectual and personal development of students. The District unequivocally opposes any situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. It is therefore the policy of the District that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited at all times.

Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

- Violate federal or state criminal law.
- Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
- Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
- Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
- Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
- Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

*Aggravated hazing* occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:

- The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
- The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

*Organizational hazing* occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether: The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or the conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

**Inappropriate Touching** – The intentional physical contact with another person without his/her consent. Inappropriate touching may rise to the level of harassment, sexual harassment or Title IX sexual harassment.

**Indecent Exposure** – A student's exposure of his/her genitals in any public place on school district property, at school-sponsored activities and on any provision of transportation to school or school-sponsored activity, or in any place where there are present other persons under circumstances in which the student knows or should know that this conduct is likely to offend, affront or alarm.

**Insubordination** – The outright refusal to obey a directive from any staff member after more than one attempt has been made to encourage students to comply without disciplinary action being initiated. Failure to turn over a cellular telephone (restricted electronic device) when requested by District officials is insubordinate behavior and shall be treated as a second offense or third offense.

**Loitering** – To hang around, to lag behind, to aimlessly stop or pause without legitimate purposes, to remain on school property after repeated requests to vacate premises by school personnel.

**Profane, Vulgar Language or Gestures** – Language or gestures which are crude, coarse, gross, or irreverent and inappropriate for the educational setting.

**Retaliation** – when a student intimidates, threatens, coerces, assaults, bullies or discriminates against another student as a result of or in response to that student having reported to District officials violations of the Student Code of Conduct or any other law or rule or having testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the District.

Retaliation protections are designed to preserve the integrity and effectiveness of the District's Student Code of Conduct. Retaliation is prohibited in the District. A student engaging in retaliatory conduct will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

**School Safety** – In order to keep the schools in a safe and orderly condition during the school day and during school-sponsored events, students must comply with the following:

- May not prop open any door or window of the school building;
- May not let any individual into the school (all persons entering the building shall enter the building through the main entrance and sign in at the office);
- May not leave and re-enter the school building during the school day;
- May not leave their assigned area during the school day and should always remain where they are assigned or authorized to be (this includes leaving their classroom or assigned area to witness a fight or other altercation);
- May not exchange any items with any individual outside of the school (ex., may not order lunch in and receive it through a door or window; may not receive any object through a door or window) – all items brought into the school must flow through the main office.
- May not have a hood up or hat on during the school day ("bell to bell").

**Sexual Conduct** – Any physical contact of a sexual nature between students, even when voluntary, welcome or invited. Sexual conduct is prohibited on school property, at school or District-sponsored events and on District-provided transportation.

**Smoking/Tobacco** – Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco in school buildings, on buses, vans or other vehicles owned by, leased by or under the control of a school district, and on property owned by, leased by or under the control of the school district anywhere a school sponsored activity takes place. Tobacco is defined as "a lighted or unlighted smoking product and smokeless tobacco in any form ." (35 P.S. §1223.5).

For purposes of internal school discipline (detentions/out of school suspensions), the District also prohibits students from using or possessing electronic cigarettes, vapes, Gutka, hookah pipes and/or paraphernalia, etc. "Electronic cigarettes" or vaping devices mean any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia, and/or other substance, and the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking. The term shall include such devices, whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vapes or under any other product name or descriptor.

Any student who serves as a "look out" will be treated as if smoking.

**Terroristic Threats/Acts** – Students are prohibited from communicating a terroristic threat to or about any student or employee of the District, Board member or community member, and are prohibited from committing a terroristic act directed at any student or employee of the District, Board member or community member or toward any school building. Students are on notice that all threatening comments or actions of this nature will be presumed to be serious and will be subject to any appropriate consequences.

"*Terroristic threats*" are threats to commit any crime of violence to another or to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility, or to cause serious public inconvenience, or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience. The District considers pictures, drawings or illustrations depicting shooting staff

and students or depicting other forms of violence against those individuals to be terroristic threats.

*“Terroristic acts”* are offenses against property or involving danger to another person.

NOTE: Any parent or guardian of a District student who communicates a terroristic threat to or commits a terroristic act directed at any student, teacher, administrator, any other employee of the District, Board member, community member, or toward any school building shall be immediately escorted off School District property and local law officials will be notified. The parent or guardian or individuals will be notified that he or she has lost the privilege of entering school property and of attending any school related functions to which parents or guardians are invited to attend.

**Threats to Staff or Students** – any threatening verbal comment or physically menacing behavior made by a student to or about a District employee or official or another student. Threats to staff or students may not always rise to the level of “terroristic threats” or “terroristic acts.” Examples of “physically menacing behavior” include, but are not limited to, raising your fist to a staff member/student, approaching a staff member/student and invading his/her personal space in a menacing or intimidating manner, drawing a “bullseye” around an image or name of another individual, etc.

**Trespass/Defiant Trespass** – To enter or remain in or on school property or vehicles, knowing or having reason to know that one is not permitted to enter or remain.

Students who have been suspended from school, have been referred to the Alternative Education Program (AEP) and/or who have been expelled from the District are not permitted on school property or at school-sponsored events, including athletic events, extra-curricular activities, graduations, proms, etc.

**Unauthorized Substances (Illegal Drug Policy)** - The possession and/or use of an unauthorized substance, the possession of an unauthorized substance with the intent to deliver, the misrepresentation of an unauthorized substance and the possession of paraphernalia by students on school district property, at school district sponsored events and on school district transportation is prohibited.

Definitions:

*Illegal Alcohol* - any malt, brewed, or distilled beverage, the purchase or possession of which by a person under twenty-one years of age is prohibited by Pennsylvania Law.

*Illegal Drug* – (a) Any substance (other than food) which affects the structure or function of the human body when introduced into the body by ingestion, injection, inhalation, or any other means; the possession, delivery, or use of which is prohibited by Pennsylvania and/or Federal Law, unless prescribed by a physician or licensed by the state or federal government to possess, deliver, or use such substances; or (b) Any legal substance not intended for introduction into the human body, but which when introduced into the body affects the structure or function of the human body; which is possessed for the purpose of introduction into the body; and the introduction into the body of such substance is prohibited by Pennsylvania or Federal Law (such as solvents).

*“Look-alike” drugs/substances* – any substance that substantially resembles or is meant to represent any illegal drug or unauthorized substance.

*Misrepresentation* – any attempt to distribute a substance which has been inaccurately described or implied to the receiver as an unauthorized substance.

*Paraphernalia* – tools or equipment whose function is to aid a user in consuming or selling any type of drug, controlled substance, or alcohol or any other unauthorized substance. Paraphernalia shall also include hookah pipes or any other similar device, and all oral devices that provide a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia or any other substances, the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking, including any such devices whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vapes, vaping devices, vape pens, advanced personal vaporizers (aka MODS), wave cartridges, vape pods and/or any other similar device or under any other product name or descriptor.

*Possession* – student in possession of unauthorized substances or paraphernalia found on the person of the student; in the student’s locker; under the student’s control while he/she is on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on his/her way to or from school.

*Use (of an unauthorized substance)* – either the actual use during school hours or at school-sponsored activities either during or after school hours; or the use prior to arrival at school or school-sponsored activities which evidences itself by strong odor or any unusual behavior. The District considers being under the influence of an unauthorized substance while at school to fall within the meaning of “use”

*Unauthorized substances* – shall include but are not limited to alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs which are being used in an abusive or unlawful manner or in a manner for which they were not intended or prescribed, non-prescription drugs which are possessed by the student without compliance with the District’s procedures regarding student use of medication, anabolic steroids, look-alike drugs/substances and any substance which is intended to alter mood. Unauthorized substances also include hookah pipes, any substance used in conjunction with hookah pipes or similar paraphernalia, Gutka, vapes, vaping devices, advanced personal vaporizers (aka MODS), wave cartridges, vape pods, and liquid nicotine, lobelia and/or any other substances the use of inhalation of which simulates smoking. Note that possession and/or use of vaping devices, vape pens and advanced personal vaporizers (aka MODS), wave cartridges, vape pods and any e-liquid or e-juice contained therein.

NOTE: Nothing in this provision relating to the prohibition of using, possessing, delivering or misrepresenting unauthorized substances is intended to nullify the procedures followed by the District regarding student use of medication.

**Vandalism** – is the deliberate or reckless destruction, damage or defacement of District property or property controlled by the District.

**Weapons** – shall include, but not be limited to any of the following or any replica or look-alike of the following: guns, BB guns; firearms, ammunition, such as bullets; knives; metal knuckles, straight razors and razor blades; noxious, irritating or poisonous gasses, including mace and pepper spray; poisons; explosive materials; bombs; missiles; chains; metal objects or any other object designed for protection or designed to inflict serious bodily injury to others.

Students are strictly prohibited from bringing, carrying, using, concealing, or possessing weapons, or any replica or look-alike object thereof, on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or on any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity.

**NOTE: STUDENTS WHO BRING WEAPONS TO SCHOOL FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING HIM/HERSELF, EVEN WITH THE PERMISSION OR URGING OF THEIR**

## CONSEQUENCES FOR CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL I Infractions												
OFFENSES		Verbal warning from teacher or building administrator	Parent Notification	Parent Conference	Teacher Detention	Administrative Detention	In-school suspension/detention	1 – 10 days out of school suspension	SAP Referral	Internal or external evaluation or counseling	Behavior management contract	Exclusion from school activities or loss of privileges <sup>^</sup>
	Detention, failure to report	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Disrespect	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Dress Code Violations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	False Identification	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Minor violations of Electronic Devices & Computer/Internet Acceptable Use Policies	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Insubordination	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Loitering	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Profane/vulgar language or gestures	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

*\*This list of infractions and authorized consequences is not all inclusive. The District maintains the right to pursue any necessary consequence to maintain the health, safety and welfare of staff and students. These Consequences may be utilized at the discretion of the teachers and/or building administrators if appropriate, depending on the circumstances.*

*<sup>^</sup>Exclusion from school activities could mean, for example, removal from the classroom during a classroom party; loss of privileges could mean, for example, loss of privilege to use Internet/District computers and/or any electronic communication devices.*

LEVEL II Infractions				Consequences*																		
		Warning to student	parent Notification	Parent Conference or Informal Hearing when required	Teacher Detention	Administrative Detention	In-school suspension/detention	Assignment Learning Center (ALC)	1 – 10 days out of school suspension	Referral to alternative education placement	Referral for expulsion	Referral to local law enforcement and/or District Justice	Suspension of transportation privileges	SAP referral	Internal or external evaluation or counseling	Behavior management contract	Exclusion from school activities or loss of privileges^	Voluntary community service	Restitution when applicable	Safe Schools Act notification (required when marked)	Receipt of no credit* 0" for assignment/test	
OFFENSES	Bullying	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
	Cheating/Plagiarism/ Forgery	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■			■	
	Classroom/Laboratory/ School Safety	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
	Computer Use (serious/ multiple infractions)		■	■					■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■			
	Disorderly Conduct		■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Disruptive Behavior		■	■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Electronic devices (serious/multiple infractions)		■	■					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Endangerment		■	■						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Extortion/stealing/ robbery		■	■						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Fighting	■	■	■						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Gambling	■	■	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Harassment (including sexual harassment and Title IX sexual harassment)		■	■	■	■	■	■				■	■	■				■	■	■	■	
	Hazing		■	■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■	■	■	■		
	Inappropriate touching	■	■	■		■	■	■		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Indecent Exposure		■	■						■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	
	Retaliation	■	■	■	■	■				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	School safety	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Sexual Conduct	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Smoking	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Threats to staff or students		■	■	■		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	
	Trepassal/defiant trespass	■	■	■	■		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	
	Vandalism		■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Level I infractions which are severe or where more than one offense has occurred			■	■					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		

\*This list of infractions and authorized consequences is not all inclusive. The District maintains the right to pursue any necessary consequence to maintain the health, safety and welfare of staff and students. Authorized Consequences for Level II infractions may be utilized at the discretion of the building administrators, depending on the circumstances.

\*Exclusion from school activities could mean, for example, removal from the classroom for a day for a classroom safety infraction; loss of privileges could mean, for example, loss of privilege to use Internet/District computers and/or any electronic communication devices.

LEVEL III Infractions		Consequences*													
OFFENSES	Assault/physical act of violence	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Terroristic threats/terroristic acts	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Unauthorized substances/illegal drugs	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Weapons (Board approval required of all disciplinary consequences resulting from weapon violations.)	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
		Parent notification+	Parent Conference or Informal Hearing when required+	10 days out of school suspension (gr. 6 -12); 1 – 10 days out of school suspension (gr. K – 5)†	Referral for expulsion for a period of not less than one year (Superintendent may recommend a lesser penalty) +	Referral for expulsion (11 or more days)†	Referral to local law enforcement†	Possible suspension of transportation privileges	SAP referral	Internal or external evaluation or counseling	Behavior management contract	Exclusion from District/school sponsored activities	Voluntary community service, if authorized by Board (for weapons) or Superintendent	Restitution	Safe Schools Act notification+

*\*Building Administrators are required to refer students for expulsion for violations of Level III infractions. The Superintendent has the discretion to modify the Consequences on a case by case basis, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the student and/or the District. This list of infractions and consequences is not all inclusive and the District retains the right to pursue any necessary consequence to maintain the health, safety and welfare of staff and students.*

*+Consequences designated with a + are required actions for building administrators for Level III infractions. Consequences without the + designation may be utilized at the discretion of the building administrators and/or Superintendent if appropriate depending on the circumstances./*

## **APPENDIX A — SAFE SCHOOLS ACT PARENT NOTIFICATIONS**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations, at 22 Pa. Code §10.25 requires school districts to immediately notify, as soon as practicable, the parent or guardian of a victim or suspect directly involved in an incident listed in section 1303-A(b)(4.1) or (4.2) of the Safe Schools Act. Those sections are set forth below:

(4.1) A list of criminal offenses which shall, at a minimum, include:

(i) The following offenses under 18 Pa.C.S. (relating to crimes and offenses):

- Section 908 (relating to prohibited offensive weapons).
- Section 912 (relating to possession of weapons on school property).
- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
- Section 3121 (relating to rape).
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
- Section 3124.2 (relating to institutional sexual assault).
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
- Section 3301 (relating to arson and related offenses).
- Section 3307 (relating to institutional vandalism)  
when the penalty is a felony of the third degree.
- Section 3502 (relating to burglary).
- Section 3503(a) and (b)(1)(v) (relating to criminal trespass).
- Section 5501 (relating to riot).
- Section 6110.1 (relating to possession of firearms by minors).

(ii) The possession, use or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in "The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act."

(iii) Attempts, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses listed in subclauses (i) and (ii).

(iv) An offense for which registration is required under 42 Pa.C.S. § 9795.1 (relating to registration).

(4.2) The following offenses under 18 Pa.C.S., and any attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses:

- Section 2701 (relating to simple assault).
- Section 2705 (relating to recklessly endangering another person).
- Section 2706 (relating to terroristic threats).
- Section 2709 (relating to harassment).
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
- Section 3307 (relating to institutional vandalism)  
when the penalty is a misdemeanor of the second degree.
- Section 3503(b)(1)(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv), (b.1) and (b.2)  
(relating to criminal trespass).
- Chapter 39 (relating to theft and related offenses).
- Section 5502 (relating to failure of disorderly persons to disperse upon official order).
- Section 5503 (relating to disorderly conduct).
- Section 6305 (relating to sale of tobacco).
- Section 6306.1 (relating to use of tobacco in schools prohibited).
- Section 6308 (relating to purchase, consumption, possession or transportation of liquor or malt or brewed beverages).



## Valley Grove Elementary Behavior Matrix

	<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Bathroom</u>	<u>Hallways</u>	<u>Cafeteria</u>	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Gatherings</u>	<u>Bus</u>
<b>S</b>  <b>Safety</b>	Stay in personal space  Use walking feet  Use materials/tools appropriately	Wash hands with soap and water  Use walking feet	Walk on right side  Hands and feet to self  Yield to others	Use walking feet  Eat your own food  Follow the Oriole path  Stay seated	Play and use equipment appropriately  Participate in teacher approved activities	Hands and feet to self  Stay in personal space	Enter and exit quietly  Stay seated facing forward  Hands, feet, and belongings to self
<b>O</b>  <b>Ownership</b>	Come prepared  Complete classwork in a timely manner  Do your best	Keep it Clean  Flush toilet	Keep Hallways Clean  Go to destination and return timely	Clean up after yourself	Return equipment  Keep playgrounds clean	Sit so others can see  Be a good audience member  Be welcoming to guests	Keep it Clean  Keep track of your belongings
<b>A</b>  <b>Attitude</b>	Be positive  Be a problem-solver  Be honest  Be actively engaged	Make custodians proud	Quietly acknowledge others	Use kind words and actions  Include others in conversation  Use please and thank you to all cafeteria helpers	Use kind words and actions  Include others  Be active	Cheer when appropriate  Be positive	Use kind words and actions  Greet and Thank the driver
<b>R</b>  <b>Respect</b>	Use school appropriate language  Actively listen while others are speaking  Follow adult directions	Respect others privacy  Enter and Exit quietly  Follow adult directions	Move quietly  Respectful to items in the hallway  Follow adult directions	Raise your hand  Talk appropriately  Follow adult directions	Take care of equipment and supplies  Follow adult directions	Enter and Exit quietly  Follow adult directions  Treat visitors politely	Talk appropriately  Follow adult directions

# RGHS P.R.I.D.E.

	BATHROOM	HALLWAY	CAFETERIA
<b>PREPARED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ HAVE AGENDA</li> <li>❖ GO BEFORE CLASS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ HAVE ALL MATERIALS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ BRING MANNERS WITH YOU</li> </ul>
<b>RESPECTFUL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ USE THE RESTROOM AS INTENDED</li> <li>❖ FLUSH</li> <li>❖ THROW TRASH IN GARBAGE CAN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE</li> <li>❖ USE INDOOR VOICE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ USE INDOOR VOICE</li> <li>❖ BE THERE AT YOUR GIVEN TIME</li> <li>❖ STAY IN CHECKOUT LINE</li> <li>❖ LISTEN TO MONITORS</li> </ul>
<b>INVOLVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ DO YOUR PART TO KEEP IT CLEAN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOR</li> <li>❖ REPORT PROBLEMS TO AN ADULT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ GO THROUGH CHECKOUT</li> <li>❖ CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF</li> </ul>
<b>DEPENDABLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ WASH YOUR HANDS</li> <li>❖ REPORT PROBLEMS TO AN ADULT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ KEEP YOUR LOCKER CLEAN</li> <li>❖ STAY IN YOUR LANE</li> <li>❖ KEEP MOVING</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ BE ON TIME</li> <li>❖ USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE</li> </ul>
<b>EMPATHETIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ RESPECT OTHERS' PROPERTY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ HELP OTHERS</li> <li>❖ BE KIND</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ INCLUDE OTHERS</li> </ul>