



Mt. Vernon Middle School

Student Handbook  
2011 - 2012

Mt. Vernon Middle School  
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Fortville, IN 46040

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We have received and reviewed the 2011 - 2012 Mt. Vernon Middle School discipline policy, Student Athlete Guidelines and "Network and Internet Access Agreement for Students." We also agree that any photography taken of our student may be used in any publication by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation.

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Student's Name

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Grade

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Parent/Guardian

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Date

Please detach the bottom portion, sign, and return to school. Thank you!

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## Welcome

Welcome to Mt. Vernon Middle School, home of the Marauders. The administration, faculty, and staff hope that the time you spend here is valuable and enjoyable. The opportunities available to you within the walls of this building are endless. The knowledge found inside these walls have taken thousands of years to collect. It is all yours if you have the desire and strive to seek it.

This handbook contains the answers to many of the questions often asked by students and parents. Please take the time to read through this carefully. If you have questions or concerns about the content, please do not hesitate to ask.

# **Mt. Vernon Middle School**

## **Home of the Marauders**

### **Our Mission Statement**

We believe all students deserve a secure learning community where students grow academically, emotionally, socially, and develop an appreciation for life-long wellness.

### **Our Core Convictions**

- A school community committed to positive student growth and development.
- A relevant and challenging curriculum.
- A safe and orderly environment that promotes learning.

### **Marattitudes**



Marattitudes are the core behaviors that are expected of every student, every day, in every setting at Mt. Vernon Middle School – including the school bus. Both staff and student input were considered in the development of the Marattitudes. They are posted in every classroom, the hallways, the media center and the commons area as a constant reminder of what is expected. They are discussed during announcements and during class. Students who demonstrate behaviors consistent with the Marattitudes will receive rewards periodically throughout the school year. The goal of the Marattitudes is to decrease the number of incidents requiring disciplinary action, increase attendance and academic success, while acknowledging students who make good choices. It is the conviction of Mt. Vernon Middle School staff that the Marattitudes are the attitudes necessary for successful citizenship and scholarship.

# MVMS

**"Excellence in Education"**  
***Character Counts***  
**2011-2012**

Mt. Vernon Middle School recognizes the importance of developing positive character among both students and staff members. Every month a character trait has been determined for 2010-2011. Each month students and staff members will be nominated by their peers. Winners will receive a free lunch, a certificate, a t-shirt, and be recognized on the daily MVMS news and in our local Fortville-McCordsville paper. The traits for this school year are:

***September - Trustworthiness***  
***October - Caring***  
***November - Tolerance***  
***December - Citizenship***  
***January - Integrity***  
***February - Responsibility***  
***March - Initiative***  
***April - Punctuality***  
***May - Discretion***

Nominations are due on the last day of the month for the following month. Winners will be announced on the third day of each month.

## Time Schedule

The school day for middle school students begins at 8:30 a.m. Dismissal is at 3:20 p.m. The specific time schedule for your child's classes will be included in the Team Handbook. The Team Handbook is given to your child during orientation conducted the first week of school.

## Incentives

Mt. Vernon Middle School rewards students for a job well done, both academically and behaviorally. Students who follow the Marattitudes on a daily basis will have the opportunity to be involved in one or more of the following incentives provided by the staff of MVMS.

**Just Do It (JDI):** Just Do It is an incentive program rewarding students for turning in all homework assignments during the 9-week grading period. Activities are planned during the school day or after school as a reward for this program.

**STRIVE:** STRIVE is an incentive program rewarding students for raising their overall grade point average (GPA) by .5 or more on the 4-point scale. Students are rewarded with a pizza party during the school day for achieving this goal.

**Flying Aces:** Flying Aces is an incentive program for those students who reach the All "A" or "A/B" Honor Roll. Students make paper airplanes for every A they receive during a grading period. Prizes are rewarded for each paper airplane that lands in designated areas of the gymnasium floor. Students who are on the All "A" Honor Roll for the year will have a special reward program during Fourth Quarter.

**Honor Roll "Fun Day" Trip:** Students who achieve Honor Roll status for First Semester have the opportunity to attend the Honor Roll "Fun Day" trip. Students are identified in January. This trip takes place during the school day in late January.

## Website

Parents and students are welcome to visit the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon Middle School website at:

<http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/mvms>

## Asbestos Statement

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has complied with the AHERA regulations 40 CER Part 763 with the completion of management plan, tri-annual and periodic inspection of Asbestos as required by the Act. These reports have been filed with the Environmental Protection Agency designee and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The report is on file in the Administration Building and is available for public inspection during normal business hours.

## Emergency Alert System

In case of emergency or other situations warranting parental notification, the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has an automated system for notifying stakeholders of these events. The alert system will automatically call the main contact numbers listed in Skyward. Therefore, it is critically important for parents log on to Skyward and update their contact information as needed. Emergency and school closing information can also be obtained from the MVCSC website at [www.mvcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us).

## Classroom Materials

Mt. Vernon Middle School has a dispensing machine available for all students providing notebook paper, pens, pencils, and erasers. Poster board may be purchased in the main office for special projects assigned by the teachers.

## Cheating

Cheating is not acceptable behavior at Mt. Vernon Middle School, regardless of any form that it takes. Students caught cheating on a test, homework assignment, class project, report/essay will receive a zero for that assignment and the parent/guardian will be notified of the offense. Saturday school will be assigned. Repeated violations will result in a more serious consequence.

## Cafeteria

The lunch menu for students of Mt. Vernon Middle School is located on our website at: [www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/mvms](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/mvms). Paper menus are posted in the Commons area. Please read ahead to understand your lunch choices.

General Procedures—Students are asked to sit in assigned seats in the cafeteria. Students will line up to purchase food in an orderly manner—no pushing, shoving, or yelling. Students will use student ID numbers for account access. Students without their student IDs will line up for lunch after all students with IDs have the opportunity to line up. Once students are finished with their meals, they are to return their lunch tray to the dish room, throw all trash away, and make sure their tables are clean and litter free. All items purchased must be in clear view of the cashier. The cashier, kitchen staff, or school administration will ask students to empty their purses, jackets or pockets if there is suspicion of a concealed item.

Students are not permitted to use other student's accounts to pay for their food. No charging for school lunches is allowed

### **CAFÉ PREPAY**

Mt. Vernon Community Schools has enrolled in an internet-based service called Café Prepay. This service is a website where you can pay for your child's lunches and snacks using your Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Participation in this service is voluntary; you may enroll at any time. Also, please note that you will be charged a convenience fee of **\$2.50 per transaction**. Transactions made through Café Prepay before 10am should be available to students for that day's lunch purchases. Mt. Vernon Schools download payments from the Café Prepay website three times a day, so if you find that your payment isn't reflected in your student's balance update within 24 (during the normal school week), please contact the Food Service Director, Doris Johnson, immediately.

## Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are not needed for any class or activity at Mt. Vernon Middle School (unless permitted by the teacher). This includes MP3 players, CD players, PSP's, cell phones, etc. If these items are brought to school, they are to be kept in the student's locker at all times. If they are found being used by the student, or the student is receiving calls and/or messaging through these devices or the phone is a distraction while at school, they will be confiscated and given to the administrative staff. On the first offense, the item will be kept for 24 hrs and returned to the student's parent/guardian with a WARNING only. The second will result in the item being kept by the school and a detention being assigned electronic device will be returned to the student's parent/guardian only after the detention has been served. Further offenses will result in phone being kept for one week, a detention being assigned and the electronic device will be returned to the student's parent/guardian only after the detention has been served. There are no exceptions. Lost or stolen electronic devices are not the responsibility of the school.

**Cell Phone Usage: The use of a cell phone during the school day is not permitted at Mt. Vernon Middle School. There is absolutely no reason for students to text, receive phone calls, or take pictures with their cell phones at school.** Inappropriate actions such as the ones listed below occur with cell phones and may result in disciplinary action at school in addition to reporting to the proper authorities

### *Important Notice to Students and Parents Regarding Cell Phone Content and Display*

The Child Abuse/Neglect Law requires school personnel to report to law enforcement or child protective services whenever there is a reason to believe that any person/student is involved with "child exploitation" or "child pornography" as defined by Indiana Criminal Statutes.

- It is "child exploitation," a Class C felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4(b), for any person/student (1) to exhibit, photograph, or create a digitalized image of any incident that includes "sexual conduct" by a child under the age of 18; or (2) to disseminate, exhibit to another person, or offer to so disseminate or exhibit, matter that depicts or describes "sexual conduct" by a child under the age of 18.
- It is "child pornography," a Class D felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4(c), for any person/student to possess a photograph, motion picture, digitalized image, or any pictorial representation that depicts or describes "sexual conduct" by a child who the person knows is less than 16 years of age or who appears less than age 16.
- "Sexual conduct" is defined by I.C. 35-42-4-4(a) to include sexual intercourse, exhibition of the uncovered genitals intended to satisfy or arouse the sexual desires of any person, or any fondling or touching of a child by another person or of another person by a child intended to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of the child or other person.
- The Indiana Sex Offender Registration Statute at I.C. 11-8-8-7 and the Sex Offender Registry Offense Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-11, as of May 2009, requires persons convicted of or adjudicated as a juvenile delinquent of violating the Child Exploitation Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-4(b) to register as a sex offender.
- Because student cell phones have been found in a number of Indiana school districts to have contained evidence of "sexual conduct" as defined above, it is important for parents and students to be aware of the legal consequences should this occur in our school district.

## Social Network/Digital Platforms

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation (MVCSC) acknowledges that students are not restricted from using any on-line social network sites or digital platforms such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, and other similar sites while away from school and off school grounds, provided said use is not related to any school activity or event. MVCSC students using social network sites and digital platforms should understand that they are responsible for any and all content they make public via on-line social networks or digital platforms, and all such material is expected to comply with state, local, and federal laws, rules, regulations, and procedures. All such activities that are deemed detrimental to MVCSC students, teachers, administrators and their families may be subject to disciplinary action by MVCSC within such laws, rules, regulations and procedures. MVCSC will prosecute to the fullest extent permitted by law.

MVCSC further acknowledges a student's right to free expression within the confines of the law. In recognition of a student's rights to freely express themselves, MVCSC suggests students conform to the following guidelines in using social networking sites and other digital platforms. Students must learn to assume responsibility for their actions as well as accept the consequences of said actions.

- Students are expected to conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior at all times;
- Students shall not infringe upon the rights of others through personal attacks, use of derogatory or demeaning language, or threats;
- Students shall respect the person, property, and rights of others in accordance with school policy and the law;
- Students should not use obscenities, defamatory statements, disruptive tactics, nor advocate violations of the law, rules, regulations, school policies or procedures, and
- In no event should a student's actions or expression of opinions substantially impact the educational process of MVCSC or its students.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** MVCSC students and parents should know that anything posted online enters the public record. Law enforcement agencies, future employers, and college admissions personnel, among others, have used social networking sites as a means of gathering information.

## Counseling Program

Each student is given an opportunity to talk with someone regarding his/her interests, problems, future educational plans, or aims in life. This might be the counselor, assistant principal, or principal. Members of the faculty are glad to talk with and encourage all students to learn about and understand themselves, how to make wise choices and friends, how to take part in school activities, and how to make the most of their educational opportunities. In addition, groups meet periodically to discuss issues such as the death of a family member, anger issues, and classroom difficulties.

## Emergency Drills

In compliance with 511 IAC 6.1-2-2.5, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has developed and implemented Comprehensive Safety and Crisis Intervention Plans at the district level and for each individual school. Mt. Vernon Middle School has established procedures for dealing with a wide range of crises and emergency events. Routine drills and practice sessions will be conducted periodically to ensure our preparedness. Drills and practice sessions are intended to teach students proper behavior and appropriate responses in emergency situations. Students are expected to listen closely to adults and to follow their directions quickly during all emergency drills.

## Hall Passes

Students in the hall during class time are not in the classroom learning. It is, therefore, important that students be in the classroom unless given permission to be in the hallway. All hall passes must have a teacher/staff member's signature and the time which they were dismissed. Students without passes will be assigned a Saturday School for not following school procedures.

## Grading Period

Report Cards will be issued on a nine-week basis. Please check your child's progress throughout the grading period on **Skyward Family Access**. Mid-term is at the end of the fourth week of the grading period. Please refer to the school calendar for grading period dates. Your **Skyward Family Access** account numbers do not change from year to year. To obtain your account numbers please call the Guidance office at 485-3160 ext. 2163. PIN numbers will not be given over the phone.

## Grading System

The MVCSC School Board adopted the recommendation by the student assessment task force. Changes were made in the way grades are determined and beginning with the start of the 2009-2010 school year, the following grading scale was put into effect:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Percent</u> | <u>4 Point</u> |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| A+                  | 100            | 4.0            |
| A                   | 95-99          | 4.0            |
| A-                  | 93-94          | 3.7            |
| B+                  | 91-92          | 3.3            |

|    |              |     |
|----|--------------|-----|
| B  | 87-90        | 3.0 |
| B- | 83-86        | 2.7 |
| C+ | 80-82        | 2.3 |
| C  | 76-79        | 2.0 |
| C- | 73-75        | 1.7 |
| D+ | 71-72        | 1.3 |
| D  | 68-70        | 1.0 |
| D- | 66-67        | 0.7 |
| F  | 65 and below | 0   |

- Skyward Family Access will reflect student grades as percentages during the nine week grading period.
- At the end of the nine week grading period, all posted grades will be reflected as a letter grade.

### **Extra Credit**

The use of extra credit will be used at the teacher’s discretion. However, any extra credit used will be academically based, appropriate to the course content and applied for all students. All other forms of extra credit will not be permitted.

### **Response to Instruction (RtI)**

MVCSC is committed to providing high quality instruction to all students; therefore, we utilize a general education initiative called Response to Instruction. RtI represents a systematic method for evaluating the needs of all students and for fostering positive student outcomes through carefully selected and implemented interventions.

RtI is a framework that is to be used for every student in a school, from the low achieving to the high performing students, and everyone in between. This implies that high achieving students may be “at risk” by not reaching their full potential in a particular area.

Thus, “at risk” is not a terminology that is used solely with students who are considered to be low performers; rather it is a term that may be applicable to any student.

The IDOE (2009) defines all learners to include; low incidence students, high ability students, minority students, English language learners, children of poverty, students who may be disproportionately placed in special education, as well as those students who do not hold unique characteristics and perform at grade level in the regular classroom.

### **Skyward Family Access**

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has the Skyward Family Access online system. Skyward Family Access allows students’ families the ability to access important information about their student directly from a computer—anytime, anywhere. Parents and students can view grades, class schedules, and attendance records. Lost PIN slips can be requested by calling each school’s main office. PIN numbers will not be given over the phone. PIN numbers do not change from year to year.

## **Honor Roll**

Following each grading period, an Honor Roll list will be compiled of the names of those students who have accomplished outstanding grades during the grading period. The Honor Roll Program recognizes students for the following accomplishments:

“A” Honor Roll—All A’s; no grade lower than 93%  
Honor Roll—All A’s and B’s; no grade lower than an 83%

## **Lost and Found**

An area is provided for the placing of lost and found articles. The lost and found box is located on the north side of the commons area. Articles not claimed at the end of each semester will be removed and sent to a charity organization.

## **Lockers**

All students will be assigned a locker that the student will use throughout the school year. To prevent loss or theft, students should not share locker combinations with other students. Students are not permitted to put their own locks on these lockers. In addition, lockers will not be shared.

School facilities, such as lockers and desks, are school property provided for student use subject to the right of the superintendent and his/her designee to enter the facility as needed and inspect all items in the facility. Students shall not have an expectation of privacy in any facility provided by the school.

Searches, pursuant to School Board Policy 5771, shall also be permitted in all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board as defined by IC 20-8.1-5.1-8  
Lockers are a privilege, not a right; therefore, the locker right may be taken away if the use of the locker violates rules and expectations set forth by the school.

## **Health Services**

The health room is located in the main office complex. The school nurse is not in the school every day; but she can be reached at anytime during the school day through the health room assistant or other school personnel. The health room assistant will be in the health room every day.

A student needing to see the health room assistant, or wishing to lie down due to illness, must first obtain a pass from his/her classroom teacher and then report to the health room. No student may be in the health room for more than one period. At the time, he/she must either report back to the class or the health room assistant will call a parent/guardian to determine if the student needs to go home. If a student feels ill, he/she should not miss a class by going to the restroom and then notifying the office or teacher later. Instead, he/she must report to his/her teacher and then to the health room assistant so the student will not be counted absent or tardy.

Students needing to take medication during the school day are required to leave the medication with the health room assistant. See the Medication section of this handbook.

Confidential height and weight measurements will be taken annually on all students who have written parental permission on file to participate in Indiana’s Height and Weight Measurement Project.

**Meningitis Information for Parents/Guardians:** An Indiana law requires each year that parents/guardians be informed about meningococcal disease and its vaccine. Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth. The disease can progress rapidly and within hours of the first symptoms, may result in death or permanent disability including loss of hearing, brain damage and limb amputations. Symptoms of meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, and stiff neck, making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that cause meningococcal diseases are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. Fortunately there is an immunization available and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends routine meningococcal immunizations at 11 to 12 years old. For teenagers, immunization is recommended at high school entry and for incoming college freshman. Please talk with your child’s health care provider about meningococcal disease and vaccination.

**Latex Allergy Information:** Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will take precautions to protect known and unknown persons with latex allergies (no latex balloons, gloves, or bandages).

## Media Center

The media center is located in the middle of the academic wing of the school building. An orientation at the beginning of each school year familiarizes students with the media center rules and circulation policy. Teachers and students have access to books, magazines, computers, multimedia materials, and equipment. Student’s visit the media center with a class, group, or individually to check out books, complete research projects, study and read.

The school-wide reading program, called Mareaders (Marauders Read), is a collaborative mission between teachers and librarians to promote avid readers. The media center works closely with Language Arts teachers to help all students develop an interest for reading. The media center offers more than 5,000 fiction and non-fiction books in the student collection. A large percentage of the collection match with Accelerator Reader quizzes. Students are encouraged to check out books as often as they want during a media center visit, individually with permission from a teacher, during a passing period, or immediately before or after school.

The media center is fully automated with Follett’s Destiny OPAC. Students consult the OPAC to locate materials on the shelf and to explore suggested book lists. Supervised Internet access is available to students for research and book selection.

### Mt. Vernon Middle School Media Center Policies, 2011-2012

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Hours:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open: 8:35 a.m.<br/>Closed: 3:30 p.m.</p> | <p><b>Student access times:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Language arts classes for routine media center visits</li> <li>*Research classes, computer projects, makeup work</li> <li>*Before and after school – Don’t be late to the bus!</li> <li>*Passing periods – Don’t be late to class!!</li> <li>*Lunch period – Stop by on the way to lunch!</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Circulation Services:**

Students are allowed a maximum of two items checked out at one time.

| <u>Materials</u> | <u>Limit</u> | <u>Length Of Checkout Period</u> | <u>Fines</u>         |
|------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Books            | 2            | two weeks from day checked out   | no fines are charged |

Magazines 1 next school day no fines are charged

- Materials renewed during each class visit. Materials must be present at the time of renewal.
- Renewal could be denied if there is a hold pending by another patron for the same material.

**Fines Charged:**

- Unattended fees (25 cents) for a misplaced library book found by a staff member in the school building, on a bus, or on the MVCSC campus.
- Replacement fees for a lost or damaged material or a repair fee when possible. Fees will be assessed accordingly.

**Lost Materials:**

- Replacement fees are charged for lost materials. An additional fee is added for shipping and processing.
- Refunds are no longer allowed by the Indiana State Board of Accounts. A book replacement fee cannot be returned once the fee has been deposited to a school account. If a book is lost and paid, but the book is found later, the family may keep the book or donate it to the media center.

**Damaged Materials:**

- Damaged materials must be returned to the media center. All attempts will be made to repair the item with repair costs charged to the student as needed. If the material is not salvageable, the student will be charged a replacement fee.

## **Parent Conferences and Visitation**

If at any time parents wish to have a conference with a teacher or a group of teachers, they should call the guidance office (485-3160) to arrange an appointment with the particular person or persons. Far more can be accomplished when records and grades are available. Therefore, parents should refrain from calling a teacher at his/her home to discuss school business or concerns. Whenever a parent wishes to visit while school is in session, he/she should first make arrangements with the principal's office. Parents and/or grandparents are welcome to eat lunch with their child at any time. Students are not permitted to bring friends from other schools at any time. All visitors must sign in at the main office upon entering the school.

## **Parent Organizations**

Parents are encouraged to become active in the middle school's Parent Teacher Organization. The P.T.O. meets four times during the school year. The MVMS PTO is a parent volunteer organization established to assist the middle school teachers through donation of individual's time and resources.

The MVMS PTO Board consists of MVMS Principals and Teacher Representative (Jill Scott), Co-Presidents (2), Co-Vice-Presidents (2), Secretary, Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinators (2), Hospitality Coordinators (2), and Marauder Wear Coordinator (1).

The MVMS PTO is responsible for assisting in Back-to-School registration, Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser, 3 PTO sponsored dances, the creation and distribution of a school/family directory, and Marauder Wear Sales. The goal of these activities and the PTO is to generate monies to benefit MVMS teachers and students. All monies that are raised are given back to the school through a process called the Ways & Means Teacher Grant Program.

All MVMS teachers are given the opportunity to complete a form requesting special items that would be beneficial in the classroom. Those teachers who complete the grant form present their request before the MVMS PTO board in the fall at the Ways and Means meeting. Depending on the MVMS PTO funds available, the board then evaluates how to best allocate the funds for the maximum benefit to the students and teachers.

Additionally, the middle school has a School Improvement Team which also meets four times a year. The School Improvement Team consists of parents, teachers, and school administration. If you are interested in becoming a part of this team, please contact Mr. Price, principal. The Middle School Improvement Team and the Corporation School Improvement Council meetings are open to the public.

## **Administration of Medication**

Administration of medication is consistent with Indiana Law. **Absolutely no medication shall be given or dispensed by the school nurse, health room assistant, or school employee unless a medication authorization form has been properly filled out. Prescription medications require a parent and physician signature. Over-the-counter medications only require a parent signature. This form must be on file in the school office at the time the medication is given to the student. These forms may be obtained by contacting the school office and are available on our website:**

[www.mvcsc.k12.in.us](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us).

**IMPORTANT: Medications prescribed for an individual student shall be kept in the original container bearing the original pharmacy label showing the prescription number, date filled, physician's name, directions for use, dosage, and the student's name. For the safety of all Mt. Vernon Middle School students, we can have no exceptions. All over-the-counter medications must be brought in their original containers.**

We suggest that parents send in only the amount of medication needed to take at school. Ask the pharmacist for a second prescription container with a label so that the amount needed to take at school can be in one container and the remainder left at home in the second container.

Written consent is valid for the time specified on the consent and not longer than one school year. Non-prescription medications will not be given at school unless sent from home by the parent and with the properly completed medication authorization form. When no longer needed, the medication shall be returned to the parent or destroyed if left at school at the end of the school year.

**Possession and self-administration of some medications is permitted by Indiana State Law.** Students with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer medication for the chronic disease or medical condition. The authorization must include a note from the physician stating: 1) the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication, 2) the student has been instructed in how to self-administer the medication, and 3) the nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the medication. The authorization and statement must be filed with the school annually.

## **Release of Medication**

Medication that is possessed by the school for administration during school hours or at school functions for a student may be released to: 1) the student's parent/guardian, 2) an individual who is at least 18 years of age and designated in writing by the student's parent to receive the medication, or 3) the student if the student's parent/guardian provides written permission for the student to receive the medication.

## **Network and Internet Access Agreement for Students**

Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and other resources. The Corporation expects faculty to blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. Access to Internet resources will be structured in ways that point students to those evaluated prior to use. However, students may be able to move beyond those resources to others not previewed by staff. Safety filters are in place to prevent access to sites deemed inappropriate; however, students may have the opportunity to move to sites that are deemed safe, yet inappropriate for classroom activities.

Students utilizing Corporation provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior on-line just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

The purpose of Corporation provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research education. To remain eligible as users, students use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Mt. Vernon Community Schools. Access is a privilege, not a right. Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

The intent of this agreement is to ensure that all students will comply with all Network and Internet acceptable use policies approved by the Corporation.

In addition, students will be provided with a school e-mail account for educational purposes and use. This account will be apart of the Google Apps system which provides Mt. Vernon Schools the ability to manage the student's Google accounts. The accounts will have the Mt. Vernon domain (mvsc.k12.in.us) for identification purposes. The Google Apps system will be used by students within the direction and coordination of their classroom teacher.

In exchange for the use of the Network resources either at school or away from school, the student understands and agrees to the following:

- A. The use of the Network is a privilege, which may be revoked by the Corporation at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited to: 1) altering system software, 2) placing unauthorized information, computer viruses, or harmful programs on or through the computer, and/or network. Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation reserves the right to log computer use, monitor file server space, remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student for other disciplinary action.
- B. The Corporation reserves all rights to any material stored in files and will remove any material which the Corporation, at its sole discretion, believes may be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable. Student will not use their Corporation-approved computer account to obtain, view, download, or otherwise gain access to, distribute, or transmit such materials.
- C. All information, services, and features on Corporation resources are intended for the private use of its registered users and any use of them for commercial-for-profit or other unauthorized purposes (i.e. advertisements, political lobbying) is expressly forbidden.

- D. The Corporation resources are intended for the exclusive use of their registered users. The student is responsible for use of his/her account, password, and privileges. Any problems arising from the use of the student's account are the responsibility of the account holder. Use of an account by someone other than the registered account holder is forbidden and may be grounds for loss of access privileges.
- E. Any issue of the account will result in suspension of the account privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. Misuse shall include, but is not limited to:
  1. intentionally seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users;
  2. disrupting the operation of the Network, Internet, or any other computer system through abuse or vandalizing, damaging, or disabling the hardware or software;
  3. malicious use of the network through hate mail, harassment, profanity, vulgar statements, or discriminatory remarks;
  4. interfering with others use of the network or accessing the materials, information, or files of another without their prior approval;
  5. use of the Network for instant messaging, e-mailing, blogging, and online chatting for any purpose. Responding to unsolicited on-line contact is strictly prohibited for student safety;
  6. unauthorized installation, down-sizing, copying, or use of licensed or copyrighted software or plagiarizing material;
  7. misrepresenting others on the network or allowing anyone else to use an account other than the account holder;
  8. accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;
  9. violating any local, state, or federal statute.
- F. Corporation and network resources are to be used exclusively for the support of the academic program, not for entertainment.
- G. Students bringing data files into the Network agree to check the file with a virus-detection program before opening the file for use. Should the student deliberately or maliciously infect the Network with a virus or cause damage through other vandalism, the student will be liable for any and all repair costs to restore the Network to full operation and will be subject to additional disciplinary measures.
- H. The student may only log on and use the Network under the immediate supervision of a staff member and only with the student's authorized user name and password.

Violation of Corporation policy and rules will result in appropriate suspension of computer access to be determined by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation staff. Additional disciplinary action will be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language and behavior. When or where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Network/Internet access it is providing. The Corporation will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions of services. The Corporation will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will make all reasonable attempts to prevent inappropriate access to a student's personal information through the Internet. The Corporation's intent is to make Internet access available for educational goals and objectives. However, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Even though the Corporation institutes technical methods or systems to regulate students Internet access, these methods cannot guarantee compliance with the Corporation's acceptable use policy. Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation believes that the benefits to students of access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. The Corporation is committed to helping students use the Internet responsibly, but it is not possible to monitor student usage at all times. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information. Therefore, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will provide parents and guardians the option of requesting for their minor children alternative activities not requiring Internet usage.

Parent refusal to allow students to make use of the Internet does not prohibit students from taking part in state and locally mandated testing and evaluation on the computer or through the network (e.g. ISTEP+, Core 40 exams, and NWEA testing).

## **Parent Participation Policy**

A parent/guardian/custodian of a dependent student shall be required to participate in any disciplinary action authorized under the Student Due Process code, IC 20-8.1-5.1, as well as the student discipline handbook of this Corporation, at the discretion of and upon proper notice by a school official.

Parent participation includes, but is not limited to, meetings, conferences, hearing, supervising after-school study time, reviewing homework, and assuring regular attendance and attendance after school if necessary.

When a school official deems it necessary to require parent participation to resolve a behavioral problem of a student, the parent shall be notified by written or telephone contact by a school official in advance of the meeting, conference, or hearing, followed by a letter of confirmation.

Upon receipt of proper notice, any parent, guardian, or custodian who fails to comply with the requirements of a school official to participate in the resolution of behavioral problems of a student whose conduct is repeatedly disruptive to the student's own educational progress or the progress of others may be referred to the Hancock County Office of Family and Children and the child may be considered to be a "child in need of services" in accordance with IC 31-6-4-2(a)(7). The parent, guardian, or custodian may also be referred to the Hancock County Probation Department or the Hancock County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

## **Pay to Participate**

Pay to participate has been approved by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. Middle School non-sport club/activity/group fee is \$25 per person per club/activity/group. Middle School sport participation fee is \$100 per person per sport. Participation fees are in addition to any other fee charged. All students will pay the fees listed for all groups, activities, clubs and sports. No discounts for students who participate in multiple sports/club/activity/group. If not enough students participate in a sport, activity, club, or group, either the group will pay the balance of the cost or the activity will be cancelled. If the activity is cancelled by the corporation, students will receive a refund. Otherwise, participation fees are non-refundable.

## **Restrooms**

Restroom facilities are available before and after school, during the breaks between classes, and at lunchtime. Students absolutely needing to use the restrooms during classes must have a permission pass from the teacher. It is expected that restrooms will be kept clean. Students may not remain in the restrooms during class time. If this occurs, disciplinary action for skipping class will occur.

## **Policy Notification Statement on Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap in its educational programs or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act (IC 22-9-1), IC 20-8.1-2, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Educational Amendments), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Inquires regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act should be directed to:

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|---|--|
| Assistant Superintendent<br>Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation,<br>1776 W. State Road<br>Fortville, IN 46040 | Office of Civil Rights<br>U.S. Department of Education<br>Washington, D.C. |
|   | Or   |

## **School Closing Information**

All school closing information will be provided to our officially designated radio and television stations. The stations are: WIBC (93.1 FM), WLHK (97.1 FM), WFMS (95.5 FM), WZPL (99.5 FM), WISH-TV (CBS), WRTV-TV (ABC), WTHR-TV (NBC), WXIN-TV (FOX). Every broadcast from 6:30 a.m. on should carry school closings. In addition, all families enrolled in the Emergency Alert System will receive a telephone message stating school closing, delay, or postponement information about all school activities.

## **Student Drop-Off**

Parents who bring their child to school or pick them up at the end of the day should not use the drive in front of the middle school when buses are present. After 8:15 a.m., parents are expected to drop students off at the west end of the school building. Students may then enter the building through the west end doors (near the art classroom). Parents picking up their child in the afternoon should park at the west end of the building while buses are present.

## **Student/Teacher Expectation Plan (STEP)**

### **6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, Grade S.T.E.P.**

Mt. Vernon Middle School maintains high expectations of its students. We expect our students to follow school rules, to be self-disciplined and well behaved. Students who fail to meet these expectations will receive consequences. The below STEP consequences start over each nine week grading period.

A consequence is given to students who have repeated classroom infractions. Infractions could include, but, are not limited to: displaying disruptive behavior, disregarding classroom rules, having gum or candy, lying or cheating, being disrespectful, or refusing to cooperate. The consequences are sequential in nature and are listed below. Classroom teachers will contact parents about the infraction and the consequences given for STEP 1 through STEP 4. These consequences are assigned by individual

teachers; if a student has multiple infractions from several different teachers then a more serious consequence could be assigned. Second semester a STEP 4 consequence can result in an office referral. All STEP 5 consequences and beyond will result in an office referral.

- STEP 1 = Teacher / Student Conference
- STEP 2 = Lunch Detention or After School Detention
- STEP 3 = Lunch Detention or After School Detention
- STEP 4 = After School Detention

STEP 5 and beyond consequences will be given by the principal(s) and parents will be contacted about the consequence by the principal(s). STEP 5 and beyond consequences may include, warning, parent conferences, after school detention, Saturday School, In-School Suspension, Out-of-School, or Expulsion to be determined by the principal(s).

**\*Serious misbehaviors will result in automatic office referral and disciplinary action.**

### **Student Activities**

All student activities must be sanctioned by the administration of the school and must be under the direct supervision of the administration and/or faculty of Mt. Vernon Middle School. The listed activities are school sanctioned activities at Mt. Vernon Middle School. In the past, MVMS has offered the following clubs (see below) and participation was a factor of student interest, parent support and staff participation. Club offerings for 2011-2012 will be determined on an as needed basis culled from student interest. Financial obligations for some of these activities will be based on parental support.

|  |                     |                         |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Academic Bowl—Social Studies, Math, Language Arts, and Science | Jazz/Pep Band       | Boys Soccer             |
| Student Council  | Newspaper Club      | Girls Soccer            |
| Tech Club  | Focus               | Boys Basketball         |
| National Jr. Honor Society                                     | Spell Bowl          | Girls Basketball        |
| FCCLA  | Gold Dusters        | Wrestling               |
| Drama Club   | Cheerleading        | Boys Swimming & Diving  |
| Computer Club  | Student Ambassadors | Girls Swimming & Diving |
| Geography Bee  | Science Club        | Baseball                |
| Spelling Bee   | Talent Show         | Softball                |
| Flag Corp/Color Guard  | Football            | Boys Golf               |
| Art Club   | Volleyball          | Girls Golf              |
|  | Boys Cross Country  | Boys Track & Field      |
|  | Girls Cross Country | Girls Track & Field     |

Students may be excluded from student activities at the discretion of the supervisor in charge. Eligibility for student activities shall be based on the extracurricular report system.

Student athlete guidelines are governed by the athletic department. Guidelines covering eligibility are addressed in the Student Athlete Guidelines section of this handbook.

### **Mt. Vernon Middle School Student Ambassadors**

Mt. Vernon Middle School Student Ambassadors are seventh and eighth grade students chosen to help new students transition to MVMS. The ambassadors will assist new students with locker issues, finding classes, getting lunch, and any other questions or concerns about the school. It is

the responsibility of the ambassadors, along with staff, to try to make the transition to our school as comfortable as possible.

One girl and one boy will be chosen from each first period class as an ambassador to new students. When the new student arrives, the chosen ambassador will help them get acclimated to Mt. Vernon Middle School. This may involve a tour of the school or lunch assistance.

Students chosen for the ambassador program must:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Be respectful to all staff and students. | 6. Represent MVMS in a respectable manner  |
| 2. Be responsible                           | 7. Be positive when speaking with new students/parents                           |
| 3. Be passing all academic classes          | 8. Direct students/parents to the correct person if they can't answer questions. |
| 4. Be friendly to students                  | 9. Be a positive role model  |
| 5. Make up all work missed if out of class  |  |

## **Student Fundraising**

The School Board acknowledges that the solicitation of funds by or from students must be limited since compulsory attendance laws make the student a captive donor and may also disrupt the program of the school. For purposes of this policy, "student fundraising" shall include the solicitation and collection of money by or from students for any purpose and shall include the collection of money in exchange for tickets, papers, or any other goods or services for approved student activities.

The Board will permit student fundraising by students in school, on school property, or at any school-sponsored event when the profit from this is to be used for school purposes or for an activity connected with the schools. Fundraising by approved school organizations, those whose funds are managed by the Corporation may be permitted in school by the principal. Such fundraising off school grounds may be permitted by the Superintendent. Fundraising by students on behalf of the school-related organization whose funds are not managed by the Corporation may not be permitted on the school grounds by the Superintendent.

In accordance with IC 4-32-9-34, no student under the age of eighteen (18) may play, participate in, or sell tickets for any of the following types of fundraising events: bingo games, charity game nights, raffles, door prizes, fundraising festivals, activities related to pull-tabs, punch boards, tip boards, and the like. All other fundraising shall be done in accordance with Board Policy 9700.

## **Textbooks, Workbooks, and Fees**

All classroom textbooks are the property of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and are on the rental plan. Fee statements for book rental, laboratory fees, and workbooks will be distributed after the start of the school year. Payment is expected no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Mt. Vernon Middle School accepts credit cards for payment of book rental on-line. For parents who cannot make full payment by the due date, payment options are available. Contact the school treasurer to discuss those options. Parents who fail to make full payment by the due date or make arrangements for a payment will be notified regarding their failure to comply. After the school sends a second overdue notice, the Corporation may file suit in small claims court to collect the overdue book rental. The classroom teacher will issue textbooks to the

students on the first day of school. Laboratory fees are charged in those classes where school furnishes supplies and students use machines. Workbooks are consumable and, therefore, are purchased outright by the student. Book rental and laboratory fees are prorated on one-fourth of the total cost for each nine weeks used. Students are expected to maintain reasonable care and upkeep to their textbooks. Damaged or lost books should be reported to the main office or classroom teacher. In most cases, students will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost or damaged books. Students withdrawing during the school year must turn in all rental books to the office when leaving before a refund can be determined.

## Student Dress Code and Appearance

Mt. Vernon Middle School students are expected to dress in clean, neat clothes **to, during, and from school**, which will not detract from the learning experience. Students are expected to adhere to health and safety standards in their mode of dress. No student, while at school or at any school function, whether or not on school premises, shall dress or appear in such fashions as to substantially interfere with a teacher's ability to conduct a class or activity or disrupt or detract from the learning experience, or draw undue attention from other students, or the faculty, or disrupt normal routine.

Failure to dress appropriately may result in a discipline being received. **Absences resulting from dress code violations are unexcused, and receive 2% deduction per class missed.** If there is **doubt about the appropriateness of a garment, it should not be worn.**

The following are examples of clothing or items that are **inappropriate** for the school environment:

1. Clothing with objectionable, offensive, obscene, or indecent language or drawings may not be worn. Clothing which is found to degrade, discriminates, and/or disrespect any individual or group is prohibited.
2. Clothing and accessories which advertise or promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex, and/or depict violence may not be worn. (i.e. Playboy Bunny, jewelry with drug paraphernalia, t-shirts advertising alcohol).
3. Oversized pants or pants with excessively large pockets are considered inappropriate for school purposes and present an opportunity to conceal contraband; therefore, they will not be allowed. Pants will be worn at the waistline, regardless of length of the shirt. Pants are expected to be worn with a belt if necessary to keep pants at an appropriate level. No holes in pants above the knee.
4. Shorts, Capri's, skirts, and dresses, including the peak of a slit on a slit skirt, must extend to the top of the knee. All other are considered too short. This rule will be enforced even if worn with a full length under garment i.e. leggings, biker shorts, etc.
5. All tops must cover the chest area. Garments with plunging or revealing necklines may not be worn.
6. Shoulders must be covered with fabric. Tank-tops, spaghetti straps, strapless tops, off-shoulder tops, halter tops may not be worn.
7. Clothing which reveals undergarments or the lack of undergarments will be considered inappropriate. Clothing revealing a bare midriff is not to be worn. Shirts, tops, and bottoms must be worn in such a manner as to not reveal bare skin or undergarments while performing normal school activities such as sitting, walking, raising one's hand/arm, etc.
8. Clothing which is torn, ripped, or altered in such a manner as to be revealing or a safety issue may not be worn. No pants may be worn that are torn, ripped or have holes above the knee.
9. Hats, hoods or other head coverings, such as bandanas, headbands, may not be worn inside the school building. Hats are to be kept in lockers during the day.
10. Coats may not be worn during school hours unless authorized by the main office.
11. Hooded sweatshirts are permitted to be worn during the school day. The hood shall not be worn up on the student's head at any time. Wearing the hood will result in the student having the sweatshirt confiscated and a parent will be required to pick up the sweatshirt from the main office.

The above noted applies at school, on school grounds, and at school functions on or off school grounds. Repeated acts of inappropriate clothing at school will require a parent to bring properly fitting clothing to school, the student being given detention, Saturday school, In-school suspension, or a recommendation for Out-of-school suspension.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs**

Students under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs are not capable of achieving at a high level which the teachers expect of students at Mt. Vernon Middle School. Therefore, the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has established a firm policy with regards to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Students either in possession, using, transmitting, selling, or under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs, or substances represented to be alcohol, or drugs will be subject to expulsion and arrest. This policy applies to students who are caught on school grounds before, during, or after school, and at school-sponsored activities on or off school property. For further clarification, see School Board Policy 5530.

Recognizing that alcohol and drug usage may occur with some Mt. Vernon Middle School students and that some students want to break their ties to alcohol and drug dependence, Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will assist students who voluntarily seek help. The assistance provided may include school counseling and/or referral to outside agencies. Confidentiality in these matters will be of utmost importance. Students who voluntarily seek help will not be penalized by the school, provided school policies regarding possession or usage on school grounds are not violated (see School Board Policy 5530). Students seeking help can do so by discussing the matter with a classroom teacher, a school guidance counselor, or the school administration.

Student use of tobacco violates several sound principles that the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation supports. First, it is against school and Corporation policies and Indiana Law. Second, smoking in the school building violates state and local fire ordinances. Third, the use of tobacco is contrary to health and safety practices taught in the classroom.

Students caught using and/or in possession of tobacco and/or tobacco products will be subject to suspension and a citation from a law enforcement officer for underage possession of tobacco. Repeated violations will result in a recommendation for expulsion. This policy applies to students who are caught on school property before, during, or after school, and at school-sponsored activities on or off school property.

## **Attendance**

One of the cornerstones of a successful middle school education is the development of regular school attendance patterns. The State of Indiana recognizes attendance as an indicator for successful schools and has made attendance a part of the Four Star School Status. Mt. Vernon Middle School has received this award 5 times during the past decade. An averaged daily attendance rate of 97% meets one of the criteria for Four Star Status. This means that all students should miss less than 5 ½ days of school. In addition to this status, regular school attendance is a key element for students to mature intellectually and socially. If a student is

going to be absent from school for the day, a phone call must be received by the attendance secretary (485-3160 EXT 2163) before 9:15 a.m. each day. Failure to contact the attendance secretary will result in the child receiving an unexcused absence. In addition, the attendance secretary will contact parents/guardians about the child's absence. A parent phone call within three days of the absence will excuse the absence. Students who have been absent due to illness should not return to school until they are "fever free" for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol.

### **Absence Homework Policy**

Daily absence homework assignments are available to students via the homework our website at [www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/mvms](http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/mvms) (please see Homework Central). Upon parent request, worksheets and handouts will be gathered after a student has accumulated three or more days of being absent. Please contact the attendance secretary to make this request. Upon a student's return for an absence, the student will be allowed one day to make up work for each day the student was absent. Late work is not accepted. However, individual teachers reserve the right to accept late work due to extenuating circumstances. After a student receives three zeros in a single class, a detention will be assigned.

### **Pre-Arranged Excused Absence for a Family Vacation**

When a student is going to be out of school for a family trip, he/she must have a parent contact the school in advance of the absence. Under normal circumstances, the contact must be at least two days in advance of the absence. Final approval for the absence will be made by the principal/designee. Teachers will be notified of the absence and the student will be responsible for requesting make-up assignments. If no parent contact is made prior to the absence, the absence will be unexcused.

No pre-arranged excused absence for a family trip will be granted during the last five (5) days of any semester; when a student has accumulated ten (10) absences or more during the school year; or when the requested number of days exceeds ten (10) absences; or used to extend Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, or Spring Break. No pre-arranged excused absence is to be longer than three (3) school days. Any days in excess of this number will be considered unexcused. The student must be accompanied on the trip by a parent, guardian, or grandparent. This type of absence may be used only once per academic school year.

### **Reasons for an Excused Absence**

According to School Board policy, the valid reasons for school absences are illness of the student, a death in the family, court appointments, required church observances, quarantines, and exclusion from school because of exposure to contagious diseases. Students will be counted present when acting a page in the legislature or when attending activities under the sponsorship of the school.

### **State Fair Attendance Policy**

Mt. Vernon students who are formally participating in sanctioned activities for the State Fair (competing, exhibiting, etc.), will be given an excused absence when such is requested at least one week ahead of time through the building principal/designee.

## **Take Your Daughter and/or Son to Work Day**

If a parent or guardian wishes to take a child to work with them on a designated “Take Your Daughter and/or Son to Work Day,” the parent or guardian should apply for a prearranged absence as described above.

## **Tardiness to School**

Students who are late to school in the morning or to their first class during the day will be counted tardy. When a student receives his/her third tardy in a nine-week period, he/she will be assigned a detention. Continued tardiness may result in Saturday School, In-School or Out-of-School Suspension, or recommendation for due process for expulsion. Students who arrive late due to morning medical appointments will not be assigned a detention for their appointment as long as documentation of the appointment is provided.

## **Tardiness to Class**

Students not present in the classroom when the tardy bell rings will be counted tardy. A student will receive a detention for every third tardy to class he/she receives. Teams and connections teachers may have tardy policies that are stricter. If those policies have been given to the students and are on file in the main office, they will apply. Students are permitted 4 minutes passing time between each class.

## **Unexcused Absence**

A student is assigned an unexcused absence when it is determined that the student missed school for no legitimate reason, according to the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education policy dealing with attendance. Additionally, students will receive an unexcused absence if a parent has not contacted the school to state a legitimate absence. Students who leave the building during the school day and do not get permission before leaving school will also receive an unexcused absence regardless of the reason.

Students who have unexcused absences from school will receive a two (2) percent deduction in their grades for their classes. (per School Board Policy) At 6 days of unexcused absences, a warning letter will be sent out. If a student has more than 10 days of unexcused absences, they may have their situation referred to the Hancock County Probation department for possible legal action. Recommendation for expulsion could occur and grade retention may occur for the following school year.

Students who are truant to school or are found cutting class will be assigned to Saturday School upon their first infraction. Repeated acts will result in a possible out-of-school suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

## **General Transportation Information**

Students are expected to be waiting at their designated boarding station when the bus is to arrive. Bus drivers will strive to keep a consistent day-to-day schedule; however, snow or other circumstances beyond the driver’s control may affect pick-up times. Drivers cannot be expected to wait for students. Parents are encouraged to contact Mt. Vernon Community School

Corporation's Transportation Department (485-3100) or the bus driver if they know their child will not attend school or will not be riding the bus on a given day.

Students may ride a bus to which he/she is not assigned only by presenting the driver with a permission slip signed by the parent and the principal/designee. The parental signing may be waived if a note is supplied along with the permission slip.

### After School Activity Buses

Activity buses are available to Mt. Vernon students after regular school hours to assist parents in transporting students after events and practices at the schools. Students must purchase an Activity Bus Pass (either daily, semester or school year) to ride the Activity Bus. Passes are on sale at the school office. Activity Buses will leave the High school, Middle school, at approximately 5:30 PM each school day except when announced otherwise. Buses will load first at the intermediate school, then at the middle school and finally at the high school.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure they are on the correct bus. Note that the Activity Buses do not provide door to door service and only drop off students at designated stops. It is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation for their students from the designated stops. Designated stops throughout the school corporation are listed below. There are 2 Activity buses covering the MV area.

#### McCORDSVILLE /FORTVILLE AREA BUS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Stops at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McCordsville Park</li> <li>• McCordsville Elementary School (drop off at front doors)</li> <li>• Entrance of Stansbury/Easton</li> <li>• Entrance of Austin Trace (entrance off of Carroll Rd.)</li> <li>• Entrance of Gateway Crossing (entrance off of 67)</li> <li>• Entrance of Emerald Springs</li> <li>• Entrance of Bay Creek East /also for Bay Creek off of 900N- students use walking path between subdivisions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance of Highland Springs off of 600W</li> <li>• Entrance of Bay Creek West (right side of road)</li> <li>• Entrance of Deer Crossing off of 900N</li> <li>• Entrance of Flat Rock Creek</li> <li>• Corner of Staat and Main Streets.</li> <li>• Timber Ridge at the corner of Leland and Delaware in Timber Ridge</li> <li>• Village Apartments</li> <li>• Entrance of Helmcrest</li> <li>• Entrance of Blossom Trace</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

#### MOUNT COMFORT AREA BUS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Stops at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mohawk 4-way stop 200 W &amp; 400 N</li> <li>• Entrance of Woodhaven Subdivision.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mt. Comfort Elementary (drop off at front doors)</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

### Bus Conduct Rules

Safety in the transportation of our students is a paramount concern. Consequently, strict adherence to rules and procedures is expected from students aboard our buses at all times. A school bus is an educational setting and the grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in this handbook apply to discipline situations aboard buses and at bus stops as they do in a school's classrooms. Students may be suspended or expelled from school as a consequence of their behavior aboard a bus or at a bus stop. In addition, Indiana Code provided that upon the recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities may deny the privilege of riding a bus to any pupil whose behavior so warrants.

The following sequences of events may be expected by students who commit **minor infractions** of rules or acceptable standards of behavior while aboard a bus:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| First Offense  | Driver-student conference.   |
| Second Offense | Referral to school administration. Referral to the school administration will result in a warning. |
| Third Offense  | Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of one day.   |
| Fourth Offense | Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of three days   |
| Fifth Offense  | Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of five days  |
| Sixth Offense  | Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.                                 |

**Minor offenses** of student discipline aboard the buses include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Failing to stay seated properly while the bus is in motion.
2. Using loud, boisterous, or profane language.
3. Using hands, feet, or body in an objectionable or aggressive manner.
4. Possessing nuisance materials and objects such as radios, cell phones, electronic devices, toys, pets, balls, aerosol containers, etc. Students may carry such objects and materials to and from school with the driver's permission, provided that the driver's instructions for doing so are followed closely.
5. Opening windows without permission.
6. Other violations of the school discipline code and rules of conduct, or laws of the State of Indiana.
7. Eating or drinking on the bus without the driver's permission.

The following sequence of events may be expected by students who commit **major infractions** of rules, or standards of acceptable behavior:

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| First Offense  | Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of one day.            |
| Second Offense | Suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of three days          |
| Third Offense  | Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year |

**Major offenses** of student discipline aboard buses include, but are not limited to:

1. Moving about the bus in any fashion that endangers themselves and/or other students.
2. Throwing any objects or placing any body part out of the window on the bus.
3. Opening emergency exits without reasonable cause and/or permission.
4. Fighting
5. Vandalism
6. Other violations of the school discipline code and rules of conduct, or the laws of the State of Indiana.
7. Possession of any hazardous materials on bus. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the types of items: finger nail polish remover, hazardous chemicals of any kind, open cologne bottles, lighter fluid etc...

## Student Code of Conduct

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The student is responsible to the school for his/her actions from the time he/she leaves home in the morning until he/she returns home after school. Administrators and teachers are expected to

maintain discipline since they stand in place of the parents during the school day. Observance of the laws of good citizenship shall be required of all Mt. Vernon Middle School students. Classroom aides, lunch aides and school bus drivers have the same authority as a classroom teacher.

The behavior and conduct of students attending Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation shall reflect the standards of good citizenship, high morality, self-discipline, and responsibility for one's own actions that should characterize all members of a democratic society. To this end, positive discipline is a necessary element and provides all students with a healthy learning environment. The Board of School Trustees of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has declared certain student misconduct as grounds for suspension or expulsion from school. Said misconduct shall include, but not be limited to the following acts:

### **SHOWING OF AFFECTION**

Attraction of middle school students is natural and will occur at Mt. Vernon Middle School. Unfortunately, there are times where students will act inappropriately with their feelings toward other students. It is because of this that students refrain from holding hands or kissing at Mt. Vernon Middle School.

### **STUDENT HAZING**

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education believes that hazing activities are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in the school facilities, on school property, or at any Corporation-sponsored event. Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act for initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lesion the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Administrators, faculty members, and other employees of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation shall be alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed by the discoverer of the prohibitions contained in this policy and shall be ordered to end all hazing activities or planned activities immediately. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Students, faculty members, administrators, and other employees who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana.

### **HARASSMENT**

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education recognizes that a student has a right to learn in an environment that is untainted by any form of harassment or discrimination. Offensive conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with learning performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, discriminatory, or offensive learning environment disrupts the educational process and impedes the legitimate pedagogical concerns of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. The harassment of a student by a fellow student or staff member of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is strictly forbidden.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

This topic includes all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal contact, or physical contact of a sexual nature. Other prohibited conduct includes that which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, discriminatory, or offensive learning environment on the basis of gender, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, and/or disability.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as overt, repeated acts/gestures including verbal or written communications transmitted; physical acts committed; or any behaviors committed by a student or a group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student. Because of this, no student shall bully another student on school grounds, immediately before, during, or after school hours, or at any time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or while using property or equipment provided by the school. Internet bullying (myspace.com, facebook, etc.) will also be considered within the grounds of bullying at school. Many times, this form of bullying is carried over into the school and may result in disciplinary action from the school. Indiana State Law requires all schools to follow strict guidelines dealing with bullying.

**Possible disciplinary actions for bullying include: A warning, parent notification by phone or letter, after school detention, Saturday School, Suspension from school, and/or recommendation for expulsion from attendance at Mt. Vernon Middle School.**

## **STUDENT MISCONDUCT AND/OR SUBSTANTIAL DISOBEDIENCE**

**A. Student Misconduct and/or Substantial Disobedience-** The grounds for suspension and expulsion listed below apply when a student is on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group. These also apply if a student is off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; while traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or during summer school.

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this rule:
  - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
  - b. Blocking the entrance of exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
  - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
  - d. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or educational function, or any meeting or assembly on school property.

- e. Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any other person to conduct or participate in an educational function.
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing, or attempting to steal school property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing, or attempting to steal private property.
4. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way that could reasonably cause physical injury to a person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person does not constitute a violation of this rule. Self defense does not mean causing injury to the other person involved.
5. Threatening or intimidating any person for any purpose, including obtaining money or anything of value from the student.
6. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
7. Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, is represented to be a weapon, or looks like a weapon. This includes toy guns, knives, or similar objects.
8. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event. Prescribed use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this rule; however, the prescribed medication must be held in the Health Room along with the documentation. If prescription or over-the-counter medication is kept by students, all disciplinary action is in effect.
9. Possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, tobacco product, or intoxicant of any kind.
10. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by caffeine-based substances, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), or stimulants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription.
11. Engaging in the selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other persons or constitutes an interference with school purposes or any educational function.
12. Failing in any number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
13. Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or violating a school rule, and/or a state or federal law.
14. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
15. Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules or state or federal law.
16. Violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function, including but not limited to:
  - a. engaging in sexual behavior on school property;
  - b. disobedience of administrative authority;

- c. willful absence or tardiness of students;
  - d. engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry or hair style, which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or offensive to school purposes;
  - e. failing to tell the truth about any matter under investigation by school personnel;
  - f. possessing or using a laser pointer or similar device.
17. Possessing or using an electronic paging device or cell phone in any situation on school grounds during school hours. This includes text messaging.
  18. Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.

## **B. Possessing a Firearm**

1. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.
2. The following devices are considered to be a firearm under this rule:
  - a. any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
  - b. the frame or receiver of any weapon described above;
  - c. any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
  - d. any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or similar device;
  - e. any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter;
  - f. any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled;
  - g. an antique firearm;
  - h. a rifle or a shotgun which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes;
  - i. a lighter or accelerant capable of causing harm to students, faculty, administration, or building.
3. The penalty for possession of a firearm will include law enforcement being notified. The student will receive a suspension up to ten days and recommendation for expulsion. The expulsion from school will be for a minimum of one year with the return of the student to occur at the beginning for the first semester after the one year period. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, may reduce the length of the expulsion if the circumstances warrant such reduction.
4. The Superintendent will notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

## **C. Possessing a Deadly Weapon**

1. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any deadly weapon on school property.
2. The following devices are considered to be deadly weapons as defined in IC 35-41-1-8: a weapon, taser, or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substance, or other material that in the manner it is used, or could be ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury.

3. The penalty for possession of a deadly weapon includes a suspension up to ten days and expulsion from school for a period of time up to one calendar year.
4. The Superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

#### **D. Unlawful Activity**

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

#### **E. Legal Settlement**

A student may be expelled if it is determined that the student's legal settlement is not in the attendance area of the school where the student is enrolled.

Repeated violations of these rules could result in expulsion from school. Students who are suspended (in-school or out-of-school) are excluded from participating in or attending all school activities on the day(s) that the suspension occurs.

For further clarification of student conduct, refer to Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education Policy 5000-Students.

#### **POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS**

**CLASS EXCLUSION:** During class exclusion, a student is assigned to the office during a specific class for up to five days. While in the office, the student will complete class work assigned by the teacher. In addition, a Saturday School will be assigned for the behavior incident.

**SOCIAL PROBATION:** Any student who has been involved in an infraction of school rules, or has been found to be in academic non-compliance, may be placed on Social Probation by the administrative staff, in addition to, or in lieu of, other disciplinary actions. Social Probation will be for a definite time period during which critical examination and evaluation of the student's progress should take place.

During the probation period, the student may be denied the privilege of participating in, or attendance at all extracurricular activities (including field trips). If the student is further involved in an infraction of school rules during the probationary period, he/she will be subject to whatever disciplinary action is set forth in the probationary agreement. The parent/guardian will be notified that the student is being placed on Social Probation including the length of the period, the terms of the probation, and the possible consequences of suspension/expulsion if the student is found in further violation of school rules.

**DETENTION:** Detention is used for relatively minor violations of school rules. Detention is an after school study period. Students are supervised during detention by a teacher or administrator. Students are required to bring materials to read or study. Detentions are held on Thursdays from

3:20 to 5:25. Students assigned to detention must abide by the rules of the detention. Students who are disruptive or otherwise unable to abide by the detention rules will be assigned a Saturday School. Failure by a student to serve a detention will result in the following:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| First Offense  | Students will be assigned a Saturday School  |
| Second Offense | Students will be assigned a Saturday School  |
| Third Offense  | Students will be assigned to a day of In-School Suspension                                       |
| Fourth Offense | Students will be assigned to a day of In-School Suspension                                       |
| Fifth Offense  | Recommendation for expulsion made to the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Superintendent. |

**SATURDAY SCHOOL:** The Saturday School program is offered by the school to keep students in school, and to provide study assistance and personal guidance. A staff member supervises Saturday School. Saturday School meets at Mt. Vernon Middle School from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. It should be clearly understood that students face immediate Out-of-School Suspension, for up to ten days, if they are guilty of any of the following:

1. Being tardy to Saturday School. The main entrance of the Middle School is locked promptly at 8:00 a.m.
2. Failure to attend Saturday School.
3. Misconduct during Saturday School.
4. Failure to come to Saturday School prepared with books and supplies.
5. Failure to complete assignments during Saturday School.

Repeated violations of Saturday School guidelines will result in a recommendation for expulsion.

**IN- SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** In-School Suspension was created as an alternative to Out-of-School Suspension. Students assigned to ISS may not participate in any sports or extracurricular activities on the day(s) they are assigned. If a student is assigned to ISS, he/she is isolated from the rest of the student population. Assignments for the student are brought to the ISS room and are expected to be completed upon the return to the class. Students will receive full credit for any work completed in ISS. Middle School instructional aids supervise ISS. If a student violates the rules of ISS, he/she may be suspended from school for up to ten days.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Out-of-School Suspension is used when a student is guilty of a major violation of school rules or when a student is guilty of repeated violations of school rules. Students suspended from attendance at Mt. Vernon Middle School are not permitted to participate in any sport or extracurricular activity on the day(s) they are assigned.

Mt. Vernon Middle School participates in the Hancock County Out-of-School Day Reporting Program. The purpose of this program is to continue educational services and provide supervision for students who have been suspended from school. Students are assigned to the Suspension Center, located at 35 E. Pierson Street, Greenfield, IN. The student's assignments will be provided each day the student is assigned to the center. Full credit for completed assignments will be given upon the student's return to school. Transportation to and from the OSS Center is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. Failure to attend the center will result in an unexcused absence due to truancy. Each truancy will count toward the number of trancies used to determine habitual truancy.

**EXPULSION:** Expulsion is the removal of a student from school for a period exceeding ten days. An expulsion is usually for the remainder of a semester, but can carry over up to a calendar year. An expulsion would result in the loss of all credits for that period of time.

**DUE PROCESS:** All students attending Mt. Vernon Middle School shall be afforded the right to due process regarding suspensions, expulsions, and exclusions as outlined in the Indiana Code 20-8.1-1-17 (Burns 28-5303 and 38-5390). Such a right entitles the student and his/her parents to a hearing as outlined by the statute in the case of an expulsion or exclusion, which is a period of time exceeding ten days. The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Board of Education in conjunction with the Indiana Code have adopted and listed those reasons, which could result in the suspension, expulsion, or exclusion of a student from school which is outlined in this section.

# Student Athlete Guidelines

## Mt. Vernon Fight Song

Hail, Hail! To Mt. Vernon High  
 Hail to the Gold and White  
 We will be loyal to you  
 Through battles tried and true.  
 Fight, Fight, Fight!  
 Fighting Marauders are we  
 On to victory!  
 We are proud to sing  
 All the praises of  
 Our Mt. Vernon High!  
 M-A-R-A-U-D-E-R-S  
 Marauders, Marauders, Are the BEST!

## Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Profile

Mt. Vernon Middle School has developed a strong tradition in athletics. The entire school and community take great pride in the accomplishments of Marauder athletic teams. Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic teams reflect the school's philosophy and commitment to excellence.

Mt. Vernon Middle School offers a total of twelve different sports. All students with sufficient ability are eligible to participate in athletics at the Middle School, provided they meet the scholastic standards and conduct requirements established by the Middle School athletic department and detailed in the subsequent pages.

Mt. Vernon Middle School is a charter member of the Hoosier Heritage Conference (HHC). Other HHC member schools include Delta, Greenfield-Central, New Palestine, Pendleton Heights, Rushville, Shelbyville, and Yorktown. In addition, Mt. Vernon Middle School proudly competes with the other three schools in Hancock County: Greenfield-Central, New Palestine, and Eastern Hancock. Mt. Vernon's athletic squads compete for conference and county championships in most of our sports.

### Sports Offered at Mt. Vernon Middle School

| <u>Fall Season</u>        | <u>Winter Season</u>          | <u>Spring Season</u>       |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Cheerleading (7-8)        | Boys A & B Basketball (6-8)*  | Boys Baseball (7-8)        |
| Boys Cross Country (6-8)  | Girls A & B Basketball (6-8)* | Boys Golf (6-8)*           |
| Girls Cross Country (6-8) | Cheerleading (6-8)*           | Girls Golf (6-8)*          |
| Boys Football (7-8)       | Boys Swimming (6-8)           | Girls Softball (7-8)       |
| Girls Volleyball (7-8)    | Girls Swimming (6-8)          | Boys Track & Field (6-8)*  |
| Boys Soccer (6-8)         | Wrestling (6-8)               | Girls Track & Field (6-8)* |
| Girls Soccer (6-8)        |                               |                            |

## Athletic Staff

Carey Cole, Athletic Director  
(317) 485-3160, EXT 2162  
[carey.cole@mvcsc.k12.in.us](mailto:carey.cole@mvcsc.k12.in.us)

Stephanie Evans, Athletic Secretary  
(317) 485-3160, EXT 2163  
[stephanie.evans@mvcsc.k12.in.us](mailto:stephanie.evans@mvcsc.k12.in.us)

## Introduction of Marauder Athletics for Students and Parents

### To Parents

Mt. Vernon Middle School believes that participation in any extracurricular activity provides many opportunities and experiences that assist students in their personal growth and development. The Athletic Department encourages the development of young men and women through athletics, and feels that a controlled, well-organized sports program meets student's needs of self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is the goal of the Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletics to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and able to further each student's educational and social maturity.

### To Students

Being a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic team is a fulfillment of an ambition for many students; however, participation carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. An athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many individuals over many years. As a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic squad, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, and you will be challenged to uphold it.

**Responsibilities to Yourself:** The most important of these responsibilities is to develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the most from your experiences here. Your academic studies, combined with your participation in Mt. Vernon Middle School athletics and other extracurricular activities will do much to prepare you for life as an adult.

**Responsibilities to Your School and to Others:** Another responsibility you assume is to represent your school in the best way possible. Mt. Vernon Middle School cannot maintain its reputation as an outstanding school unless you do your best in all of the activities with which you are involved. By participating to the best of your ability, you contribute to your school's reputation. You assume a leadership role when you become an athlete. The student body, our community, and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field/court. Because of this role, you can contribute greatly to your school spirit and community pride. Make Mt. Vernon Middle School proud of you, and your community proud of your school! As a squad member, you also bear a responsibility to your teammates, your family, and to future athletes. When you know in your heart that you have given your all at practice and in competition, your teammates and family will be proud of you. Remember that being a member of a Mt. Vernon Middle School team means that all eyes are focused on you, and students of all ages will look up to you. They will copy you in many ways, whether you realize it or not. Always set a good example and always do your best.

# **Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct**

## **Statement of Adoption**

The specific rules and regulations governing Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic programs have been reviewed and agreed upon by the administration of Mt. Vernon Middle School, and are consistent with the policies of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon Middle School.

## **Philosophy**

Participation in school athletics is a privilege that carries with it varying degrees of honor, responsibility, and sacrifice. Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes are representing Mt. Vernon Middle School and the school community. Since athletes represent their school and student body, it is their duty to conduct themselves in a manner that is healthy and positive for themselves, their family, their school, and their community. Therefore, athletes are expected to represent the school well and abide by the rules established in this handbook. Our code, like that of Mt. Vernon High School and other middle and high schools, is intended to serve as a deterrent to unacceptable student behavior. However, it is extremely important that our code provides avenues for obtaining help in an attempt to modify student behavior when deemed necessary.

An athlete's conduct in and out of school shall be such as not to reflect discredit upon their school and not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, and moral or educational environment in the school. It is recognized that the Principal, acting under the advisement of the Athletic Director, faculty, and staff, and by the administrative authority vested in that office, may exclude such contestants from representing the school.

## **Scope**

This code applies to all students connected to the athletic program of Mt. Vernon Middle School and shall govern inclusively all athletes, managers, trainers, and cheerleaders (collectively, "athletes"). The participants, having received this code, must agree to be bound by its contents. Athletes shall be considered in violation of this code if they use, consume, or possess alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or illicit controlled substances (drugs), or if they commit a felony or engage in acts of vandalism, theft, acts of disrespect, hazing, or actions unbecoming an athlete. The Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct is in effect twenty-four (24) hours a day, twelve (12) months a year.

## **Additional Training Rules**

The Mt. Vernon Middle School Athletic Department delegates to the coach the responsibility of developing a reasonable set of training rules for athletes. Two important conditions are made when making these rules:

1. Rules may not be in conflict with the general rules and policies of Mt. Vernon Middle School, or specific Athletic Department Rule, and
2. All rules should be discussed with the squad prior to the beginning of practice at the first practice session.

Those training rules are considered as valid and binding in addition to this code.

## **Rules and Regulations**

**Absences Due to Injury/Illness:** An athlete who misses five (5) consecutive days of school or athletic participation due to illness or injury must obtain written permission from a physician and present this to the Athletic Director or coach before they again become eligible for participation. Additional practices are required before regaining eligibility for competitions after an extended absence due to illness or injury.

**Academic Eligibility:** Mt. Vernon Middle School has established the following policy for academic eligibility:

1. Academic eligibility will be checked at the end of each nine-weeks and at progress report time.
2. A student who receives two failing grades will be ineligible from any athletic participation, including tryouts for a sport. The athlete will become eligible at the end of the next grade check period (either progress report or end of the quarter) if he/she raises the grade to a passing level.

Students should manage their time in order to attend all practices, competitions, and other school functions to achieve high marks in their courses at Mt. Vernon Middle School. If a student athlete fails in managing their time wisely, they should not be involved in athletics. Academics must always be a higher priority than athletics.

**Age Eligibility:** Athletes may not have reached their sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) birthday on or before the date of the last possible contest for the sport in which the athletes participate. The last possible contest is defined as the last contest which is scheduled or, if a tournament is the last scheduled contest, the championship match of the tournament.

**Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) Use:** The usage and/or possession of illicit drugs, alcohol, and tobacco in any form will not be permitted. Please be advised that being in attendance at a party or any place where the illegal possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco occurs may be grounds for suspension from athletic participation. In keeping with the policies and procedures of the Mt. Vernon High School athletic department, athletes engaging in the use and/or possession of these illicit substances will be disciplined as follows:

### **First Violation:**

1. The student shall be excluded from all athletic participation and competition for 365 days (one calendar year) from the day that said violation is confirmed as fact
2. The student may reduce the penalty to fifty percent (50%) of the contests in each sport the student participates in for 365 days (one calendar year) by submitting to a substance abuse program of assessment, counseling, screening, and/or indicated therapy. The program must have been approved by the middle school administration and may include a recommendation for parents/guardians to participate. The cost of the program is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. The student will serve the remainder of the entire suspension if the Athletic Director is notified that the student has violated any of the stated conditions of the substance abuse program.
3. The total penalty will be reduced to twenty five percent (25%) of the contests in each sport the student participates in for 365 days (one calendar year) if the student or the student's parents/guardians report the violation to the Principal, Athletic Director, or head coach prior to a school official's independent confirmation of a violation. The student must also submit to a substance abuse program as described above.

**Second Violation:**

1. The student will be suspended from all athletic participation for 365 days (one calendar year) from the day that the second violation is confirmed as fact.

This policy includes the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs when used off school grounds. The use of these substances on school grounds will be handled by the school administration and will generally result in expulsion, which may result in the student forfeiting his/her privilege to participate in athletics at Mt. Vernon Middle School for the remainder of the athlete's middle school career.

**Amateurism:** Students shall not play under assumed names, accept payment directly or indirectly from athletic participation, or participate in athletic activities, tryouts, auditions, practices, and games held or sponsored by professional athletic organizations, clubs, or their representatives.

**Athletic Fee:** All athletes have a once per year Athletic fee. This fee helps cover the cost of transportation to and from competitions. If your athlete is in multiple sports, families are expected to pay this fee for their first sport of the school year only.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to make school attendance their first priority. Students must be in attendance at school by 11:00 a.m. and attend all afternoon classes to be eligible for extracurricular activities that day. Exceptions to this would be a prearranged absence or a school related function. A medical appointment or family emergency during the afternoon will also be exempted if the student attends school prior to the contest.

**Awards:** All students who successfully complete a season with a given sport will be awarded a Certificate of Participation acknowledging their work and commitment to the team throughout the season. In addition, special awards will be given at the conclusion of each school year:

1. Outstanding Athlete Awards: Two individuals (one boy and one girl) shall be chosen from each grade by the coaching staff and school administration as Outstanding Athletes. These individuals will be honored with a special certificate and the entering of their names on a plaque to be displayed at school.
2. Three Sport Award: those individuals who participate in three sports (one in each season) during their seventh and eighth grade years shall be recognized as recipients of the Three Sport Award at the conclusion of their eighth grade year. Recipients will be honored with a certificate and a medal acknowledging their accomplishments.

**Changing Sports:** If an athlete is cut from a team, the athlete may join another team or program in that sport season. Otherwise, an athlete cannot quit one sport to join another until that team is no longer competing. For example, an athlete cannot quit basketball to try out for wrestling until the basketball season has concluded, or until that student has been cut from the basketball program. If an athlete is removed from a team for any reason other than being cut (quitting, rule violation, loss of eligibility, etc.), that athlete will not be allowed to participate in any practice, conditioning program, or weight room activity for any sport until the team from which the athlete was removed is no longer competing. *An athlete may not participate in more than one sport in any given season.*

**Chain of Communication:** For purposes of resolving disputes, an athlete should speak first with the coach. If the athlete is unable to resolve the dispute, the athlete should then involve

his/her parents, who should meet with the coach. If an acceptable resolution still cannot be reached, the parents should contact the Athletic Director, who under guidance and input of the Principal, shall be the final arbiter of all disputes.

**Cheerleading:** Cheerleading is considered a sport at Mt. Vernon Middle School. All requirements for participation listed here shall apply equally to cheerleaders. The cheerleading coach establishes the procedure for selection of cheerleaders, and the decisions made are final.

**Conduct and Character:** Athletes conduct, in and out of school, shall be such as not to reflect discredit upon Mt. Vernon Middle School, and not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, or moral or educational environment in the school. Athletes who violate this rule may be excluded from representing Mt. Vernon Middle School in athletic participation. *Misconduct that leads to an in-school or out-of-school suspension may result in athletic probation and/or suspension from athletics for up to one (1) year.* Only ladies and gentlemen will represent Mt. Vernon Middle School in interscholastic activities.

**Conflicts with Non-Athletic Extracurricular Activities:** Mt. Vernon Middle School recognizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. However, students should be cautious about participating in too many activities. Conversely, students are also cautioned to refrain from “specializing” in one activity, thus denying themselves a well-rounded school experience. The administration has made every effort to reduce the number of conflicts between athletics and other extracurricular pursuits. If a conflict does arise, the student is encouraged to communicate with all coaches and sponsors involved. If the conflict persists, the student and/or the student’s parent should contact the Athletic Director for assistance. A commitment to a school team indicates that all non-school conflicts should be resolved in favor of the school team. Of course, significant religious holidays, family weddings, and funerals come first.

**Disciplinary Eligibility:** In accordance with the policies set forth by the school administration and athletic director, disciplinary eligibility will be determined by a student’s position in the STEP program, established in the section of this handbook “Student/Teacher Expectation Plan (STEP)”

**Equipment Issue and Return:** Mt. Vernon Middle School strives to provide each team member with the best and safest equipment available. Any equipment issued to an athlete must be returned in the same condition (with expected wear and tear) as when issued or the athlete is expected to compensate the athletic department for the lost or damaged equipment. Failure to return equipment or to compensate the school for lost or damaged equipment will result in forfeiture of an award earned in that sport, and may render the athlete ineligible for future sports (until restitution is made).

**Grooming and Appearance:** Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes act as representatives of the school and community and therefore are expected to exhibit a well-groomed and appropriate appearance. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people’s opinion of athletes, the team, and the school. Once an athlete has chosen to be a member of a squad, he/she has made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in this community. The Principal, Athletic Director, and coaches will determine guidelines as needed concerning the appearance of athletes within the context of safety and accepted social norms. It should be noted, however, that school dress codes apply when an athlete is not in uniform, including when at practice, on trips, before games, and after games.

**Injuries and Medical Care:** All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor, trainer, or treatment center, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity. Injuries that occur while not participating in athletics at Mt. Vernon Middle School should also be reported, in the interest of promoting the athlete's safety.

**Insurance:** Mt. Vernon Middle School administrators and coaches are safety conscious and are trained to instruct athletes in the safe and proper techniques of each sport. Due to the nature of athletic activity, injuries may occur. While the school provides the opportunity for such participation, the parent retains the right of denial of such participation and must carry the responsibility for providing medical care and insurance coverage for their son/daughter. Parents are strongly encouraged to have a family insurance policy that covers athletic injuries and the cost of treatment, or to purchase insurance specifically for that purpose. ***It should be noted that Mt. Vernon Middle School does not carry any kind of first-dollar medical insurance for athletic injuries.***

**Nutritional Supplements:** Mt. Vernon Middle School does not encourage or endorse the use of any type of nutritional supplement. The use of products such as protein supplements, amino acid supplements, creatine, weight gain/loss products, or any other items, while not illegal, is a decision that must be made by the athlete and his/her parents, in consultation with a physician.

**Pay to Participate:**

Pay to participate has been approved by the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. The Middle School non-sport club/activity/group fee is \$25 per person per club/activity/group. The Middle School sport participation fee is \$100 per person per sport. Participation fees are in addition to any other fee charged. All students will pay the fees listed for all groups, activities, clubs and sports. No discounts are given for students who participate in multiple sports/clubs/activities/groups. If not enough students participate in a sport, activity, club, or group, either the group will pay the balance of the cost or the activity will be cancelled. If the activity is cancelled by the corporation, students will receive a refund. Otherwise, **participation fees are non-refundable.**

**Parent Meetings:** Parents are expected to attend an informational meeting conducted by the athletic department for each sport in which their child is active. Meetings will be held according to the schedule printed in this handbook, and information on the meetings is available from the Athletic Director.

**Parent and Student Certification:** At the beginning of this handbook, is a form acknowledging and accepting the rules contained in the handbook. The signature of both the athlete and a parent is required, and indicates that each has read and understood these stated policies, and agrees to be bound by them.

**Physical Examination:** Students desiring to participate in interscholastic athletics must undergo a physical examination performed by a licensed medical doctor prior to the first practice of the sport in which the student will participate. The physical must be recent, having been conducted no earlier than May 1 of the school year prior to the year in which the student wishes to compete. The physical form may be obtained from the Mt. Vernon Middle School Main Office. Additionally, students must complete and sign the included medical history and emergency contact information in order to be eligible for participation. Parents interested in reduced-cost physicals should contact the Athletic Director.

**Practice Sessions:** Practice sessions will be held prior to the beginning of competition, under the supervision of the coaching staff. Team practices are open to team members and school staff only. Generally, practices are not held on days when school is dismissed early. Coaches may schedule practices Monday through Saturday, and some coaches elect to hold practices during school breaks. Athletes are expected to attend practice when present at school and in accordance with the coach's policy on practice attendance, unless prior arrangement has been made with the coach. Coaches may suspend an athlete from competition if the athlete misses too many practices, or a practice immediately preceding a competition.

**Responsibility to Team:** Student athletes must remember that their responsibility to the team does not end with the conclusion of a day's practice or competition. Participants should not do anything unnecessary to endanger their health or ability to participate while on school breaks, at home, or during the weekend. Additionally, students should remember that all of the rules are in effect at all times during which an athlete is involved in a Mt. Vernon Middle School athletic program, including outside of school hours.

**Sportsmanship:** Sportsmanship is an honorable quality that embodies courtesy, fairness, and respect. It is a blending of cheers for the home team and applause for the visitors, observing both the letter and the spirit of the rules, and showing consideration for opponents. In effect, practicing good sportsmanship is practicing the Golden Rule as it pertains to athletic contests. Coaches and athletes should remember that bad sportsmanship is unacceptable in representing Mt. Vernon Middle School. Spectators should realize that an admission ticket is a privilege to observe a contest and support an activity, and not a license to verbally assault others.

**Supervision Before, During, and After Extracurricular Events:** Coaches and sponsors have an obligation to the school and to parents to provide supervision of athletes during practices and events. However, *students are not allowed to stay after school* unless the practice or event in which the student is involved begins immediately after school, or unless the coach or designated adult agrees to supervise the students. Additionally, students must arrange for transportation after a practice or event. While the coach has a responsibility to make sure that all students are picked up, students and parents should respect the coach enough to be prompt in arranging for pickup after a practice or event.

**Ticket Information:** Mt. Vernon Middle School charges admission at many of its sporting events. Paid admission tickets help to make it possible for Mt. Vernon Middle School to provide its students the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics. This revenue supports the purchase of uniforms, equipment, and supplies for all of the sports offered at Mt. Vernon Middle School. The athletic department sincerely appreciates the outstanding community support its programs receive from its patrons. Single admission tickets will be \$3.00 for adults and students. Preschoolers are admitted free to Mt. Vernon Middle School sporting events. In addition, people over the age of 60 will be admitted free. A single event immediate family ticket will also be available for \$12.00 at any event. This ticket will admit parents and their children to the event, but *all family members s must be present when the ticket is purchased.*

**Travel:** Mt. Vernon Middle School athletes are required to travel to away athletic contests and special events in school approved vehicles (buses) under adult supervision provided by Mt. Vernon Middle School. Parents may arrange with the coach to pick up their child after the game, but parents must provide the coach notice in accordance with the coach's stated policy.