



# **Parent-Student Handbook Vernon Middle School 2026-2027**

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# **WELCOME TO VERNON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

The staff and I would like to welcome you and your student to Vernon Middle School! We look forward to working with you!

In our effort to help you become better informed about the educational experience at VMS, we have prepared this handbook. I hope that it will answer some of the questions that you may have over the year and give you the basic information concerning our programs, rules, and regulations. Please keep this handbook available for ready reference during the year.

We can have a successful year if students are in school daily and abide by the rules outlined in the handbook. Welcome to Vernon!

Mr. Cochran

## ***Marion Independent School District Mission Statement***

Foster a community of learners in developing the knowledge and skills to be future-ready.

## ***Vernon Middle School Vision Statement***

Vernon Middle School exists to provide a safe, supportive environment where students are expected to reach a high level of academic achievement as determined by district and state standards. As a team, we will identify, evaluate, and make accommodations based on individualized student needs.

## ***Vernon Middle School Values***

We believe that Wolves...

- Care for others
- Respect the diverse nature and opinions of peers and teachers
- Pursue excellence through hard work
- Create a welcoming environment so every person feels valued and important
- Bring honor to ourselves and our school by exemplifying respect, responsibility, integrity, and safety
- Collaborate with peers to accomplish common goals

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Staff & School Day Information**

## Vernon Middle School Faculty & Staff Directory

Main Phone line is 377-9401 followed by the extension listed.

|                                   |      |                    |                                   |      |                      |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------|
| <b><u>Fifth Grade Staff</u></b>   |      |                    | <b><u>Eighth Grade Staff</u></b>  |      |                      |
| Jenni Adams                       | 4448 | Band               | Corey Baldwin                     |      | Math                 |
| Nathaniel Golay                   | 4459 | General Music      | Nadine Bellinger                  | 4419 | Literacy             |
| Tia Hale                          | 4428 | Art                | Jake Fishell                      | 4437 | Social Studies       |
| Justin Hill                       | 4491 | Physical Education | Jason Haag                        | 4491 | Physical Education   |
| Mark Kenny                        | 4426 | Computer Science   | Tia Hale                          | 4428 | Art                  |
| Tannor McCoy                      | 4476 | Science            | Mark Kenny                        | 4426 | Computer Science     |
| Justin Medinger                   | 4472 | Literacy           | Cole Kuethe                       | 4431 | Math                 |
| Elli Netolicky                    | 4413 | Physical Education | Heath Mueller                     | 4449 | Future Ready         |
| <b>NEW HIRE</b>                   | 4471 | Literacy           | Katy Neff                         | 4425 | Science              |
| Dana Phillips                     | 4410 | Math               | Elli Netolicky                    | 4413 | Physical Education   |
| Alan Read                         | 4414 | Physical Education | Alan Read                         | 4414 | Physical Education   |
| Samantha Roberts                  | 4423 | Math               | Kari Scherbring                   | 4427 | Chorus               |
| Tracy Slaughter                   | 4408 | Social Studies     | Amber Schouten                    | 4415 | Literacy             |
| Kari Scherbring                   | 4427 | Chorus             | Michelle Waymire                  | 4447 | Band                 |
| Sandee Wolfe-Kerker               | 4418 | Building Skills    | Sandee Wolfe-Kerker               | 4418 | Teen Living          |
|                                   |      |                    | Gina Young                        | 4846 | Science              |
| <b><u>Sixth Grade Staff</u></b>   |      |                    | <b><u>Special Programming</u></b> |      |                      |
| Jenni Adams                       | 4448 | Band               | Kevin Hahn                        | 4489 | Instructional Coach  |
| Marshall Boche                    | 4463 | Social Studies     | Eli Cochrane                      | 4445 | RP Coordinator       |
| Jason Dabroski                    | 4429 | Math               | Josh Claypool                     |      | VSC Coordinator      |
| Suzette Ehrle                     | 4443 | Literacy           |                                   | 4473 | Special Education    |
| Nathaniel Golay                   | 4459 | General Music      | Becky Doyle                       | 4226 | Special Education    |
| Tia Hale                          | 4428 | Art                | Virginia Utsinger                 | 4475 | Special Education    |
| Justin Hill                       | 4491 | Physical Education | Cruz MacTaggart                   | 4435 | Special Education    |
| Mark Kenny                        | 4426 | Computer Science   | Kimberly McGuire                  | 4460 | Special Education    |
| Sara Lange                        | 4417 | Math               | Breina Salvati                    | 4488 | Special Education    |
| Elli Netolicky                    | 4413 | Physical Education | Zaq Recker                        | 4482 | Special Education    |
| Alan Read                         | 4414 | Physical Education | Chelsea Sandin                    | 4555 | Special Education    |
| Kari Scherbring                   | 4427 | Chorus             | Ashley Studt                      | 4461 | Special Education    |
| Jacqueline Weber                  | 4436 | Literacy           | Michelle Wilson                   | 4409 | Family Resource      |
| Greg Wilkinson                    | 4444 | Science            | Erin Henderson                    | 4462 | ELL Coordinator      |
| Sandee Wolfe-Kerker               | 4418 | Teen Living        | Sean Morley                       | 4480 | Talented & Gifted    |
|                                   |      |                    | Grant Wood AEA                    | 4485 | AEA Staff            |
|                                   |      |                    | Therapist                         | 4481 | Tanager Services     |
|                                   |      |                    | Steph Hoppenworth                 | 4407 | Library              |
|                                   |      |                    | Elizabeth Pearson                 | 4407 | Library              |
| <b><u>Seventh Grade Staff</u></b> |      |                    | <b><u>Office Staff</u></b>        |      |                      |
| Jason Haag                        | 4491 | Physical Education | Phil Cochran                      | 4401 | Principal            |
| Tia Hale                          | 4428 | Art                | Jen Clemen                        | 4416 | Associate Principal  |
| Ashley Jenkins                    | 4450 | Science            | Sidney Zahn                       | 4446 | School Counselor     |
| Leslie Jones                      | 4430 | Social Studies     | Kalli Semler                      | 4405 | School Counselor     |
| Mark Kenny                        | 4426 | Computer Science   | Garrette Williams                 | 4467 | Activities Director  |
| Tiffany McQuerry                  |      | Math               | Taylor Thuringer                  | 4404 | Administrative Asst. |
| Heath Mueller                     | 4449 | CS Discoveries     | Katie Toomer                      | 4402 | Administrative Asst. |
| Elli Netolicky                    | 4413 | Physical Education | Amy Page                          | 4406 | Attendance Asst.     |
| Alan Read                         | 4414 | Physical Education | Lindsey Eagle                     | 4403 | District Nurse       |
| Kari Scherbring                   | 4427 | Chorus             | Katy Flach                        | 4403 | Health Associate     |
| Travis Stearns                    | 4433 | Math               | Officer Brian Davis               | 4505 | Resource Officer     |
| Sarah Stephenson                  | 4434 | Literacy           |                                   |      |                      |
| Steve Vanderhei                   | 4422 | Literacy           |                                   |      |                      |
| Michelle Waymire                  | 4447 | Band               |                                   |      |                      |
| Sandee Wolfe-Kerker               | 4418 | Teen Living        |                                   |      |                      |
| Gina Young                        | 4846 | Science            |                                   |      |                      |

## ***Communication & Questions for Staff***

\* All staff may be reached by email. The address is their first initial and last name followed by @marion-isd.org. Phil Cochran's email address is [pcochran@marion-isd.org](mailto:pcochran@marion-isd.org).

**Contact the Administrative Secretary, Taylor Thuringer [tthuringer@marion-isd.org](mailto:tthuringer@marion-isd.org) in the Main Office for...**

- Visitors
- PowerSchool Questions
- Lockers
- Withdrawals & Transfers
- Fees
- Lunch Accounts/Money
- Lost & Found
- Bus Passes

**Contact the Athletic Secretary ([ktoomer@marion-isd.org](mailto:ktoomer@marion-isd.org)) for...**

- Athletic Physicals
- Coaches' Information
- Sports Schedule Questions
- Athletic Booster Information

**Contact the Counseling Secretary ([apage@marion-isd.org](mailto:apage@marion-isd.org)) in the Main Office for...**

- Absence Notification
- Student Concerns
- Conflict Resolution
- 504 Plans
- Personal Concerns
- Mental Health/Doctor Reports
- Withdrawals & Transfers
- Passes to Class

**Contact the Health Office for...**

- Medications
- Immunizations

**Contact Teachers for...**

- Homework Questions
- Student Issues/Concerns
- Volunteering
- Requests for Team/Teacher Meetings

## **Phone Numbers**

|                                            |                            |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Vernon Middle School Office                | (319) 377 - 9401           |
| Mr. Phil Cochran, Principal                | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4401 |
| Ms. Jen Clemen, Associate Principal        | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4416 |
| Ms. Katy Flach, Health Associate           | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4403 |
| Ms. Kalli Semler, School Counselor         | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4405 |
| Mr. Sidney Zahn, School Counselor          | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4446 |
| Ms. Michelle Wilson, Family Resource       | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4409 |
| Mr. Garrette Williams, Activities Director | (319) 377 - 9891 ext. 1166 |
| Ms. Eli Cochrane, Student Support          | (319) 377 - 9401 ext. 4445 |

## 2026-27 Bell Schedules

### 5th Grade

|         |            |             |                |
|---------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Block 1 | 1st Period | 8:00-9:28   | Core           |
|         | 2nd Period |             |                |
| Block 2 | 3rd Period | 9:31-10:14  | Band/Choir/SH  |
|         | 4th Period | 10:16-10:59 | PE/Exploratory |
| Lunch   | Lunch      | 11:00-11:30 | Lunch/Recess   |
| MTSS    | Math       | 11:31-11:57 | Core           |
| Block 3 | 5th Period | 11:58-1:17  | Core           |
|         | 6th Period |             |                |
| Block 4 | 7th Period | 1:18-2:36   | Core           |
|         | 8th Period |             |                |
| MTSS    | Literacy   | 2:38-3:05   | Core           |

### 6th Grade

|                 |                 |             |                |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Block 1         | 1st Period      | 8:00-9:28   | Core           |
|                 | 2nd Period      |             |                |
| Block 2         | 3rd Period      | 9:31-10:14  | PE/Exploratory |
|                 | 4th Period      | 10:16-10:59 | Band/Choir/SH  |
| Block 3 (split) | Block 3 (split) | 11:02-11:30 | Core           |
| Lunch           | Lunch           | 11:31-12:01 | Lunch/Recess   |
| Block 3 (split) | Block 3 (split) | 12:03-1:02  | Core           |
| Advisory        | 7th Period      | 1:05-1:35   | Advisory       |
| Block 4         | 8th Period      | 1:37-3:05   | Core           |
|                 | 9th Period      |             |                |

### 7th Grade

|                 |                 |             |                |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Block 1         | 1st Period      | 8:00-9:28   | Core           |
|                 | 2nd Period      |             |                |
| Block 2         | 3rd Period      | 9:31-10:59  | Core           |
|                 | 4th Period      |             |                |
| Block 3 (split) | Block 3 (split) | 11:02-12:02 | Core           |
| Lunch           | Lunch           | 12:02-12:32 | Lunch/Recess   |
| Block 3 (split) | Block 3 (split) | 12:34-1:02  | Core           |
| Advisory        | 7th Period      | 1:05-1:35   | Advisory       |
| Block 4         | 8th Period      | 1:37-2:20   | PE/Exploratory |
|                 | 9th Period      | 2:22-3:05   | Band/Choir/SH  |

### 8th Grade

|          |            |             |                |
|----------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Block 1  | 1st Period | 8:00-9:28   | Core           |
|          | 2nd Period |             |                |
| Block 2  | 3rd Period | 9:31-10:59  | Core           |
|          | 4th Period |             |                |
| Block 3  | 5th Period | 11:02-12:33 | Core           |
|          | 6th Period |             |                |
| Lunch    | Lunch      | 12:33-1:03  | Lunch/Recess   |
| Advisory | 7th Period | 1:05-1:35   | Advisory       |
| Block 4  | 8th Period | 1:37-2:20   | Band/Choir/SH  |
|          | 9th Period | 2:22-3:05   | PE/Exploratory |

| VMS Early Out Schedule |        | Fifth | Sixth | Seventh | Eighth |
|------------------------|--------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| NO ADVISORY (Period 7) |        |       |       |         |        |
| 8:00-8:31              | 31 min | 1     | 1     | 1       | 1      |
| 8:34-9:05              | 31 min | 2     | 2     | 2       | 2      |
| 9:08-9:39              | 31 min | 3     | 3     | 3       | 3      |
| 9:42-10:13             | 31 min | 4     | 4     | 4       | 4      |
| 10:16-10:47            | 31 min | 5     | 5     | 5       | 5      |
| 10:50-11:21            | 31 min | 6     | 6     | 6       | Lunch  |
| 11:24-11:55            | 31 min | 8     | 8     | Lunch   | 6      |
| 11:58-12:29            | 31 min | Lunch | 9     | 8       | 8      |
| 12:32-1:05             | 35 min | 9     | Lunch | 9       | 9      |

| VMS Late Start Schedule |        | Fifth | Sixth | Seventh | Eighth |
|-------------------------|--------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| NO ADVISORY (Period 7)  |        |       |       |         |        |
| 10:00-10:31             | 31 min | 1     | 1     | 1       | 1      |
| 10:34-11:05             | 31 min | 2     | 2     | 2       | 2      |
| 11:08-11:39             | 31 min | Lunch | 3     | 3       | 3      |
| 11:42-12:13             | 31 min | 3     | Lunch | 4       | 4      |
| 12:16-12:47             | 31 min | 4     | 4     | Lunch   | 5      |
| 12:50-1:21              | 31 min | 5     | 5     | 5       | Lunch  |
| 1:24-1:55               | 31 min | 6     | 6     | 6       | 6      |
| 1:58-2:29               | 31 min | 8     | 8     | 8       | 8      |
| 2:32-3:05               | 35 min | 9     | 9     | 9       | 9      |



## 2026-27 School Year Calendar

### CALENDAR LEGEND

|  |                                                             |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Professional Learning (PL)-<br>No School                    |
|  | Teacher Work Day (WD)-<br>No School                         |
|  | Teacher Comp Day- No School                                 |
|  | Early Dismissal- Professional<br>Learning Communities (PLC) |
|  | Early Dismissal- Holiday                                    |
|  | Break- No School                                            |
|  | No School- All Offices Closed                               |
|  | New Teacher Orientation                                     |

P/T= Parent Teacher Conferences

### District Administrative Office

319-377-4691

Office Hours: M-Th 7:30-4:00, F to 3:30 PM

### Marion High School (MHS)

319-377-9891

Student Hours 8:00-3:00 PM

Early Dismissal 1:00 PM

### Vernon Middle School (VMS)

319-377-9401

Student Hours 8:00-3:05 PM

Early Dismissal 1:05 PM

### Francis Marion Intermediate (FMI)

319-373-4766

Student Hours 8:30-3:30 PM

Early Dismissal 1:30 PM

### Parkview Elementary School (PES)

319-377-4698

Student Hours 8:20-3:20 PM

Early Dismissal 1:20 PM

### Longfellow Elementary (LES)

319-377-0183

Student Hours 8:20-3:20 PM

Early Dismissal 1:20PM

### Marion Home School (MHSAP)

319-373-9209

School Hours 8:00-3:00 PM

Early Dismissal 1:25 PM

### Transportation Department

319-377-4691 Ext 7911

\*1080 hours required, 1133.3 hours in calendar,  
Inclement weather cancellations: Days 1-5 will not  
be made up, Day 6+ will be added to the end of the  
school year.

176 student days (174 + 2 P/T)

190 teacher days (176 + 8 PL/6 WD)

| August 2026    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|
| M              | T  | W  | Th | F  |
| 3              | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 10             | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 17             | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 24             | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 31             |    |    |    |    |
| September 2026 |    |    |    |    |
|                | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 7              | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 14             | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21             | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28             | 29 | 30 |    |    |
| October 2026   |    |    |    |    |
|                |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 5              | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 12             | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 19             | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 26             | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| November 2026  |    |    |    |    |
| 2              | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 9              | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 16             | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23             | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 30             |    |    |    |    |
| December 2026  |    |    |    |    |
|                | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 7              | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 14             | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21             | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28             | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |
| January 2027   |    |    |    |    |
|                |    |    |    | 1  |
| 4              | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 11             | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 18             | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 25             | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| February 2027  |    |    |    |    |
| 1              | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 8              | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15             | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 22             | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| March 2027     |    |    |    |    |
| 1              | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 8              | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15             | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 22             | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 29             | 30 | 31 |    |    |
| April 2027     |    |    |    |    |
|                |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 5              | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 12             | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 19             | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 26             | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| May 2027       |    |    |    |    |
| 3              | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 10             | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 17             | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 24             | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 31             |    |    |    |    |
| June 2027      |    |    |    |    |
|                | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |

| August 2026    |                                            |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Aug. 3-17      | 1 Floating WD                              |
| Aug. 12-13     | New Teacher Orientation                    |
| Aug. 14, 17    | TLC Positions                              |
| Aug. 18-19, 21 | Staff Welcome/PL/PLC                       |
| Aug. 20        | Teacher WD                                 |
| Aug. 24        | Early Out First Student Day                |
| September 2026 |                                            |
| Sep. 2         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Sep. 7         | No School Labor Day                        |
| Sep. 16        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Sep. 24        | P/T Conferences MHS                        |
| October 2026   |                                            |
| Oct. 1         | P/T Conferences VMS                        |
| Oct. 2         | No School PL                               |
| Oct. 6         | P/T Conferences VMS                        |
| Oct. 7         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Oct. 20        | P/T Conferences FMI                        |
| Oct. 22        | P/T Conferences FMI                        |
| Oct. 21        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Oct. 23        | No School End of 1st Qtr. WD               |
| November 2026  |                                            |
| Nov. 2         | P/T Conferences PES/LES                    |
| Nov. 4         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Nov. 5         | P/T Conferences PES/LES                    |
| Nov. 6         | No School PL                               |
| Nov. 18        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Nov. 19        | P/T Conferences MHS                        |
| Nov. 25        | No School Comp Day #1                      |
| Nov. 26-27     | No School Thanksgiving Break               |
| December 2026  |                                            |
| Dec. 2         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Dec. 16        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Dec. 21-31     | No School Winter Break                     |
| January 2027   |                                            |
| Jan. 1         | No School Winter Break                     |
| Jan. 6         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Jan. 15        | No School End of 2nd Qtr. WD               |
| Jan. 18        | No School PL                               |
| Jan. 20        | Early Out PLC                              |
| February 2027  |                                            |
| Feb. 3         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Feb. 11        | P/T Conferences MHS                        |
| Feb. 16        | P/T Conferences VMS                        |
| Feb. 17        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Feb. 23        | P/T Conferences FMI                        |
| Feb. 25        | P/T Conferences FMI                        |
| Feb. 25        | P/T Conferences VMS                        |
| Feb. 26        | No School PL Day 5-12, WD P K-4            |
| March 2027     |                                            |
| Mar. 3         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Mar. 9         | P/T Conferences PES/LES                    |
| Mar. 11        | P/T Conferences PES/LES                    |
| Mar. 15-19     | No School Spring Break                     |
| Mar. 24        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Mar. 26        | No School Comp day #2                      |
| April 2027     |                                            |
| Apr. 1         | No School End of 3rd Qtr. WD 5-12, PL PK-4 |
| Apr. 2         | No School PL                               |
| Apr. 7         | Early Out PLC                              |
| Apr. 21        | Early Out PLC                              |
| Apr. 29        | P/T Conferences MHS                        |
| May 2027       |                                            |
| May 5          | Early Out PLC                              |
| May 19         | Early Out PLC                              |
| May 28         | MHS Graduation, 7 PM Marion Stadium        |
| May 31         | No School Memorial Day                     |
| June 2027      |                                            |
| June 2         | Early Out Last Day                         |
| June 3         | No School End of 4th Qtr. WD               |

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **General Information**

## **Annual Notices - Board Policies, Procedures, and Regulations**

[MISD Annual Notices](#) are posted on the MISD website. This includes legal rights available to students and the public. A hard copy of this may be obtained by requesting a copy from the building secretary.

The MISD Annual Notices document includes:

Preschool and Kindergarten Eligibility

Absences

Fee Waiver

Dental and Lead Screenings Required

Vaccination for Pertussis “Whooping Cough” Requirement

Vision Law Requirement

Protection of Pupil Rights

Parent/Guardian Rights

Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention

Healthy Kids Act

Human Growth and Development Curriculum

Post-Secondary Enrollment Special Education

Open Enrollment

Equal Education Opportunity (Board Policy 102)

Notice of Nondiscrimination (Board Policy 102.E1)

Section 504 Student and Parental Rights (Board Policy 102.E3)

Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment (Board Policy 104)

Child Abuse Reporting (Board Policy 402.2)

Hazardous Chemical Disclosure (Board Policy 403.4)

Objective for Equal Educational Opportunities for Students (Board Policy 500)

Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy (Board Policy 501.9)

Open Enrollment Transfers- Procedures as a Receiving District (Board Policy 501.15)

Homeless Children and Youth (Board Policy 501.16)

Weapons in School (Board Policy 502.6)

Search and Seizure (Board Policy 502.8)

Fees, Fines, Charges (Board Policy 503.3)

Good Conduct Rule (Board Policy 503.4)

Use of Physical Force (Board Policy 503.5)

Education Records Access (Board Policy 506.1)

Annual Notice (Board Policy 506.1E8)

Student Directory Information (Board Policy 506.2)

Administration of Medication (Board Policy 507.2)

Goals and Objectives of the Education Program (Board Policy 600)

Multicultural/Gender Fair Education (Board Policy 603.4)

Private Instruction ( Board Policy 604.1)

Internet- Appropriate Use (Board Policy 605.6)

Instructional Materials Inspection (Board Policy 605.2)

Class Size- Class Grouping (Board Policy 606.1)

Eligibility for Free or Reduced Cost Meals (Board Policy 710.2)

Use of Video Cameras on School Buses Regulation (Board Policy 711.1R2)

Asbestos Containing Materials (Board Policy 804.4)

\*The policies stated in this handbook are intended as guidelines only and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Board of Education for the Marion Independent School District.

It is the policy of the Marion Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. The belief in equal educational opportunity serves as a guide for the Board and employees in making decisions relating to school district facilities, employment, selection of educational materials, equipment, curriculum, and regulations affecting students. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Equity Coordinator (for employment), Janelle Brouwer, Superintendent, 777 South 15th Street, Marion Iowa, 52302, 319-377-4691 [jbrouwer@marion-isd.org](mailto:jbrouwer@marion-isd.org) or Equity and Title IX Coordinator (for programs), Gretchen Kriegel, Assistant Superintendent, 777 South 15th Street, Marion Iowa, 52302, 319-377-4691 [gkriegel@marion-isd.org](mailto:gkriegel@marion-isd.org)

The Marion Independent School District is dedicated to supporting equity and the success of each child. We recognize we are a community of different cultures and identities, and we will promote an environment where all feel welcomed and can thrive. The District and its employees will foster a community where everyone belongs, will treat others with dignity and respect, and will encourage our community partners to do the same.

### **Appearance & Dress Code**

The board believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors.

Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting.

The board expects students to be clean and well-groomed and wear clothes in good repair and appropriate for the time, place, and occasion. Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed. While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents, appearance disruptive to the education program will not be tolerated. When, in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications. *(See Board Policy 502.1)*

Hats, caps, hoods, or other headwear may NOT be worn inside Vernon Middle School without permission from administration for medical or religious reasons.

### **Assemblies**

Throughout the year the school district sponsors school assemblies. Attendance at these assemblies is a privilege. Students must act in an orderly fashion and remain quiet on their way to an assembly, during an assembly, and on their way back to the classroom after an assembly. Students attend assemblies unless, for disciplinary reasons, the privilege is taken away.

## Attendance, Truancy & Tardy Policy

### MISD Board Approved Attendance policies

|                                             |                                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">501.3 Compulsory Attendance</a> | <a href="#">501.9 Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy</a> | <a href="#">Regulation 501.9 R1</a> |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Students who have strong attendance records are more likely to perform at a higher level and enjoy school life to a greater degree. A student's attendance record is an important part of her or his permanent record and can be a significant factor not only in being admitted to college but also in getting and keeping a job. Prospective employers expect promptness and regular attendance from employees and are reluctant to hire persons who have not established the good habits of responsibility that a positive attendance record indicates.

Something important happens in school everyday in every class. The activity and interaction between teachers and students can never be exactly duplicated through makeup work. It is the responsibility of the school, working cooperatively with the parents, to provide accountability for student attendance.

The school requests that a parent call in the morning or email [vmsattendance@marion-isd.org](mailto:vmsattendance@marion-isd.org). Parents who need to call before 7:30 AM may leave a message on the answering machine. After 7:30 AM, a secretary will handle the call. The answering machine is also available after 3:05 PM on weekdays and all day on weekends. If a student is absent and there has been no call by 8:30 AM, the school will attempt to reach either parent at home or at work.

#### **Attendance Reporting:**

##### Half and Full Day Absences

1. A student missing 4 or less periods is counted absent for a HALF DAY.
2. A student that is absent more than 4 periods will be counted absent for a FULL DAY.

**Under no circumstances is a student to leave the building without communication through the office from the parent/guardian. These conversations must be with office staff and not with your student via text or phone call. All work missed is the student's responsibility.**

#### **Tardies**

All students will be allowed three minutes of passing time between classes. This is a sufficient amount of time to enable students to change classes without being tardy for their next period. However, students must learn to move between classes quickly and efficiently without wasting time.

If a teacher or the office detains a student for some reason, that student will be issued an Excused Tardy Pass by the teacher or the office and will then be readmitted to class without penalty.

A student who is tardy first period must report to the office for a Tardy Admit before being admitted to her or his assigned class unless he or she has already received a pass. The teacher in charge will record the tardiness on the daily attendance and tardiness report, which is turned into the office.

#### **Vernon Middle School Tardy Policy**

- 3 Parent Contact
- 5-9 Detention (30 min) (Parent Contact)
- 10 Detention (45 min)
- 15 and over - A tardy plan will be implemented and discipline may be any of the following:

- Parent Meeting
- Detention
- 8:00-11:00 Saturday Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension

## **Bags**

Gym bags, backpacks, equipment bags, purses, and other similar bags are to be used only to transport needed materials and supplies to and from school. These bags must be stored in the student's locker during the school day and cannot be brought to classrooms. Students will be expected to carry their school-issued Chromebook device in the provided case. These Chromebook cases can and should be carried to classes. Students should not bring their bags or Chromebooks to lunch or recess.

## **Buses and Other School District Vehicles**

Buses are used to transport students to and from school. Students who ride the bus and other school district vehicles to and from school, extracurricular activities, or any other destination must comply with school district policies, rules, and regulations. Students are to be respectful to the driver while on the bus or in another school vehicle, loading/unloading, or leaving the bus. The driver has the ability to discipline a student and may notify the principal of a student's inappropriate bus conduct.

Persons riding in school district vehicles shall adhere to the following rules:

- Riders must be at the designated loading point before the arrival time.
- Riders must wait until the vehicle comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
- Riders must not extend arms or heads out of the windows at any time.
- Aisles must be kept clear at all times.
- Riders shall load and unload through the right front door. The emergency door is for emergencies only.
- Riders will depart from the vehicle at the designated point unless the parent has contacted the Transportation Office and made a request for a different location.
- Riders may be assigned a seat by the driver.
- Riders who damage seats or other equipment will reimburse the school district for the cost of the repair or replacement.
- Riders are not permitted to leave their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
- Waste containers are provided on all vehicles for riders' use.
- Permission to open windows must be obtained from the driver.
- Classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the vehicle except for ordinary conversation.
- The driver is in charge of the riders and the vehicle, and the driver is to be obeyed promptly and cheerfully.
- Riders should assist in looking after the safety and comfort of younger riders.
- Riders who must cross the roadway to board or depart from the vehicle must pass in front of the vehicle (no closer than 10 feet), look in both directions, and proceed to cross the road or highway only on a signal from the driver.
- Riders must not throw objects about the vehicle nor out through the windows.
- Shooting paper wads, squirt guns, or other material in the vehicle is not permitted.
- Riders must keep their feet off the seats.
- Roughhousing on the vehicle is prohibited.

- Riders must refrain from crowding or pushing.
- The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or look-alike substances is prohibited in the vehicle.
- The good conduct rule is in effect.

The driver, sponsor, and chaperones are to follow the school district policies, rules, and regulations for student violations.

### **Cafeteria**

The school district operates a lunch and breakfast program. Students may either bring their own lunches to school or purchase a lunch and other items using their lunch card, including milk and juice through the lunch line or the vending machine.

### **Care of School Property**

Students are expected to take care of school property including desks, chairs, books, lockers, school equipment and school issued devices. Vandalism is not tolerated. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school property may be required to reimburse the school district. In certain circumstances, students may be reported to law enforcement officials.

### **Closed Campus**

Vernon Middle School has a closed campus policy for the entire school day, including the lunch period. Students must have parent permission to leave campus.

### **Dances**

School-sponsored dances will be held periodically throughout the school year. The following rules will apply at all dances:

- Dances will be for Vernon Middle School students only.
- Visitors will not be allowed to attend.
- If a student needs to leave, he/she will not be allowed to return.
- All school rules apply at dances.
- No profanity is to be sung or chanted under any circumstances.
- Students are not to be in the locker area, or in any part of the building outside of the area where the dance is held.
- Inappropriate dancing at school dances is prohibited.
- Violators will be asked and expected to leave. Detention and/or suspension may apply for violations.

### **Drug Dogs**

In accordance with Board Policy 502.8 Searches/Seizures, a drug dog, in cooperation with law enforcement, may randomly sweep through the building. This is a precaution and not an alarm that signals any drug use.

## **Dual Enrollment Students**

Home school or home school assistance program students enrolled in classes or participating in school activities in the school district are subject to the same policies, rules, and regulations as other students and are disciplined in the same manner as other students. Dual enrollment students interested in participating in school activities or enrolling in classes should contact the counseling office.

## **Elevator**

Students with a pre-approved identified need (either short or long term) will be allowed to use the elevator if they adhere to the following guidelines:

- Permission and/or a pass to use the elevator will be issued by the school nurse or office personnel.
- A maximum of one designated student may ride along to assist with school books and supplies.

## **Exemplary Student Performance Award**

The Exemplary Student Performance Award applies to 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. To earn an Exemplary Student Performance Award a student must earn a 4 in all classes for the reporting period.

## **Family Night**

We respect that family activities may represent an important part of some students' lives. As such, Wednesday night of every week during the school year has been set aside as "family night". All school-related activities will end no later than 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays.

## **Field Trips**

In certain classes, field trips, and excursions are authorized and may be taken as an extension of the classroom to contribute to the achievement of the educational goals of the school district. If a field trip is required for a course, students are expected to attend the field trip. Absences in other classes or school activities due to attendance on field trips or excursions are considered excused absences.

While on field trips, students are guests and considered ambassadors and representatives of the school district. Students must treat employees, chaperones, and guides with respect and courtesy.

During registration, parents signed a permission form for field trips along with an emergency form, giving their child permission for field trips that cover the entire school year.

## **Food/Beverages/Gum**

Students are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle that has a sealable top. No open containers are allowed. Only water is allowed. Food and beverages are not to be consumed in the halls or classrooms. Food and beverages are to be kept in the lunchroom area of the school during the lunch hour. Gum is not allowed during the school day. Food will only be allowed if there is a medical reason. This needs to be approved with a doctor's note through our health office.

Students are not allowed to order food from restaurants/food delivery services.

## **Gang Activity or Association**

A gang as defined in the Iowa Code 723A means any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity. The “pattern of gang activity” means the commission, attempt to commit, or solicitation of two or more criminal acts provided the criminal acts were committed on separate dates or by two or more persons who are members of, or belong to, the same criminal street gang.

At Vernon Middle School, no student on or about school property or at any school activity:

- Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, write, draw, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, colors, or any other thing, which is evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang.
- Shall commit any act or omission or use any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in a gang.
- Shall use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to: a) Soliciting others for membership; b) Requesting any person pay for “protection”, otherwise intimidating or threatening any person; c) Committing any illegal act or violation of school district policies.
- Inciting another student to act with physical violence upon another student.

## **Illegal Items Found in School and/or in Student Possession**

Students are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, manufacturing, possessing, using, and being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or look-alike substances; and possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products, or look-alike substances.

## **Lighters and Other Incendiary Devices**

Students are not allowed to have in their possession lighters, matches, or any other incendiary devices. Students who have these devices in their possession will be suspended and the object will be confiscated. Students who use the devices in a manner as to vandalize or damage school or personal property will also be suspended. If the devices are used to harm other students or cause significant property damage, the student will be suspended and may be brought before the Board for expulsion. The decision to contact authorities will be made on a case-by-case basis.

## **Lost and Found**

Articles found in the building or on the grounds should be turned into the office. Also, persons are advised to come to the office for any lost articles. Articles not claimed at the end of the school year will be donated.

## **Materials Policy**

Students should only bring materials that are necessary for learning. Items that disrupt the learning environment will be taken away from the students and will be returned at a later date.

## **Modes of Transportation by Students**

Bicycles and scooters should be parked in the racks provided on either the north or south sides of the building. Students driving mopeds should park in the lot north of 5th Ave. All bicycles and scooters should be equipped with LOCKS. Students may also utilize rollerblades or skateboards, but they should cease use upon arriving at school and must be kept in their lockers. The school cannot be responsible for damage or theft of parts while bicycles or scooters are parked in the racks. Students who violate safety rules on their bikes may be denied the privilege of riding their bikes to school. Anyone borrowing any of these items without permission, or causing damage, will be subject to disciplinary action. **Due to the increase of students riding e-bikes and e-scooters, we want to be sure everyone is aware that students are not allowed to bring them inside the building or charge them during the school day.**

## **Money/Valuables**

The carrying of large sums of money and valuable items of any kind to school is strongly discouraged. If valuables or cash are brought into the school, please check them in with the office, so they can be stored in the safe until taken home. If you have experienced a theft, please report it to the principal's secretary at once. Students are encouraged to contact their insurance carrier to see if theft loss is covered by the parents' policies.

## **Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)**

Vernon Middle School utilizes PBIS as a way to provide positive support to all students. PBIS is a three-tiered evidence based framework that integrates data, systems, and practices to positively impact the success of all students. We have established clear expectations in all areas of our school. We will explicitly teach those expectations to the students and reward them frequently with positive reinforcement for their good behavior. Often they will be rewarded with PBIS points which can be redeemed for items in the PBIS store. The expectations for all student behavior are clear throughout the building.

We will apply consistent consequences and positive reinforcement for all students. By detailing every expected behavior and teaching students in a positive way, we will provide a common language for everyone in our building, including students, teachers, front office staff, and our paraprofessionals.

We believe that by helping students practice good behavior, we will build a school community where all students have an environment where they can feel safe, loved, and respected.

PBIS and expectations at Vernon Middle School are based on: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity & Safety.

## **Posting of Information**

Students who wish to post or distribute information must receive permission from the principal at least five days before the posting or distribution. This applies whether the information deals with school-sponsored or non-school-sponsored activities. The principal can explain or answer questions regarding the school's rules on posting and distributing materials.

## **Profanity**

The use of profanity at school will not be tolerated. Students using profanity in the school will be subject to the district's discipline plan.

## **School Counseling Program**

Our counseling program addresses academic, career, and personal/social needs of students at the middle school level. The program is provided through guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support.

The counseling program is responsible for assisting students in their development and addressing student needs, such as self-awareness, conflict management/problem solving, decision making, life planning, substance abuse prevention, relationships, coping strategies, sexual issues, tolerance/diversity, and educational planning. Every student needs sound emotional and social skills to achieve maximum benefit from the education program. The counseling program is designed to assist students throughout their educational and life experiences. Vernon Middle School Counselors are Kalli Semler and Sidney Zahn.

## **School Day**

Students may be present on school grounds before 7:40 a.m. or after 3:10 p.m. only when they are under the direct supervision of an employee or an extracurricular activity sponsor. If school is dismissed early, students are expected to leave the school grounds within 15 minutes of dismissal. Students involved in the morning breakfast program may be in the cafeteria at 7:40 a.m. Lunch is from 11:00 - 1:03 and unless students have principal permission to leave because of special circumstances, students are all expected to eat at school. We have a closed lunch hour.

## **School Grounds**

To preserve the neat appearance of our grounds and school building, always use the sidewalks and place any trash in waste cans. Students and staff at Vernon Middle School support recycling. We recycle all white and colored paper, cardboard, plastics, envelopes, and most other recyclable materials with the exception of glass and plastic bags. Please support our recycling efforts to save our planet and its natural resources. Litter only detracts from the beauty of the grounds and building that the community has provided for your education. Take pride in your school.

## **School Celebrations**

The school observes holidays with parties for some grades throughout the school year including, but not limited to Halloween, Winter Break, Valentine's Day, and the end of the school year. Students who do not wish to participate in these events or activities may be excused with a note from home. Any treats brought in by students should be for the entire class. Food must be approved in advance by the teacher for medical/allergy reasons and must be prepackaged and not homemade.

## **Smoking & Other Tobacco Products**

School district buildings, grounds, and vehicles shall be off limits for smoking and use of other tobacco products. This requirement includes all district personnel and visitors.

Students who smoke, vape, or use tobacco on school grounds at any time or while representing the school at school activities will be placed on suspension. Students should not have in their possession or in their locker any smoking, vaping, or chewing tobacco. Teachers and administrators will take tobacco products from students. These materials will not be returned to the student.

Violations can result in charges from the Marion Police Department.

## **Student Lockers**

Students' lockers are the property of the school district. Students shall use the lockers assigned to them for storing their school materials and items necessary for school. It shall be the responsibility of each student to keep their assigned locker clean and undamaged. If a locker is damaged by a student, the repair expense will be charged to that student.

A student's locker can be searched whenever an administrator or teacher has a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a criminal offense or a school district policy, rule, or regulation bearing on school order has been violated and the administrator or teacher has a reasonable and articulable belief that the search will produce evidence of the violation. Items in violation of school district policies, rules, or regulations found in student lockers are confiscated. Illegal items may be given to law enforcement officials.

There will be random times during the school year when drug dogs may be brought into the building for the purpose of locating illegal drugs and prescriptions.

## **Student ID Cards**

At the beginning of the school year each student will be issued a photo ID card. This card is used as both their meal card and library card. The card must be presented at dances and athletic events. Replacement for lost ID cards will be done in the office. ID cards are not transferable.

Students can show their student ID at home middle school sporting events and get free entry into that event.

## **Student Lunch Information**

Please visit our website or contact us at 377-9401 for the most up-to-date lunch prices. Breakfast and a hot lunch are available for all students every day. All students are encouraged to eat a hot lunch or bring a sack lunch. Skipping lunch is not healthy. Lunch at the middle school is "closed". Students do not leave the building for lunch.

Our district uses the School Dining System as our program for school meals. The lunch accounts are pooled together into "family" accounts that include other family members. Parents have access to their student's accounts 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the district website at <http://www.marion.isd.org>. Deposits to lunch accounts can be made online. The link to the School Dining System is located under the "Community" menu item on the above website. You will be assigned a family ID number and a password. Checks or online deposits go into the family account and the funds are accessible from any building. Please make sure your family account has a positive balance at all times. A complete statement of the lunch charge policy was given to families at registration or is available at the office.

Each student will receive a plastic scan card on the first day of school. This card must be presented to the food service personnel to purchase any lunch items. Students will not be allowed to purchase snack items if they have lost their lunch card and have not yet purchased a replacement card. The fee for a replacement card is \$5.00. Students with continually or excessively negative lunch balances will be provided an alternate meal at the discretion of the lunch staff and administration. It is the goal of Vernon Middle School to zero out all lunch balances at the conclusion of each school year. Phone calls, emails, and notes may be sent home to indicate a payment is needed on the account. If the debt is not resolved in a timely manner, the amount owed may be turned over to the District Business Office for further attempts at collection. Please refer to the food service policies handed out at registration for further details.

The Vernon cafeteria has a Vending machine that can be used before school, during the students assigned lunch period, or after school. Students may purchase healthy snacks and drinks with cash or their student ID. In order for the student to use their student ID to purchase an item they must have a 3-digit code emailed to parents at the beginning of the year. If a parent does not want their student using the vending machine with their student ID, they should not give the student the 3-digit code.

### **Student Photographs**

When photographs are taken during the school year for records and school memory books, students are not required to purchase their pictures. In September or October, students will have school pictures taken. All students will be photographed for the yearbook. Price lists will be sent home in advance of picture day. Payment must be made at the time photos are taken. Spring photos may also be offered.

### **Surveillance**

Surveillance equipment is being used at various locations throughout the building and grounds for student safety.

### **Technology**

#### **One to One Laptop & Technology Policy**

All students are assigned a Chromebook for technology access. A separate handbook will be shared with all parents and students at the start of the school year and can also be found on our website:

[Marion Independent School District Student Technology Handbook](#)

#### **Personal Technology Devices and Cell Phones in Classrooms**

- Students must turn off and leave all personal technology devices (cell phones, tablets, etc.) in their lockers during school hours.
- Personal devices left in hallways, cafeteria, or any common spaces are at risk to be broken or stolen.
  - Vernon Middle School is not responsible for misplaced, stolen, or broken personal technology devices. The school will assist students to the best of our ability, but students are ultimately responsible for the devices they bring in.
- Students must have permission from the teacher prior to bringing any personal technology devices into the classroom. Devices must remain off until the teacher has given permission to use them in the classroom. This includes the use of all earbuds and headphones.
- Personal devices are not to be used in common spaces like the hallways, restrooms, and cafeteria.
- All policies related to technology apply to personal devices and usage. School consequences will be applied in cases where the policy is violated. If a student violates the policy and privileges are revoked, they will be revoked in all settings regardless if the teacher allows the devices or not.
- **At no time should a cell phone or any other technology device that can record video or take pictures be brought into a school locker room or bathroom.**
- Inappropriate use of a device or a prohibited item will be taken away from the student and returned at a later date.
- Students found in violation of this policy may be subject to discipline and, in cases where a law may be violated, law enforcement may be contacted. Students need to remember that whatever they put on a personal electronic device could end up anywhere, so they need to ensure the devices are

used appropriately.

#### **Personal Technology Use Disciplinary Action**

- 1st Offense: Item is confiscated and the student will retrieve the item from the office at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- 2nd Offense: Item is confiscated and the student will receive a 30 minute main detention. The student will retrieve the item from the office after they have completed their detention.
- 3rd Offense and each offense there after: Item is confiscated and the student will receive a 45 minute detention. The student will retrieve the item from the office after they have completed their detention. The student will be put on a technology check-in check-out system for the following five school days. They will put their item in the office at the beginning of the school day and pick it up at the end of the school day.

**Any offense in a locker room or restroom will result in confiscation of the item and parents/guardians will be notified. Disciplinary action will depend on the severity of the action. This may include detention, suspension from school, authorities may be notified, and/or a technology check-in check-out system.**

#### **Student Technology Use Before/After School**

Electronic devices brought to school must be turned off and put in the students' locker. Devices that are playing/showing anything inappropriate will be confiscated and returned only to the parent. That student will forfeit their right to bring an electronic device for a specific amount of time deemed appropriate by the administrator.

Devices that are used for any type of bullying/harassment will also be confiscated and returned to the parent. That student will forfeit their right to bring an electronic device for a specific amount of time deemed appropriate by the administrator. Bullying/harassment paperwork may also be started.

#### **Telephone Calls & Messages**

The office telephone is for office use and student emergencies. Students are to use the phone between classes or get a pass from a teacher to make an emergency phone call.

Classroom interruptions will be kept to a minimum. Only emergency messages will be delivered to students. Routine messages and items that could be arranged in advance will not be delivered. Parent messages will be given broader consideration. Parents are encouraged to call teachers before (7:30-7:50 AM) or after (3:05-3:30 PM) school or during their plan/team time (please contact the office to know when this happens for a specific teacher). Teachers at Vernon Middle School have voicemail (and e-mail) to allow parents the ability to leave messages at your convenience.

#### **Use of School District Facilities by Student Organizations**

School district facilities are available during non-school hours to school-sponsored and non-school-sponsored student organizations for the purpose of meetings or activities. Students wishing to use the school district facilities should contact their sponsor, the principal, or the activities director, to reserve a room. School district policies, rules and regulations are in effect during these meetings.

## **Visitors**

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit school and/or their child's classes during the school day. You are required to stop at the office and sign in first. It would be helpful if the classroom teacher could be notified before your visit. Please plan to have your visit last through a full class period. We do not allow school age friends or relatives from attending for a special visit.

## **Volunteers**

We encourage and welcome volunteers to help in our school. If you are interested in helping at Vernon on a volunteer basis, please call our office at 377-9401. There are various opportunities for involvement in the school district through service on advisory committees.

Individual buildings as well as the school district as a whole have organizations and advisory groups. At VMS there is a Parent Group, which meets monthly and is open to all parents of Vernon Students. If you would like to become an active member please contact the Vernon office at 377-9401.

Booster Clubs are another part of the supports available for fine arts and athletics. If you are interested in learning more about Athletic and/or Fine Arts booster clubs, contact Marion High School at 377-9891.

There are advisory committees to which members are appointed by the Board. Such committees include the Superintendent's Advisory Committee as well as the School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC). The SIAC committee meets a couple times a year in the evening to discuss student achievement, learn about district initiatives, receive updates on state requirements and make recommendations on district goals. The Superintendent's Advisory Committee operates in a similar manner but provides feedback without the expectations for district goal recommendations. If you would like to be considered to serve on the SIAC please contact Superintendent Dr. Janelle Brouwer.

## **Withdrawing From or Adding Classes**

Band and Choir are optional classes offered at VMS. However, adding or dropping these classes is allowed only per the guidelines set forth in the music handbook. Such changes need to be processed through the Counseling Office after the parent/guardian has communicated with the band or choir teacher.

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Anti-Bullying & Student Safety**



## **Board Policy 104 Anti-Bullying/Harassment**

The Marion Independent School District is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame. Within 24 hours of receiving a report that a student may have been the victim of conduct that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent or guardian of the student. Formal complaints and informal reports of conduct constituting sexual harassment will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator and will be governed by the provisions of Regulation 102.R2.

If as a result of viewing surveillance system data or based on a report from a school district employee, the district determines that a student has suffered bullying or harassment by another student enrolled in the district, a parent or guardian of the student may enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student's grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law related to this topic.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

### Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in an investigation is prohibited. Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- “Electronic” means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- “Harassment” and “bullying” mean any repeated or potentially repeated electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
  1. Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual’s person or property.
  2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual’s physical or mental health.
  3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s academic or career performance. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

### **Filing a Complaint (Anti-Bullying/Harassment)**

An individual who believes that the individual has been harassed or bullied may file a complaint with the superintendent or superintendent’s designee. The complaint form is available on the website as the following Exhibit- 104.E1. If the complainant is a school employee, after filing the complaint with the superintendent or superintendent’s designee, the employee may separately notify the parent or guardian of the student alleged to have been harassed or bullied.

An alternate investigator will be designated in the event it is claimed that the superintendent or superintendent’s designee committed the alleged bullying or harassment or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within 180 days of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The Complainant shall receive assistance as needed.

School employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or an individual who has reliable information about an act of bullying or harassment.

### **Investigation (Anti-Bullying/Harassment)**

The school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The principal or designee (hereinafter "Investigator") will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging bullying or harassment.

If the Complainant is under 18 years of age, the Investigator shall notify his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may attend investigatory meetings in which the Complainant is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy.

*The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:*

- *Interviews with the Complainant and the individual named in the complaint ("Respondent")*
- *A request for the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint;*
- *A request for the Respondent to provide a written statement;*
- *Interviews with witnesses identified during the course of the investigation;*
- *A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement; and*
- *Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation.*

The Investigator shall consider the totality of circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes bullying or harassment. Upon completion of the investigation, the Investigator shall issue a report with respect to the findings.

### **Decision (Anti-Bullying/Harassment)**

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of the policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include suspension and expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures, which may include exclusion from school grounds.

The investigator, building principal or superintendent, depending on the individuals involved, shall inform the Complainant and the accused about the outcome of the investigation. Individuals who knowingly file false bullying and/or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.





**104.E1 ANTI-HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM**

Date of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you filling out this form for yourself or someone else? (please identify the individual If you are submitting on behalf of someone else.) \_\_\_\_\_

Who or what entity do you believe harassed or bullied you (or someone else)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of alleged incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Names of any witnesses (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

In the space below, please describe what happened and why you believe that you or someone else has been harassed, or bullied. Please be as specific as possible and attach additional pages if necessary.

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Please state the remedy requested.

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I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

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



**104.E2 ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT WITNESS DISCLOSURE FORM**

Name of witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of initial complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of complainant (include whether the complainant is a student or employee): \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of alleged incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of incident witnessed:

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Additional information:

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I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

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

**104.E3 Disposition of Complaint Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Initial Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Complainant (include whether the Complainant is a student or employee):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of alleged incidents(s): Name of Respondent (include whether the Respondent is a student or employee):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nature of harassment or bullying alleged (list specific examples) of incident witnessed:  
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Summary of Investigation:  
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I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

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

## **Founded Harassment Complaint Procedures**

In order to provide a safe environment for all students, Vernon Middle School has adopted the following procedures in the event of a founded harassment complaint.

1st Offense: The first offense is treated as a learning opportunity for the harasser. We will have a parent meeting that includes the student, a school counselor, administrator and the school resource officer. A restorative conversation will take place with the students if appropriate. The student who committed the offense will also meet with a school counselor and be given a consequence that appropriately fits the situation.

2nd Offense: A second offense will result in a five day suspension with completion of an anti-harassment and bullying module being required to return. A parent meeting is also required and a re-entry plan will be created.

3rd Offense: A third offense will result in a ten day suspension with completion of an anti-harassment and bullying module being required to return. A parent meeting with district administration is also required and a re-entry plan will be created.

4th Offense: A fourth offense will result in a 45 day suspension with the student moving to on-line learning. Completion of an anti-harassment and bullying course is required to return. A parent meeting with district administration is also required and a re-entry plan will be created.

## **Student Safety Procedures**

### **A.L.I.C.E (Unknown Threat Procedure)**

A.L.I.C.E. implementation will be initiated via an intercom announcement

- **A- Alert-** notify local law enforcement ASAP as safety permits.
- **L-lockdown-** not simply an end all answer but a way to buy time if need be- if you decide to stay in the room, barricade, prepare to fight.
- **I-Inform-** let staff/students/civilians know about the crisis and what to do.
- **C-Counter-** what you can do to your attacker- scissors, coffee, chair, pencil, books, book bags, anything one can grab, lift, strike with or throw. Involve students, as you deem appropriate. Their safety is our concern.
- **E- Evacuate-** probably the simplest and safest thing to do if possible-GET UP, GET OUT, AND GET GONE.

This procedure is used as an alternative to total **LOCKDOWN** in that there is an intruder in the building. The plan will develop as the situation escalates, Decisions (by you) will need to be made on how best to evacuate the building and who should leave the building. Each individual will be required to use their best judgment and decision making skills to keep their students and themselves as safe as possible. As chaotic as it will be, please keep in mind we are trying to create chaos for the intruder as well. Once you are outside, attempt to direct students to the safest option; that will be a decision by you. Remember, stationary students are easy victims, keep moving if this seems to be the best option.

Office personnel may not be able to announce A.L.I.C.E. You will need to use your judgment if no command has been given

## **LOCKDOWN (Student Safety Procedures)**

**LOCKDOWN** is a procedure to protect the children and adults in the building from a potential emergency. Once a **LOCKDOWN** is ordered and re-entry is complete, no one leaves or enters the building. Police and emergency personnel have keys to the buildings.

### Signal: LOCKDOWN

1. The building principal or designated school leader will authorize to initiate a **LOCKDOWN. MARION Police Department (MPD) (911 or 319-377-1511)** and **Marion Fire Department (MFD) (319-377-8237)** will be immediately notified by the individual initiating the **LOCKDOWN** event. Intercom announcement that LOCKDOWN has been implemented.
2. Students/Staff who are outside immediately return to the school building.
  - After initial re-entry, students should remain in classrooms, attendance will be resubmitted and no one will enter or exit the building until “ALL CLEAR” is signaled.
3. Administrators/custodians lock and secure all exterior doors and entrances.
4. Doors to classrooms are closed and locked. All windows are shut and locked- blinds closed.
  - Students move to the safest part of the room, away from windows & doors, to the interior walls.
  - Everyone moves away from windows and out of the line of vision from the door.
  - Window shades are pulled down.
  - Any window in doors are covered (to prevent an intruder from seeing into the room).
  - Classroom lights are turned off.
5. School Messenger will notify parents via email, text and voice message phone call of the incident and again when the “All Clear” is issued.
6. The building principal or director will issue the “All Clear” via intercom. Custodians will unlock doors secured on LOCKOUT order. Normally locked doors will remain locked.

## **LOCKOUT (Student Safety Procedures)**

**LOCKOUT** is a procedure used which allows the school to continue with the normal school day but curtails outside activity. **LOCKOUT** eliminates unauthorized personnel from entering the building. This procedure is most commonly used when an incident is occurring outside the school building, on or off school property.

### Signal: LOCKOUT

1. The building principal or designated school leader will authorize to initiate a **LOCKOUT. MARION Police Department (MPD) (911 or 319-377-1511)** and **Marion Fire Department (MFD) (319-377-8237)** will be immediately notified by the individual initiating the **LOCKOUT** event. Intercom announcement will be made that LOCKOUT has been implemented.
2. Students/Staff who are outside immediately return to the school building.
  - After initial re-entry, students should remain in the school, attendance will be resubmitted and no one will enter or exit the building until “All Clear” is signaled.
  - Attendance report to office.
3. Administrators/custodians lock and secure all exterior doors and entrances.

4. All windows are shut and locked-blinds closed.
5. Classes operate as normal.
6. The use of cell phones by students or staff, or police is authorized in the effort to establish two-way communications with the building's or district's front office (319-377-4691 x1101).
7. School Messenger will notify parents via email, text and voice message phone call of the incident and again when the "All Clear" is issued.
8. The building principals or director will issue the "All Clear" via intercom. Custodians will unlock doors secured on LOCKOUT order. Normally locked doors will remain locked.

### **Emergency Drills**

The school will hold regular emergency fire and tornado drills. At the beginning of each semester, teachers notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms.

Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Students who pull the fire alarm or call in false alarms, in addition to being disciplined under the school district's policies rules and regulations, may be reported to law enforcement officials.

### **False Reports**

The Code of Iowa discussion of false reports is as follows:

#### **718.6 False Reports To Law Enforcement Authorities Or Communications With Public Safety Entities**

1. A person who reports or causes to be reported false information to a fire department, or a law enforcement authority, or other public safety entity, knowing that the information is false, or who reports the alleged occurrence of a criminal act knowing the same act did not occur, commits a simple misdemeanor, unless the alleged criminal act reported is a serious or aggravated misdemeanor or felony, in which case the person commits a serious misdemeanor.
2. A person who telephones an emergency 911 communications center knowing that the person is not reporting an emergency or otherwise needing emergency information or assistance commits a simple misdemeanor.

### **Sexual Harassment & Assault Information**

The Iowa Department of Education has directed school districts to provide age appropriate materials and a list of available community and web-based resources on sexual harassment and assault to parents at registration and to include the materials and resource list in the student handbook. Included below is a list of age appropriate web-based resources and materials that have been approved by the Iowa Department of Education:

#### **Middle School Resources**

Stop It Now! ([www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org))

Cadette Girl Scout Handbook ([www.GirlScouts.org](http://www.GirlScouts.org))

American School Counselor Association ([www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org))

## **Threats of Violence**

All threats of violence, whether oral, written, or symbolic, against students, employees, visitors, or to school facilities are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school.

Students engaging in threatening behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion.

The following factors will be considered in determining the extent to which a student will be disciplined for threatening or terroristic behavior: the background of the student, including any history of violence or prior threatening behavior; the student's access to weapons of any kind; the circumstances surrounding the threat; the age of the student; the mental and emotional maturity of the student; cooperation of the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) in the investigation; the existence of the student's juvenile or criminal history; the degree of legitimate alarm or concern in the school community created by the threat; and any other relevant information from any credible source.

Students may also be required by the school to attend an at-risk assessment meeting before resuming classes.

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Health & Wellness**

## Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, the student shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles, and chicken pox.

### Head Lice

The Marion Independent School District has a written strategy on dealing with head lice. As part of a community plan, the district will support families by emphasizing prevention, early detection and education as the best edge in controlling head lice.

Pediculosis (head lice) represents a common childhood condition which children may experience. Community involvement is very important and families must actively participate at home in the treatment and prevention of head lice. **Head checks should be done at home as a weekly routine for preschool and school-age children.** The plan established by the Marion Independent School District is designed to be family friendly and sensitive to individual needs. Our goal is to support families and keep kids where they need to be-in school.

Students with signs and symptoms of head lice will be referred to the school health office for an evaluation and recommendations for treatment. This plan emphasizes comprehensive education and community involvement. Enhanced support will be offered to families. Working together, we can minimize the impact of head lice in our schools and community.

Our plan was developed after reviewing the recommendations of the Linn County Public Health Department, Iowa Department of Public Health, National Association of School Nurses, American Academy of Pediatrics and the Harvard School of Public Health.

### Latex Balloons

For the safety of our students, staff and the general public who use our buildings, the district is no longer allowing the use of latex balloons in any capacity, in any school building, at any time of the day. However, Mylar (foil) balloons are still allowed.

Latex (rubber) is a substance that can have an immediate or life-threatening impact when a person is exposed to it. The district has already implemented alternatives for latex, in items such as gloves, for years.

### Nurse

A Health Associate is on duty from 7:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. daily. If your child is ill or injured, the following procedure will be followed:

- The school nurse, health associate, or secretary will examine the child.
- Minor cuts, scrapes and injuries will be treated with first aid methods.
- Students with more serious injuries will receive first aid and their parents will be phoned. When students who are ill are sent to the nurse, their temperature will be taken and parents phoned if necessary.

**If an illness is accompanied by a fever, your student should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Each day, many parents are faced with a decision: should they keep their sick children home or send

them off to school? The following guidelines, recommended by experts at the Mayo Clinic, should be considered when making this sometimes difficult decision. A student should remain home when he or she:

- Vomits or has diarrhea in the last 24 hours.
- Has an oral temperature higher than 100 degrees.
- Coughs almost constantly or complains of difficulty breathing.
- Exhibits abdominal pain for more than two hours.
- Has sores on mouth or skin that are crusty, yellow or draining.
- Shows symptoms of contagious diseases such as chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat.
- Has a constant runny nose with green or yellow discharge.
- Displays an unexplained skin rash or red eye (with or without crusting/drainage).

Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school. It also allows the child the opportunity to rest and recover. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. If you have questions, please contact the school nurse.

### **Student Illness or Injury at School**

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his or her teacher, the nurse, or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the emergency form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student is released to the student's parents or, with parental permission, to another person directed by the parents.

While the school district is not responsible for treating medical emergencies, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school contacts emergency medical personnel if necessary and attempts to notify the parents where the student has been transported for treatment.

### **Student Insurance**

The Marion Independent School District does not carry medical insurance to cover injuries to students while they are at school or while they are participating in school activities. Parents are encouraged to have their children covered by health insurance. If children are not covered by health insurance, parents may wish to purchase private insurance, the state of Iowa has a medical insurance called "Hawk-I" for children of low-income families. Learn more about "Hawk-I" by calling 1-800-257-8563.

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Academic Information**

## **Cheating & Plagiarism**

Students are expected to do their own schoolwork. Cheating by looking at another student's schoolwork, copying others work, copying from other sources or similar cheating is not tolerated.

Plagiarism occurs when you present material as your own when it comes from another person or source. If you plagiarize, you steal another person's or source's ideas about a subject, their method of organizing or presenting ideas, or the actual work itself.

Plagiarism should be avoided in oral presentations, written work, and other media. If you plagiarize written material, you have used the exact words of your source, your works, or both.

To avoid plagiarism in the classroom and homework, always do your own work so you can show your knowledge of the material and your skill in organizing it. If you want to work with another person, first seek your teacher's approval. To avoid plagiarism in research projects, carefully acknowledge your source (author and text) for each idea that is not your own and do not copy and paste directly from a source.

Plagiarism is a serious offense, warranting harsh penalties. Discipline in cases of plagiarism will be determined by the principal and/or the teacher.

## **Exploratory Classes**

The following classes will meet every other day (opposite of PE) and on rotating Wednesdays. These classes are an important part of adolescent development to become well-rounded, diverse citizens that are ready for the challenges ahead in their academic and social future. It is the expectation that students strive to perform to the best of their ability in each of these classes.

### **5th Grade**

- Teen Living
- General Music
- Art
- Computer Science

### **6th Grade**

- Teen Living
- General Music
- Art
- Computer Science

### **7th Grade**

- Teen Living
- Art
- CS Discoveries
- Computer Science

### **8th Grade**

- Teen Living
- Art
- Future Ready
- Computer Science

## **Progress Reports**

Students receive progress reports in the form of report cards at the end of each quarter and semester. Students who have concerns about their academic progress should talk to their teachers to determine how they can improve their performance.

Students who receive an incomplete in a class must complete the class within three weeks after the start of the next quarter. Extensions may be granted by the teacher with the permission of the principal. Failure to finish an incomplete may result in an insufficient evidence score. Parent - Teacher Conferences are set up during the first and second semesters.

## **Academic Progress & Homework Principles**

Please click on the [Standards-Referenced Reporting Handbook](#) for specific information on academic progress and homework policies.

- Differentiation of instruction is essential in order for students to grow and progress.
- We value our students' attendance, behavior, cooperation, motivation, and positive attitude.
- Scores will be based on what the student is able to show they have learned. Therefore, extra credit will not be given at any time.
- Scores will be entered into Schoology within five school days of the due date.
- Retakes and revisions of assessments are allowed (teachers can determine a cut-off date).
- Students will be allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in various ways. When proficiency is demonstrated, students may be given the opportunity to extend their learning.
- Students are expected to complete all assigned work.
- There may be times that students are expected to do work outside of the school day.
- Independent practice will be meaningful, purposeful, of high quality and aligned with learning goals.
- Teachers will determine proficiency by considering multiple points of data using the most recent data and provide evidence to support their determination.
- Students will have multiple opportunities for practice before the learning goals are assessed for a proficiency score.

All families should sign up for Schoology. Schoology allows parents to see their student's scores on a weekly/daily basis. Parents should contact the middle school office to sign up for this service.

## **School Acceleration/Promotion/Retention Policy**

### **Board Policy 605.3**

Promotion and acceleration practices for students in the Marion Independent School District shall have as their objective the placing of the students in an environment where their maximum development will take place.

### **Retention of a Student**

The principal and appropriate staff shall determine a student's placement. Input from parents/guardians shall be considered when the principal or staff has initiated consideration for retention of a student in the same grade or class. Parental/guardian initiated requests for a student's retention shall be considered by

the principal and appropriate staff. Requests for retention need to be made in a timely manner because the process may take considerable time and time is needed to prepare schedules for the following school year.

### **Acceleration of a Student**

Students with high academic ability, demonstrated or potential, may have extended needs that are best addressed through services that expand the delivery of instruction. Such services include, but are not limited to:

- Single subject acceleration
- Liaison services with other programs for exceptional learners
- Mentorship
- Provision of appropriate counseling to the student and his/her family
- Whole grade acceleration.(See 605.3R)

Whole-grade acceleration is a radical form of curriculum modification considered after options such as for curriculum extensions and interventions have been explored. The *Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS)* developed by the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development will be used to inform the acceleration team when whole-grade acceleration is being considered. This team will include:

- Administrator(s)
- Student's parents
- Student, if appropriate,
- Current and future classroom teachers
- School counselor(s)
- AEA staff
- TAG teacher(s)
- Other staff as determined by the team

The IAS is composed of ten sections, each of which contains items relevant to the success of an acceleration, which should be discussed and considered by the acceleration team.

### **Special Services**

The following special services are available at Marion Independent Schools:

- Speech therapy
- Hearing and vision screening
- Social worker
- School psychologist
- Tanager Place therapist

Additional support services are available to assist teachers when concerns arise. These services include our building staff, (special education teacher, counselor, nurse, etc.) and Grant Wood Area Education Agency support staff, (psychologist, social worker, consultant, speech-language pathologist, occupational and physical therapist and others). Teachers and families may make use of input on an informal basis or request formal assistance in identifying strategies to address a concern, in carrying out these strategies, or in monitoring individual student progress. These services are available for all students through teacher or parent request.

Working together, we can provide the best education possible for all of our children. At some time during the year, it may be beneficial for teachers and parents to request the help of these trained people. Your written permission is needed for some of these services.

### **W.I.N Time (What I Need Time)**

W.I.N times are offered to all students at Vernon Middle School with the intent of providing enrichment and/or remedial instruction within the school day. Staff and administration will analyze data and make recommendations for placement within these classes. Students may receive W.I.N time in a variety of areas throughout the year depending upon their need for enrichment or remediation. Students are expected to participate and carry out the tasks set forth within the W.I.N. time.

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

## **Activities/Activity Rules**

Actively enrolled Vernon Middle School students are eligible to practice and participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. All athletes must have an up-to-date physical before they can participate in athletics. All athletic physicals are valid for one year from the examination date. All students should also be covered by either school insurance or a home accident policy as the school is not responsible for injuries. A participant's eligibility for all extra-curricular activities will depend on his/her academic performance, behavior, attendance at practices, and compliance with state association and local school board policies as well as rules provided by each activity sponsor and the Activities Director.

### **Academic Eligibility for Activities & Athletics**

It is the philosophy of the Vernon Middle School staff and administration that participation in extracurricular activities is an integral part of the middle school level educational experience. Students are encouraged to get involved. When you become affiliated with an organization, you will do your utmost to make that organization better because you are a part of it. Be a working member, whether you are a reserve on the football squad or have the lead in the school play. Sometimes students become members of too many groups and as a result, their academic work begins to suffer. Make sure you make academics your top priority. This policy is designed to assist students in maintaining that focus. The above policy applies to all athletic teams for 7th and 8th grade and the following activities and their performances and contests: Show Choir, Jazz Band, and Cheerleading.

All Seventh and Eighth grade students are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities; however, a student may be declared Ineligible for the following reasons:

- Student athletes may not have a 0 or 1 in either their academic performance or employability skills when progress checks are done throughout the season. Exemptions to this rule can be made for students with special circumstances as deemed by the coaches and at the final discretion of the athletic director or building principal.
- Misconduct while participating in an extra-curricular activity.
- Failure to attend practices or meetings for that activity.
- Athletes are ineligible if they do not have a current physical and a current insurance release on file in the office.
- Students who are removed from class due to behavior may not get to participate. Students who are removed from class often may be removed from the activity completely.
- A student must be in attendance the last half of the day or more of school unless the principal excuses him or her.
- Athletes are ineligible to participate in practices or contests on any day that they have been excused from physical education.
- All students are ineligible to participate or be spectators at school-sponsored events during a period of suspension.
- No middle school student is allowed to participate after he/she has reached the age of 16 years. No student may participate in middle school athletics for more than two (2) years with the exception of summer sports.

- Suspensions: Student athletes assigned to in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension are not eligible to attend and/or participate in activities that are scheduled for that calendar day.
- Students who have been suspended from school for violation of school rules on alcohol, drugs, tobacco or illegal conduct, or are found to be in violation of the Marion Independent Schools Good Conduct Code will be subject to the consequences listed in that Code.
- Ineligible students may practice at the discretion of the Activities Director and middle school principal.

Primary emphasis should be placed on attaining academic skills. Representing the Marion School District is a privilege, and as such, participation in and commitment to an activity should be taken seriously.

### **School-Sponsored Student Organizations**

School-sponsored student organizations are those which are recognized by the school district and Board. School-sponsored student organizations are:

| <u>Grades</u>                                                         | <u>Organizations</u>                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Band                                             |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                   | Jazz Band                                        |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Chorus                                           |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                   | Show Choir                                       |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Basketball                                       |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Cheerleading                                     |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Cross Country                                    |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Football                                         |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Soccer                                           |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Track                                            |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Volleyball                                       |
| * 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>                                   | Wrestling (boys and girls have separate seasons) |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Student Council                                  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Chess Club                                       |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Archery Club                                     |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> | Robotics                                         |

The above athletic activities that are (\*) asterisks require proof of physical examination, parent permission, and a signed concussion form prior to the start of that activity.

### **Student Council**

The purpose of the Vernon Middle School Student Council is:

- To foster friendliness and cooperation among the students and faculty.
- To consider and resolve problems of concern to the student body.
- To give students a chance to assist with the work of the school in a democratic way.
- To promote school spirit.
- To stimulate interest in developing high standards of citizenship and scholarship.
- To encourage desirable community and school relationships.

Membership will consist of five representatives elected by students and staff from each grade level, plus a president elected from the eighth grade. Members can be dropped from the council if they are not performing as good representatives and school citizens.

# **Vernon Middle School**

## **Discipline Rights & Responsibilities**

## Breaches of Discipline

- Conduct which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process.
- Conduct which materially and substantially disturbs or interferes with a safe and orderly environment during school and school-related activities.
- Documented pattern of conduct that is detrimental to the best interests of the school district.
- Refusal to follow school-wide expectations, policies, rules, and/or regulations.
- Refusal to follow directions from teachers, administrators or other school personnel.

## Discipline

Discipline procedures at Vernon intend to:

- Provide a safe and orderly school environment conducive to optimal learning.
- Teach and reteach positive behavior to support students in making healthy decisions.
- Provide supportive interventions for students who are habitually disruptive to the learning process.

When a student violates a classroom, school, or district policy or procedure, they will be referred to the appropriate staff person to address the behavior:

- Minor behavior referrals will result in a low-level consequence determined by the classroom teacher or staff person. This may include, but is not limited to, a lunch detention or after-school detention with the person assigning the consequence. Repeated minor referrals may result in a major behavior referral.
- Major office referrals will result in a more serious consequence determined by a school administrator. This may include, but is not limited to, a main detention, a Saturday Restitution, an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension.

All Vernon staff members will communicate, directly instruct, and reteach positive behavior expectations and procedures regarding grade-specific expectations within their classrooms. Common area expectations are outlined in the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Behavior Matrix.

The following items are examples of things that may receive disciplinary actions. Note: This list is not all inclusive and may include other items that violate School Board policy and/or the safety or learning environment for students at Vernon Middle School:

- Cafeteria and/or recess violation
- Violation of cell phone/electronic device policies
- Defiance/ non-compliance/ insubordination
- Profanity, obscenities, and/or slurs
- Disrespect
- Verbal altercations
- Physical fighting with or without injury
- Video recording physical altercations
- Failure to serve classroom-level consequence
- Unexcused tardiness/truancy
- Violation of school dress code
- Possession or use of weapons
- Inciting offers to violence and/or defiance
- Vandalism

- Theft
- Drugs or alcohol

### **Concerns – Chain of Command**

Please follow the following protocol to address concerns regarding student behavior and/or discipline processes:

1. Contact your child's teacher to discuss the problem and possible solutions.
2. If the concern is not resolved, request a conference with the principal or associate principal.
3. If the concern is not resolved, request a conference with the superintendent.

### **Main Detentions**

Students may receive a main detention for a major referrals or repeated minor referrals. Detentions will be held after school hours with a predetermined length of time. Failure to serve a main detention at the arranged time will result in an additional consequence. Students will be expected to read or work on assignments while serving detention. All students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from school for detention.

Students who violate behavior expectations during a main detention may receive the following consequences:

1. The student will be required to repeat the detention time.
2. Parents will be contacted, and the student will repeat the detention with additional time.
3. A one-day in-school or out-of-school suspension will be enforced.

### **Classroom-level Detentions**

If a staff person assigns a student classroom-level detention for academic or disciplinary reasons, the student is expected to use this time doing their homework, reading, or sitting quietly. If the student fails to attend, they will be on main detention. When necessary, a parent conference will be scheduled by the staff person to provide supportive interventions to correct the problem behavior. No sentences may be assigned as punishment. Students who are required to see more than one teacher after school will work with each teacher and notify them of their obligations. The staff person may contact a school counselor or school administrator for support.

### **Due Process**

In the event that a student refuses to follow staff directions to report to the office, the staff person may request assistance from an administrator. The school administration will follow due process procedures as directed by Board policies.

### **Restorative Practices**

Restorative practices is an approach that helps build community, relationships, and mend any harm that has been done when there is a conflict. Students at VMS have been utilizing restorative practices in a prosocial way for several years to work on their listening skills, empathy, and social skills. They also are used

to solve conflict in classrooms between peers and between staff and students. Restorative practices can be used in lieu of discipline if appropriate. However, at times discipline will be the consequence.

## **Suspensions**

Students may be assigned an in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS) based upon the seriousness of the conduct violation and the student's academic situation. Students may be suspended from class from one to ten days for a variety of reasons, which may include but are not limited to:

- Habitual violation of one or more classroom or school-wide expectations
- Possession or smoking of cigarettes or tobacco
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages and/or drugs
- Defiance, non-compliance, and/or insubordination
- Failure to make up a main detention
- Failure to make up a Saturday Restitution
- Bullying/harassment
- Use of profanity and/or slurs
- Verbal altercations with students and/or staff
- Physical fighting with or without injury
- Inciting or video recording a verbal or physical altercation
- Theft
- Other offenses as determined by the principal and/or designee

### **In-School Suspension (ISS) Rules**

- Bring all books and materials with you when you report to in-school suspension.
- Use the restroom during the one morning and afternoon break.
- Ala carte items are not available for ISS students.
- Teachers will send assignments to you. Many students finish work early. You need to bring additional reading materials.
- At no time is sleeping allowed.
- Cell phones may not be accessed during an in-school suspension and must be held by a school administrator for the duration of the time.
- Students are responsible for the appearance and condition of the furniture, carpet, and walls in the ISS area and will be held accountable for any damage.
- If a student is serving an in-school suspension, they may not participate in any school activity that day.
- Conversation with other students in the ISS area is prohibited.

Failure to follow the above rules may result in additional suspension time.

### **Saturday Restitution**

Students may be assigned restitution on a Saturday to assist them in their academic success. All Saturday restitution sessions will begin at 8 a.m. and are supervised by a Vernon staff member. The length of time will be determined by a school administrator. Students are expected to follow all school expectations.

\*For more information about the Marion Independent School District Board Policy regarding progressive discipline, please refer to [Policy 503.8](#).