VERNON CENTER | M.S.

Do What's Right!

Student-Parent Handbook
2026-2027

Vernon Center Middle School
777 Hartford Turnpike
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Vernon Public Schools- Telephone: 860-870-6000
Dr. Jennifer Hills-Papetti Superintendent of Schools
Robert Testa Assistant Superintendent

School Administrators- Telephone: 860-870-6070
Melissa Luke Principal
Brett Distasio Assistant Principal
Daniel Bologna Assistant Principal

Student Support Services

Grade	Counselor	Phone	Social Worker	Phone
6	Jon Bassett	860-870-6192	Calah Huie	860-870-4474
7	Hillary Berard	860-870-6073	Gui Estes	860-870-6074
8	Kimberly Sass	860-870-6193	Elizabeth Marinelli	860-870-4465

School Nurse
Nicoel Chimmirri-Haley 860-870-6414

School Psychologist
Christina Diaz 860-896-4475

Director of Personnel
Robert Nagashima 860-870-6000 (ext. 4667)

Section 504- Telephone: 860-870-6050

Fax Number: 860-870-6318 or 860-870-6357

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491

Preface

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather as "the student," "students," or "children." Likewise, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents need to be familiar with the District's Student Code of Conduct which is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

Vernon Center Middle School Vision Statement

The faculty, staff and administration of Vernon Center Middle School are devoted to helping every student achieve his/her maximum individual potential in a supportive environment. We recognize that this goal requires the collective best efforts of school personnel, the student, the parents/guardians and the community at large. Our staff and programs aid in the transition of students from middle school to high school. We offer programs and an environment that provides opportunities for students to participate in 21st century learning and for sound academic, social, artistic, physical, and emotional growth. We embrace the values of safety, organization, achievement, respect, and responsibility.

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such a basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law. Robert Nagashima is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The full text of all Vernon Board of Education policies referenced in this handbook are available on the district website.

Table of Contents

Preface.....3
Vernon Center Middle School Vision Statement.....3
Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination.....3
Table of Contents.....4
Principal's Message.....5
Calendar and Schedules.....6
Regular Day Schedule.....7
Early Dismissal Schedule.....8
Attendance.....10
Field Trips and Extra Curricular Activities.....13
Communications.....14
Conduct and Discipline.....16
Bullying, Harassment, and Abuse.....21
Academics and Instruction.....23
Special Education and Student Services.....27
Health Services.....29
Food Services.....31
Technology and Acceptable Use Policy.....32
Extracurricular Activities.....35
School Safety and Security.....37
Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Institutions.....39

Principal's Message

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Welcome to a new school year at VCMS! Whether you're joining us for the first time or returning to familiar hallways, At VCMS, we believe that **being present matters**. Every day in school is a chance to learn, build relationships, and grow into the best version of ourselves. Attendance isn't just about being in the building—it's about being part of something bigger: a community that lifts each other up and pushes each other forward.

To help guide us all through a successful year, we've created the **Student-Parent Handbook**. It's more than just a set of rules—it's a roadmap for how we work together to create a safe, inclusive, and joyful learning environment. Inside, you'll find important information about our programs, expectations, and the values that shape our school culture.

I encourage every student and family to read through the handbook together. Understanding what's inside helps us all stay aligned and ensures that every student has the tools they need to thrive.

We also ask families to stay connected through **ASPEN**, our online platform. It's a great way to monitor progress, celebrate successes, and support students in building strong habits and organizational skills. When home and school work as a team, amazing things happen.

Finally, we ask that you sign the acknowledgment form to confirm you've reviewed the handbook. The paperwork was sent in the Family Welcome Packet. It's a small step that makes a big difference in reinforcing our shared commitment to student success.

Thank you for partnering with us. I can't wait to see what this year holds!

Sincerely,

Melissa Luke, Principal

Calendar and Schedules

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2026-2027 CALENDAR (BOE Approved 1/12/2026)

August/September 2026 (23 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
24PD	25PD	26PD	27*	28
31	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

October 2026 (22 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30Q

November 2026 (18 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12 CONF MS & HS	13 CONF MS & HS
16	17	18	19	20
23	24T	25/ED	26	27
30				

December 2026 (17 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10 CONF ES	11 CONF ES
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23ED	24	25
28	29	30	31	

January 2027 (19 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19Q	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

February 2027 (17 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

March 2027 (21 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
8T	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18 CONF ES	19 CONF ES
22	23	24	25	26
29	30Q	31		

April 2027 (17 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

May 2027 (20 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

June 2027 (8 days)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10ED/Q/T	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

PD = Professional Development Days - **No School**

ED = Early Dismissal – **District Half Day of School**

Q = End of Quarter / **T** = End of Trimester

Holidays and School Vacations - **No School**

CONF = Parent/Teacher Conferences – Half-Day of School **(Elementary, Middle or High Schools as indicated ES/MS/HS)**

Snow Day - **No School**

August 24th, 25th, 26th - District Prof. Development **(Paras: 25th & 26th)**
August 27th – *First Day of School
September 7th – Labor Day
September 21st – Yom Kippur
November 3 – Election Day – **No School**
November 12 & 13 - Parent/Teacher Conferences - **MS & HS (Half Day)**
November 25th – District Half Day of School – **ED**
November 26th & 27th - Thanksgiving Recess
December 10 & 11 - Parent/Teacher Conferences - **ES (Half Day)**
December 23rd - District Half Day of School – **ED**

December 24 – 25, 28 – 31 - Holiday Recess
January 1st - New Year's Day
January 18th - Martin Luther King Day
February 12th – Prof. Development Day **(Includes Paras)–No School**
February 15th – 16th - President's Day & Winter Recess
March 10th – Eid al Fitr
March 26th - Good Friday
March 18 & 19 - Parent/Teacher Conferences - **ES (Half Day)**
April 12 – 16 - Spring Recess
May 31st – Memorial Day
June 10 – Last Day of School – District Half Day of School – **ED**

(If school is cancelled 8 or more days, any make-ups beyond 8 will be taken from the April vacation beginning on April 12th working forward.

Regular Day Schedule
2026-2027

Grade 6
Eagle Time 7:40-8:00
WIN 8:00-8:30
Humanities or STEM 8:30-10:02
WIN 10:04-10:34
LUNCH 10:36-11:06
Humanities or STEM 11:08-12:40
UA 1 12:42-1:25
UA 2 1:27-2:10
Eagle Time **2:12-2:15**

Grade 7
Eagle Time 7:40-8:13
CORE 8:15-9:00
CORE 9:02-9:47
UA 1 9:49-10:34
UA 2 10:36-11:21
LUNCH 11:23-11:53
CORE 11:55-12:40
CORE 12:42-1:27
CORE 1:29-2:15

Grade 8
Eagle Time 7:40-8:13
UA 1 8:15-9:00
UA 2 9:02-9:47
CORE 9:49-10:34
CORE 10:36-11:21
CORE 11:23-12:08
LUNCH 12:10-12:40
CORE 12:42-1:27
CORE 1:29-2:15

Early Dismissal Schedule

2026-2027

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
WIN 7:40-8:05	**Eagle Time** 7:40-8:00	**Eagle Time** 7:40-8:00
Humanities or STEM 8:07-9:09	**CORE** 8:02-8:32	**UA 1** 8:02-8:32
	CORE 8:34-9:04	**UA 2** 8:34-9:04
WIN 9:11-9:36	**UA 1** 9:06-9:36	**CORE** 9:06-9:36
Humanities or STEM 9:38-10:40	**UA 2** 9:38-10:08	**CORE** 9:38-10:08
LUNCH 10:42-11:12	**LUNCH** 10:10-10:40	**CORE** 10:10-10:40
UA 1 11:14-11:41	**CORE** 10:42-11:12	**CORE** 10:42-11:12
UA 2 11:43-12:10	**CORE** 11:14-11:44	**LUNCH** 11:14-11:44
Eagle Time 12:12-12:15	**CORE** 11:46-12:15	**CORE** 11:46-12:15

Two Hour Delay Schedule
2026-2027

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
WIN 9:40-10:05	**Eagle Time** 9:40-10:00	**Eagle Time** 9:40-10:00
Humanities or STEM 10:07-11:09	**CORE** 10:02-10:32	**UA 1** 10:02-10:32
	CORE 10:34-11:04	**UA 2** 10:34-11:04
WIN 11:11-11:36	**UA 1** 11:06-11:36	**CORE** 11:06-11:36
Humanities or STEM 11:38-12:40	**UA 2** 11:38-12:08	**LUNCH** 11:38-12:08
LUNCH 12:42-1:12	**LUNCH** 12:10-12:40	**CORE** 12:10-12:40
UA 1 1:14-1:41	**CORE** 12:42-1:12	**CORE** 12:42-1:12
UA 2 1:43-2:10	**CORE** 1:14-1:44	**CORE** 1:14-1:44
Eagle Time 2:12-2:15	**CORE** 1:46-2:15	**CORE** 1:46-2:15

Attendance

(Refer to BOE Policy 5113)

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly.* Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Students are required to attend school on a regular basis both in-person and virtually.

Absence means an excused absence or an unexcused absence.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10 percent of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team.

All children attending district schools must obtain the required immunizations unless they have medical contraindications or religious objections. This obligation may be waived for homeless students.

A student must remain in school until age 18, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 17.

Absence

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the school between 7:30 A.M. and 8:15 A.M. on the day of the absence by telephoning the school.

If it is not possible to telephone the school on the day of absence, the parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the office. Parents should contact the principal in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

- **Excused Absence**: A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" only if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:
  A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials. (Define required documentation.)
  B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absences and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
    1. Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence.
    2. Students observance of a religious holiday.
    3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
    4. Court appearances which are mandated. (Documentation required)
    5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
    6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines. (Family vacations during the school year does not qualify as extraordinary education opportunities.)
    7. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.

- **Unexcused Absence**: Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied makeup privileges. Such absences may also be reflected in the students final grade.

  Absences which are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions.

  Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards when issued. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, guidance counselors and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

- **Truancy**: Truancy is defined by statute as absence(s) from school without the knowledge or approval of parents/guardians and/or school officials. A student age five to eighteen** inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant.

  Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. School staff are mandated by the state to report excessive absences or patterns of concern.

  Information about truancy will also be posted in the annual district report cards required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

- **Chronic Absenteeism (Refer to BOE Policy 5113.2):** A student whose total number of absences at anytime during a school year is equal to or greater than the percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child," Such a student will be subject to review by the attendance review team and the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department of Education. The District will also collect and analyze data on student attendance, truancy and chronic absenteeism for students with disabilities.

- **Tardiness (Refer to BOE Policy 5113):** Students who are not in their Eagle Time classroom by 7:40 A.M. are considered tardy and must report directly to the office. A student discovered on school grounds who has not signed in at the office will also be considered tardy. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant. Students may be subject to disciplinary action including in-school suspension if the principal determines that tardiness is excessive.

Arrival at School
WHEN DROPPING OFF STUDENTS, PLEASE DO SO BY THE GYM ENTRANCE

Students are requested not to arrive any earlier than fifteen minutes before the start of school. Doors open at 7:20 AM. Those students who do so must go directly to the cafe and wait for the passing bell before proceeding to their Eagle Time classroom. Once students enter the building they must remain inside. Eagle Time is held from 7:38 AM to 8:13 AM. In the event of a two-hour delayed opening Eagle Time is held from 9:38 AM to 9:48 AM. During Eagle Time period, attendance will be taken and announcements will be made. The school day ends at 2:15 PM.

Parents or guardians are required to accompany their students into the Main Office after 7:40 AM to sign them in.

Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students From School

- Every attempt should be made to make appointments outside of school hours.
- Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians, school administration, or nurse.
- Parents must report to the office to pick up their children, present identification, and sign them out before leaving the building.
- No student may be released in the custody of any individual, not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list maintained by the school's principal as authorized to obtain the release of students.
- **The Board of Education does not condone/approve students leaving a school campus in third-party ride sharing vehicles; especially such service (Uber, Lyft) whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult.**

Field Trips and Extra Curricular Activities

(Refer to board policy 6153)

Field trips are valuable educational activities which enhance classroom learning. To the extent the budgetary resources permit, the Board encourages and promotes student trips or other out-of-district activities, including participation in interscholastic events, community civic projects and international travel which are of value in helping achieve each participating student's educational objectives.

Per updated Board of Education Policy 6153 on June 9, 2025

Pursuant to Vernon Board of Education Policy 6153, (Field Trips) the following administrative regulation will be communicated to all Vernon Public Schools Employees, Students & Families and become effective July 1, 2025.

Rules Concerning Field Trips

Per Board Policy 6153: Field Trips which involve overnight accommodations for students must be approved by the Superintendent of Schools. ***Please note: any student who has a disciplinary infraction (suspension, in or out of school) in the last 12 months will not be allowed on a field trip (deemed for extra-curricular activities)***. Students who are chronically absent (missing 10% or more of the enrolled days of the school year) will not be allowed to attend overnight field trips. Students attending co-curricular activities (connected to classroom learning standards) will be allowed to attend such field trips.

Students who are deemed chronically absent will <u>not be allowed</u> to attend any field trip. In Connecticut, chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the total number of days a student is enrolled in the school year. This is for students in Grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. Students must maintain a 90% attendance rate at the time of the field trip. Appeals for exemption may be granted by the Superintendent of Schools only.

Per Board Policy 6153, Section 11: The administration reserves the right to deny participation on a field trip for any student, based on a record of inappropriate behavior and/or poor attendance pattern. Please note: Building Administration will review the student's cumulative record, academic grades, and attendance verification to determine if they are allowed to participate in any extra-curricular field trip.

Communications

ParentSquare
Vernon Public Schools uses ParentSquare to communicate with parents and staff. ParentSquare is designed to keep parents informed and facilitate participation at school. It provides a safe way for the school principal, teachers, staff, and parents to send and receive school and class information, share pictures and files, see calendar items, notify families of important sign up for Parent/Teacher conferences, and more.

ASPEN Parent/Student Portal
Vernon Center Middle School uses ASPEN to keep records of attendance and grading, as well as communicating student academic progress to the parents. Please check the ASPEN Parent Portal regularly to stay informed about your child's progress in their academic classes.

VERNON CENTER M.S. Commit Work Succeed
Do What's Right!

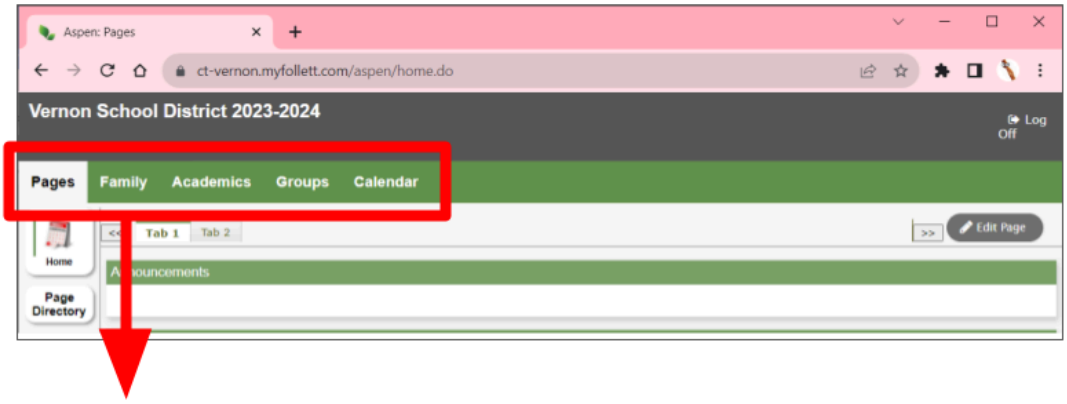
ASPEN Parent-Portal Directions

First Time Logging In

Your user name and password should have been provided to you in an email. If you have not received an email with login information **by September 8th**, please contact the school for assistance.

Go to **vernonpublicschools.org** → Go to **Student/Parent Links > ASPEN** → Enter **Login and Password** → Create **New Password and Security Question**

Navigating ASPEN



Pages
- Announcements
- Student gradebook activity
- "To Do" list
- Calendar preview

Family
- Notification - Set up an automated email if your student is absent or if a grade falls lower than a set number

Academics
- Class list
- Assignments
- Grades

Calendar
- Assignments listed by date

Channels of Communication

If there is a question about a student's classes or work in school, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases this is the teacher. The proper channeling of complaints regarding instruction, discipline, or learning materials is (1) Teacher; (2) School Counselor; (3) Assistant Principals; (4) Principal; (5) Superintendent/Central Office; and (5) Board of Education.

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational success. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors, or administrators, may initiate a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Conferences are held during school hours but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

Conduct and Discipline

It is the goal of the Vernon Board of Education to ensure the safety and welfare of all students in attendance at Board controlled schools, and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. In keeping with this goal, students are expected to comply with school rules and regulations, as well as Board policies and regulations. Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or that violates a publicized policy of the Board. Students may be disciplined for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates a publicized policy of the Board.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being dressed appropriately.*
4. Showing respect toward others, engaging in civil discourse.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines.
7. Abiding by the code of conduct.
8. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

Per Board Policy, students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

Students are urged to participate in efforts to build a positive school climate as well as alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as restorative circles or peer monitoring.

In working with students, emphasis shall be placed upon developing effective self-discipline as the most successful disciplinary approach. The Board authorizes and directs the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, to develop, revise as needed, publish, and maintain regulations for the accomplishment of necessary and appropriate student discipline. Such regulations shall include, among other things, a listing of potential student infractions that are prohibited within the District and, if committed, could result in discipline against the offending student(s). In addition, these regulations will include the procedures required for the imposition of such disciplines and shall be made available, in writing, by email, and in student handbooks, to all students, parents, Board staff and the general public on at least an annual basis.

A student who violates the district's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. The Vernon Public Schools disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as a restorative justice model, detention, removal from class, removal to an alternative education program, in school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates publicized board of education policy even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. The school district believes that exclusionary discipline practices (suspension, expulsion) limit students' access to classroom instruction and fail to improve student outcomes and school climate. These practices will be used as a last resort.

Disciplinary consequences are defined by board policy as follows:

- **Removal from Class** is the exclusion of a student for a class period of ninety minutes or less.

- **Detention:** A student may be detained outside of school hours for not more than one hour on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until the students' parents have been

notified of the reason for the detention (and can make arrangements for the student's transportation on the day(s) of the detention).

- **Social Probation:** Students placed on social probation will be excluded from any and all extracurricular for 30 school days beginning the day the discipline is assigned. Students receiving an ISS or OSS are automatically placed on the social probation list. Social probation can also be assigned without a suspension when appropriate.

- **In-School Suspension (ISS)** means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.

- **Out of School Suspension (OSS)** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below. All suspensions shall be in-school suspensions unless the administration determines for any student enrolled in grades three through twelve, inclusive, that (1) the student being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the student shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension or (2) that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence of previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of the student and efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive support strategies. A student enrolled in grades preschool to two, inclusive, may be given an out-of-school suspension if it is determined by the administration that such a suspension is appropriate based on evidence that the student's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons. In addition, a person's duty as a mandated reporter to report suspected child abuse or neglect is not limited by this section.

- **Expulsion** means the exclusion of a student, grades three to twelve inclusive, from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one calendar year. In order to be expelled, the conduct of a student must be found to be both (1) violative of a Board policy and (2) either seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangering persons or property.

Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Removal from Class, Suspension, and/or Expulsion

Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures.
4. Violation of smoking; dress;transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, or law enforcement authorities, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin, or ancestry.
7. Refusal by a student to identify themselves to a staff member when asked.
8. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
9. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students.
10. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, boxcutter, metal knuckles, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object. This also includes airsoft pistols.
11. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
12. Possession or ignition of any fireworks or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire.
13. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages. The term "drugs" shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlledsubstance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.
14. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
15. The destruction of real, personal or school property such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
16. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class cutting, or failure to attend detention.
17. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion
18. Making bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and/or other persons.
19. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and/or law enforcement authorities.
20. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects.
21. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
22. Leaving school grounds, school transportation vehicle or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
23. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution. This includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software such as ChatGPT or My AI on Snapchat.
24. Possession and/or use of a tablet, cellular telephone, or similar electronic device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the Principal or designee.
25. Photo images and video recordings of school/class events including off ground events may not be electronically posted or shared. To do so violates privacy standards.
26. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection or similar school property for non-school related purposes.
27. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer.
28. Hazing.
29. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.
30. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law which would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school community or school property.

Bus Conduct
Students may be suspended from bus transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school (door to door) which endangers persons or property, violates a Board policy, or administrative regulation.

Dress Code
In accordance with Vernon Board of Education policy 5132, the expectations for student dress at Vernon Center Middle School is to maintain an environment conducive to the educational process. Administrators will use reasonableness and discretion when determining the appropriateness of attire. The school staff will enforce the dress code in a consistent manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size. Enforcement of the dress code will be gender neutral.

The following items are **prohibited** from being worn during the academic school day:

1. **Slippers** (Shoes that do not have a solid sole for outdoor use)
2. **Blankets** (should be left at home or in a locker)
3. Footwear which marks floors or is a safety hazard, including Heelys
4. **Baseball caps, hoods, or face coverings (e.g. masks)**
5. **Sunglasses,** whether worn or carried, unless required pursuant to a documented medical issue
6. Spiked or studded bracelets, oversize or multi-finger rings, belts, or any other article of attire with spikes or studs attached, or any other clothing item that may present a safety hazard to the student, other students or staff
7. Attire or accessories that contain vulgarity or that contain overly offensive or disruptive writing or pictures
8. Attire or accessories depicting or suggesting violence, that provokes others to act violently, causes others to be intimidated by fear of violence, or that constitutes "fighting words," including but not limited to attire or accessories depicting a Nazi swastika
9. Attire or accessories which depict logos or emblems that encourage the use of drugs, tobacco products, or alcoholic beverages
10. Shirts and/or blouses that reveal undergarments or excessive midriff
11. See-through clothing
12. Shorts, miniskirts, or pants that reveal an excessive amount of the upper thigh or undergarments
13. Any item deemed to be a distraction to the education of the student or of others at the discretion of school administration

Alcohol Use, Drugs and Tobacco
Refer to BOE policy 5131.6
Use, possession, sale or distribution of drugs, including prescription drugs, drug paraphernalia and/or alcoholic beverages in violation of state law or Board of Education policy is prohibited at any time on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity. If a student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, or engaged in the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs and/or alcohol, the police will be notified, their parent(s)/responsible adult will be contacted, they will be suspended from school, referred to a Student Support Team, and considered for expulsion. In cases of the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs or alcohol, students will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. If a student is arrested and is awaiting trial for possession of, or possession of with intent to sell drugs in or on school property or at a school-sponsored event, the student will not be allowed to attend school without the permission of the Superintendent, per the guidelines set forth in Policy #5114.

Tobacco/E-Cigarette Use by Students
Refer to BOE policy 5131.6
There shall be no smoking or any other unauthorized use or possession of tobacco, tobacco products, including chewing tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia, and electronic nicotine delivery systems or vapor products by students in any school building or school vehicle at any time or on any school grounds during the school day, or at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of designated school personnel. Such as when the student is at any school function, extracurricular event, field trip, or school related activity such as a work-study program.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. The Superintendent shall propose and the Board of Education shall approve procedures and regulations to ensure that any student violating this policy is subjected to disciplinary action, and that any disciplinary actions imposed for similar actions are treated consistently.

Search and Seizure

Refer to BOE policy 5145.12

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Hallway Behavior

In order to ensure student safety and that of others, students will keep to the right when passing in the corridors, adhere to the HANDS OFF policy, walk, move at a reasonable pace, not obstruct the passage of others, and use the doors on the right hand side. Students in the hallway during class time require a pass.

Bullying, Harassment, and Abuse

Bullying
Refer to BOE policy 5131.911
The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

"Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

A. Causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
B. Places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or
C. Infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.
D. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student
E. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school

Cyberbullying
Refer to BOE policy 5131.911
Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, such misuses of technology as harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material may be disguised or logged on as someone else.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer, but brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be severely disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of school. Also, such conduct must be violative of a publicized school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, threats, or making a threat off school grounds, to kill or hurt a teacher or student.

Harassment
Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any disability they may have. The District prohibits harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

A student who believes he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

Sexual Harassment
Refer to BOE policy 5145.51
Sexual harassment will not be tolerated among students or staff of the school district. Any form of sexual harassment is forbidden whether by students, supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, individuals under contract, or volunteers in the schools. Students shall exhibit conduct which is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students, and to the public. In addition, the Board prohibits all discriminatory intimidation on the basis of any other status protected by law, including but not limited to race, color, age, gender, gender identity or expression, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability, or veteran status.

Definition: Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including, but not limited to:

1. insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct;
2. threats or suggestions that a student's submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome conduct will in any way influence a decision regarding that student;
3. conduct of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with the student's learning or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment, such as the display in the educational setting of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Complaints Procedures: The Board of Education encourages victims of sexual harassment to report such claims promptly by making a written or oral complaint to the building principal. Should this individual be the alleged harasser, sexual harassment may be reported to the district's Title IX coordinator:

Director of Pupil Personnel Services
30 Park Street, Vernon, CT 06066
860-870-6000 Ext. 4666

Child Abuse, Neglect, and Sexual Assault
Refer to BOE policy 5145.511
All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive training in their use, as required by state law.

Academics and Instruction

Curriculum and Promotion Policy

Course of Study
All students at Vernon Center Middle School are required to take a program of studies that consists of core and unified arts subjects and physical education. The core subjects include language arts (English and reading), math, science and social studies. The unified arts subjects include all of the non-core courses, band and chorus. Since promotion and/or retention are determined by individual performance, each student is encouraged to do his/her very best in all classes.

Boost Math and Boost ELA
Boost Math and Boost Reading / ELA are offered to students that need extra support in these areas. This program is individualized to meet a student's diagnosed needs, based on test results, teacher recommendation, and classroom performance.

Promotion, Retention and Placement
A student shall be promoted from one grade to the next on the basis of academic performance. Student promotion is dependent on each student's mastery and acquisition of basic learning objectives. Normally, students will progress annually from grade to grade. Students who master objectives at an exceptional rate may be considered for acceleration to another grade or class. Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate will be considered for retention. Retention and acceleration decisions are the responsibility of the teaching staff and principal, after prior notification and discussion with parents. The final decision rests with the school principal.

Students must demonstrate attainment of the basic skills needed for graduation based on the district's assessment program. A failure to attain these skills may necessitate involvement in additional courses, special help programs, summer school, retesting, etc.

Curriculum Restrictions

a. World Languages - Eighth grade students must have successfully completed the seventh and eighth grade program and be recommended by the department for year two in high school.
b. Mathematics - In order to be recommended for Algebra I, students must have advanced standing in sixth and seventh grade mathematics and teacher recommendation.

Student Records
Refer to BOE policy 5125
Educational records, defined as records directly related to a student, will be kept for each student and will reflect the physical, emotional, social and academic aspects of a student's development in the educational process.

The Board of Education recognizes the legal requirements to maintain the confidentiality of student records. Such confidentiality shall be consistent with federal statutes, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, and its implementing regulations.

Safeguards shall be established by the school administration to protect the student and the student's family from invasion of privacy in the collection, maintenance and dissemination of information, and to provide accessibility to recorded information by those legally entitled thereto. Access to inspect or review a student's educational record or any part thereof may include the right to receive copies under limited circumstances.

Homework
Refer to BOE policy 6154
Purposeful homework helps students learn. Examples of purposeful learning include 1) practicing a skill or process that a student is not yet fluent in, and 2) elaborating on information that has already been taught and will enrich student learning.

Thereby, purposeful homework improves student understanding of new material, and can be used by teachers to guide further instruction. Throughout the homework process, parents should support their children by monitoring progress and providing encouragement. At the same time, effective homework practices must not place an undue burden on students. The Board recognizes the value of extracurricular activities and unstructured time as well as adequate sleep, for student success in school. If a student is absent, it is their responsibility to check with their teachers in order to access work that they missed.

- If you are absent for two or more days, your parents/guardians may call the office between 7:30 AM and 8:15 AM and request your assignments which will be available at the close of school. Please do not request homework for less than a two-day absence.
- If an extended absence is anticipated, please contact your school counselor well in advance of the date to arrange for assignments.
- Students who have been suspended from school will automatically have their assignments requested for them. This work is to be completed and returned to the appropriate teacher at the conclusion of your suspension.
- It will be the responsibility of the student's parents to pick up the assignments and/or books. The school office closes at 4:00 PM.

Special Help and Make-up Periods
Teachers are available for extra help or make-up work. If you are having difficulty or have been absent, it is wise to arrange a time with your teachers to remain for extra help. This should take precedence over intramurals, interscholastic athletics, or any other school activity of an elective nature.

The late bus is available on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. In order for students to ride the late bus they must:

1. Turn in a LATE BUS PERMISSION SLIP to the front office by 12:40 p.m., the last lunch wave (available in the Main Office or online). Students can't take the bus without the slip on file in the office. One permission slip will last the entire school year. Slips are in the office. Students must SIGN UP FOR THE LATE BUS IN THE OFFICE BY THE END OF THEIR LUNCH WAVE.
2. Students taking the late bus MUST BE AT SCHOOL FOR A REASON. All students must let the office know what staff member they are staying with and the reason.

Grades and Honor Roll
Midterm reports are issued to all students at the midpoint of every quarter. These indicate the current grade of each core subject. Midterm reports require a parent/guardian signature and a copy must be returned. In addition, all unified arts teachers issue progress reports to those students in danger of failing. If your parents have any questions, they are encouraged to make an appointment for a conference with the teacher or team.

Report cards will be issued electronically.

The middle school uses numerical grades in all subject areas. In addition to academic numerical grades, behavior and effort grades are awarded in each subject. Behavior grades are based on, but are not limited to, student deportment, respectfulness to students and teachers, and adherence to school and class rules. Effort grades are based on, but are not limited to, completing homework and classwork, participating in class, and seeking extra help as needed. Behavior and effort grades are not contingent upon academic averages.

**Please see the EG Rubric in the beginning of the handbook for specific criteria for behavior and effort grades.

Lockers and Student Materials
All students will be assigned a locker and locker combination. Students' backpacks, bags, and purses are to remain in their locker during the day.

Students that are participating in sports teams will be assigned a locker in the Tech Ed hallway.

Metal Water Bottle Policy

Due to an increase in incidents involving water bottles, metal water bottles and gatorade water bottles will not be allowed. VCMS has experienced an increase in incidents involving water bottles, including spills, injuries, theft, and inappropriate use. We know that this is quite the shift, however we are confident that this will help students remain focused on learning.

The grading system is as follows:

Academic Grades	
Letter	**Numeric**
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	69 and below
INC	Incomplete

Effort and Conduct	
Letter	**Descriptor**
E	Exceeds Expectations
M	Meets Expectations
N	Needs Improvement

The honor roll for grades six, seven and eight is published four times a year at the close of each quarter.

General Honors: No grade below 80 in any subject and an average of an 85 in all subjects.

High Honors: No grade below 85 in any subject and an average of a 90 in all subjects.

Note: Incomplete report card grades must be made up by midterm of the following quarter. Not doing so will result in a failing grade in that subject. Students have the responsibility to complete all missing assignments.

Eagle Club

The Eagle Club is considered to be a group of students who should exhibit exemplary behavior at all times. This includes Eagle Time, cafeteria, and hallway behavior. Students' attendance and tardiness will also be considered when assigning an EG grade. **Students must receive grades of E in Effort and Behavior to qualify for the Eagle Club.**

Effort and Conduct Rubric

	E Exceeds Expectations	**M** Meets Expectations	**N** Needs Improvement
EFFORT	• Hands in **all assignments** on time • Quality of work **exceeds expectations** • Asks **relevant questions regularly** and/or requests help when needed • **Makes positive contributions** to class or group discussion **regularly** • **Perseveres through challenges** (e.g. seeks extra help, retakes assessments, reads an entire book that was challenging, reworks a math problem multiple times with feedback)	• **Most assignments** are completed and handed in on time • Quality of work **matches expectations** • Asks **relevant questions** and/or requests help when needed • **Makes positive contributions** to class or group discussion	• **Many assignments** are not completed and handed in on time • Quality of work **needs improvement** • Often asks questions that are **unrelated** to the lesson • Distracts the class with **negative contributions** during class or group discussion
CONDUCT	• **Always** follows the SOAR values and classroom expectations and encourages others to do so as well • **Always respects** all students and staff, their property, and their personal space • Puts others before themselves – **willing to help** whenever possible	• **Almost always** follows the SOAR values classroom expectations • Respects all students and/or staff, their property, and their personal space	• **Does not consistently** follow SOAR values and classroom expectations • Sometimes **shows a lack of respect** for students and/or staff, their property, and their personal space

Awards

Academic awards presented at the end of the school year include but are not limited to:

1. Florence R. Whitlock Memorial Awards are given for the highest overall average in the major academic subjects.
2. First Year Algebra Prize is given to a boy and girl with the highest numerical average in Algebra I.
3. Athletic and Activity Awards are given for participation and excellence in extracurricular activities during the academic year.
4. Academic Honors Awards
5. Scholar Leader Award for excellence in scholarship and leadership
6. President's Education Award
7. VCMS Scholar Awards recognizing three-year High Honor Roll achievement
8. VCMS Honor Roll achievement

On-Campus Recruitment

Refer to BOE policy 5145.14

Students at the middle and high school level will be informed of the availability of (1) vocational, technical and technological education and training of technical high schools and (2) agricultural sciences and technology education at regional agricultural science and technology education centers. Full access for the recruitment of students by technical high schools, regional agricultural science and technology education centers, magnet schools, and charter schools will be provided.

School Ceremonies and Observances

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as, but not limited to, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Presidents Day are encouraged. The district reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and

3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Nonparticipants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program
Refer to BOE policy 5145.511
The Vernon Public Schools District ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regards to child sexual violence, abuse and assault (referred to collectively hereinafter as "Sexual Misconduct with Children"). This change requires the efforts of the entire staff. The Vernon Public Schools shall, therefore, develop a comprehensive Child Sexual Misconduct program with the goal of making students and staff aware of child sexual violence, abuse and assault.

Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications
Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested, as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.

Special Education and Student Services

The district shall provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the district, required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans With Disabilities Act.

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act even though they do not require services pursuant to the IDEA.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of services to children with disabilities provided in state and federal statutes which govern special education. For those students who are not eligible for services under IDEA, but, because of disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need or are believed to need special instruction or related services, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students' identification, evaluation, and educational placement. This system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent(s)/guardians(s), and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Students receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) remain eligible for such services up until their 22nd birthday or until they graduate from high school with a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first. The adult student or his/her parent/guardian will be asked by the District if the student wishes to receive the special education and related services outlined in their individualized education program (IEP) until they turn 22 years of age or they graduate with a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first.

The Board of Education in fulfilling its legal duties and responsibilities for providing special education programs for the students of the school district, shall be assisted through membership in the Regional Service Center and through cooperative associations with other school districts.

If necessary, students may also be placed in private school education facilities.

English Language Learners (ELL)
Parents of English Learners participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the English Learners program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services, which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

Seclusion and Restraint
The Board of Education (Board) believes that maintaining an orderly, safe environment is conducive to learning and is an appropriate expectation of all staff members within the district. To the extent that staff actions comply with all applicable statutes and Board policy governing the use of physical force, including physical restraint of students and seclusion of students, staff members will have the full support of the Board of Education in their efforts to maintain a safe environment.

The Board recognizes that there are times when it becomes necessary for staff to use reasonable restraint or place a student in seclusion to provide a safe environment for students. The Board also regulates the use of exclusionary time out in accordance with this Policy and applicable law.

School Counseling Department

The role of a school counselor centers on each student's social-emotional development, academic achievement, and career/future planning. These areas are covered through classroom lessons, individual conferencing, family meetings, and in conjunction with school-based teams. School counselors are committed to meeting the needs of each individual student and family. School counselors recognize that students need an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to them. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, educational, or vocational in nature. Students can schedule an appointment via the school counselor by stopping by the school counseling office before school, during lunch, between classes, or after school.

Psychotropic Drug Use

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisors, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

Homeless Students

Refer to BOE policy 5118

It is the policy of the Vernon Board of Education ("Board") that no child or youth shall be discriminated against or stigmatized in this school district because of homelessness. Homeless children or youths (hereinafter referred to collectively as "homeless students"), as defined by federal and state statutes, residing within the district, or residing in temporary shelters in the district, are entitled to free school privileges.

Migrant Students

Refer to BOE policy 6141.312

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

Title I Comparability of Services

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

Title I Parent and Family Engagement

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental and family engagement involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs and opportunities for parents and family members to participate in the education of their children.

Health Services

Refer to BOE policy 5141
The VCMS Health Office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.
School health efforts shall be directed toward detection and prevention of health problems and to emergency treatment, and include the following student health services:

1. Appraising the health status of student and school personnel;
2. Counseling students, parents, and others concerning the findings of health 5141 examination;
3. Encouraging correction of defects;
4. Helping prevent and control disease;
5. Providing emergency care for student injury and sudden illness;
6. Maintaining school health records.

No student will be allowed to enroll in district schools without adequate immunization as per state law.

Student Medical Care at School
Refer to BOE policy 5141
School personnel are responsible for the immediate care necessary for a student whose sickness or injury occurs on the school premises during school hours or in school-sponsored and supervised activities.

Schools shall maintain files of Emergency Information cards for all students. If a child's injury requires immediate care, the parent or guardian will be called by telephone by the nurse, the building Principal, or other personnel designated by the Principal, and advised of the pupil's student's condition. When immediate medical or dental attention is indicated, and when parents or guardians cannot be reached, the student will be transported to the nearest hospital unless otherwise indicated on the student's Emergency Information card. In this event, the family physician/dentist and school district medical advisor will be notified of school district actions.

Administration of Medicine Policy
Refer to BOE policy 5141.21
To promote the safe administration of medications to students in order to maintain their health, support their learning, and intervene in medical emergencies.

The Vernon Board of Education shall adopt written policies and procedures, in accordance with C.G.S., Section 10-212a and Connecticut regulations, Section 10-212a-1 through Section 10-212a-10. Pursuant to the regulations, Section 10-212a-2 (a) (4), the Board, with the advice and approval of the school medical advisor and health services supervisor, shall review and revise the policy and procedures concerning medication administration in school as needed, but at least biennially, except that the policy and procedures specific to Before and After School Programs shall be reviewed on an annual basis. In order to provide immunity afforded to school personnel who administer medication, the administration of medication in Vernon Public Schools shall be in accordance with the policy, procedures and health services protocols of Vernon Public Schools for the administration of medications.

Student Medical Records
Refer to BOE policy 5141
There shall be a health record maintained in the school nurse's room for each student enrolled in the school district. For the purposes of confidentiality, records will be treated in the same manner as the student's cumulative academic record.

Student health records are covered by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and are exempt from the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPPA). However, it is recognized that obtaining medical information from health care providers will require schools to have proper authorization and to inform parents that such information once released by health care providers is no longer protected under HIPAA but is covered under FERPA.

Pesticide Applications
The Vernon Public Schools has adopted an Integrated Pest Management policy for pest control within the buildings and grounds of the Vernon Public Schools. Pesticide products may be applied by schedule for preventative or residual control

of insect, weed, and/or plant disease pests. Our IPM approach focuses on eliminating conditions that are favorable to pest infestation, thereby making their survival more difficult and reducing the need for pesticide applications.

Pesticide applications will not be performed within any building or on the grounds of any school during regular school hours or during planned activities unless an emergency application is necessary to eliminate an immediate threat to human health. These areas will be secured against access as necessary for the period specified by the manufacturer and taking into account all precautions found on the pesticide product label. All applications will be made by individuals holding valid State of CT certifications.

Food Services

Cafeteria
Refer to BOE policy 3542
All eating is to be done in the cafeteria. Food is not permitted elsewhere in the building. Rules of cleanliness are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or such other disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that students require adequate, nourishing food and beverages in order to grow, learn and maintain good health. It is the intent of the Board that District schools take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. The Board directs that students shall be provided with adequate space and time to eat meals during the school day.

The Board shall provide food service for school breakfasts; for school lunches that meets the nutritional standards required by state and federal school breakfast and lunch programs.

Free and Reduced Lunch
Refer to BOE policy 3542.31
Participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (and School Breakfast Programs) (SBP) is/are herewith authorized. Authorization is granted to the Superintendent to act on behalf of the Board for purposes of participating in the National School Lunch Program (and School Breakfast Program).

Free meals will be served to children from families whose income falls within the current criteria established by the Secretary of Agriculture under the Federal Lunch Program for free lunches.

Food Allergies
Refer to BOE policy 5141.25
The focus of a Districtwide Food Allergy Management Plan shall be prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response. The management plan shall strike a balance between the health, social normalcy and safety needs of the individual student with life threatening food allergies and the education, health and safety needs of all students. The District Food Allergy Management Plan shall be the basis for the development of the procedural guidelines that will be implemented at the school level and provide for consistency across all schools within the district.

Technology and Acceptable Use Policy

Refer to BOE policy 6141.3

The school district believes in the educational value of communications, the Internet, and electronic information services, and recognizes their potential to support its educational program, the curriculum and student learning. The Vernon School district will make every effort to protect students and teachers from any potential misuses or abuses resulting from experience with an electronic information service. Therefore, it is imperative that members of the school community conduct themselves in a lawful, responsible, decent, ethical, and polite manner while using any network resource.

Guidelines for General Use
It is important to recognize that with increased access to computers and to people all over the world also comes the availability of controversial material that may not be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Further, the school district recognizes the importance of each individual's judgment regarding appropriate conduct in maintaining a quality resource system. While this policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior, it does seek to assist in such judgment by providing the following guidelines:

1) All use of the Internet, electronic services or network resources must be in support of educational objectives or research.
2) Any electronic mail accounts shall be used only by the authorized owner of the account. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account.
3) All communication and information accessible via a network should not be assumed to be private.
4) Any use of the district's computing resources or networks for illegal or inappropriate purposes, accessing inappropriate materials in a public school environment, or supporting such activities is prohibited. Inappropriate is defined as materials that are identified as such by the rules and policies of the Vernon Board of Education. Language that is deemed to be vulgar is also prohibited. Illegal activity shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the service or network.
5) Any use of network resources for commercial purposes, financial gain, product advertisement, political lobbying, or any attempt to disrupt the use of the services by others, is prohibited.

The Board of Education has no control over the information available on the Internet. Sites accessible via the Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. The Vernon Public School District follows all Children's Internet Protection ACT regulations in order to protect its students and staff from inappropriate material.

Violations of the provisions stated in this policy may result in suspension, dismissal, or revocation of access privileges to the Internet, electronic services or district networks.

The Superintendent shall identify one administrator who will have responsibility for implementing this policy, establishing procedures, and supervising access privileges.

Guidelines for Student Use
The use of district network resources is a privilege. Students at the elementary level may use the internet or other network resources only when supervised by a teacher or paraprofessional. Guidelines for the use of these network resources by elementary students will be developed by the person designated by the Superintendent.

Students in grades 6 - 12 who wish to use district network resources that are available to them may do so provided that they:

1) Read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy;
2) Sign the Technology Agreement

3) Obtain the signature of one parent/guardian (if under the age of 18) on the Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement;
4) Submit the signed agreement(s) to the designated person in each building.

Any parent or student who wishes to appeal any decision relative to Acceptable Use Policy should contact the Superintendent.

The Board of Education provides access to the Internet to students in the Vernon School System and believes the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users, who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to assume. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources. If a district user violates any of these provisions, their privileges/account may be suspended and future access may be restricted or denied.

Internet - Terms and Conditions
Acceptable use of technology - Use of network resources and the Internet must be in support of education and research constant with education goals. Failure to adhere to the established guidelines may result in the loss of network access, disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or State regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material, or material protected by trade secrets. Use for commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.

Network Etiquette – Network users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

a) Be polite. Use appropriate language. Do not be abusive in your messages to others;
b) Illegal activities are strictly forbidden;
c) Do not reveal personal addresses or phone number;
d) Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. All email activity at any time may be monitored to ensure proper educational use. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to law enforcement;
e) Use of the network in such a way that disrupts others is prohibited;
f) All communications and information accessible via the network should not be assumed to be private property.
g) The playing of local computer or online games without express permission from a classroom teacher or administrator is prohibited;
h) Use of social media is not allowed unless approved by a classroom teacher or administrator, and then only for educational purposes;
i) Use of streaming media resources is only permissible for approved educational purposes; and
j) Use of network resources for the purposes of cyber bullying is strictly prohibited. Any individual discovered to be using network resources for bullying purposes will have their network account suspended and will be referred to administration and if appropriate, to law enforcement.

The School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The district will not be liable for any damages such as loss of data resulting from delays, non-delivery, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors or omissions. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained from the Internet.

Social Media while at VCMS
Refer to BOE policy 6141.326
Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property or at District-sponsored activities unless the posting is approved by a District representative/teacher/staff member. Social media websites are websites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, etc.

The District will not be liable for information / comments posted by students on social media websites when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment. For safety purposes, the district employs both Internet filters and firewalls.

The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

Student Cell Phone Policy at VCMS
Students may possess cell phones pursuant to board policy 5131.81 provided they are kept in their locker throughout the school day. The Board prohibits the use of these privately-owned electronic devices by students during the school day, unless directed by school personnel to utilize them. **The administrative expectation regarding cell phones during the school day is that students have their phones in their locker between 7:40 AM and 2:30 PM.** As middle school students develop their skills as digital citizens, we recognize the importance cell phones may play in their lives. However, accessing apps and digital messaging services during the school day may distract or disrupt the learning environment for students and others; doing so may be subject to consequences per the student code of conduct including but not limited to confiscation, parent pick up of the device, and/or school discipline such as detention, suspension or social probation.

Should it be absolutely necessary, the most effective way for parents/guardians to reach a student during the day is to contact VCMS's main office at (860) 870-6070. Attempting to directly contact a student by text or call during the day may interrupt the educational environment for the student.

Extracurricular Activities

VCMS is proud of its extracurricular activities. We believe that a total school program includes participation in activities outside of the classroom, and every student should have the opportunity to participate in these experiences. Students will have many opportunities to meet new people and participate in a wide variety of activities, including sports, music and drama, student council, and many others. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. A student must accept responsibility for their own actions and meet the academic and behavioral guidelines for participation. Students should listen to the lunch announcements for information about the clubs, activities and sports they are interested in. Extracurricular activities may include:

Academics	Clubs	Athletics	
● FLL Lego Team ● French Club ● Math Bee ● Math Counts Math Team ● Math Olympiads ● National History / Connecticut History Day ● Poetry Slam ● Science Bee ● Spelling Bee ● Writing Club	● Band ● Jazz Band ● Chorus ● Drama Club ● Talent Show ● EPOCH Art ● Photo and Video ● Student Council ● VCMS News ● Writing Club	Interscholastic Sports ● Soccer ● eSports ● Volleyball ● Basketball ● Baseball ● Softball ● Cheerleading ● Cross-Country	Intramural Sports ● Basketball ● Colorguard ● Bowling ● Flag football ● Floor hockey ● Dance ● Golf ● Gymnastics ● Running club ● Soccer ● Softball ● Tennis ● Walking club ● Weight training ● Wrestling

Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities and Athletics
Refer to the VCMS Student Athlete Handbook
Student athletes are held to a higher academic standard than other students. School administration and the athletic department stresses academics over athletics.

Student athletes' grades will be monitored throughout the season. If students are struggling they will be required to fill out progress reports with all of their teachers every two weeks during the season. These progress reports must be submitted to the coach to determine eligibility. If students are struggling we will do our best to provide support to improve their performance in the classroom. If a student continues to struggle they will be referred to school administration or athletic director for further determination of eligibility. It may be decided it is best for the student to not participate in athletics and solely focus on academics.

Attendance Requirements for Extracurricular Activities and Athletics
All VCMS students are required to be in school for the entirety of the school day in order to participate in extracurricular activities and athletics unless prior written notice and/or an agreement has been met with administration.

Athletics

Refer to the VCMS Student Athlete Handbook

The athletic program at Vernon Center Middle School is an integral part of the educational process. The purpose of the program is to stimulate students to develop their character, contribute to the community, build lifelong friendships, and refine life skills through sport.

To be of maximum effectiveness, the athletic program must be closely coordinated with the general instruction of the school. It must be such that the number of students accommodated, and the educational aims achieved, justify its inclusion in the overall educational program.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules and regulations. While the Board of Education takes great pride in success, it does not condone "winning at any cost" and discourages any and all pressures that might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health.

School Safety and Security

Vernon Public Schools climate and safety staff are dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors utilizing an all hazards approach and fostering positive interactions with students, staff and visitors to support the academic process.

The Vernon Public Schools Climate and Safety staff works closely with our local first responders, School Resource Officer, regional, state and federal agencies, Vernon Public Schools Facilities Department, Town of Vernon Department of Public Works, Town of Vernon Information Technology Department, as well as our district, and building level administration to develop and implement best practice emergency response procedures, conduct safety and security training for school staff, coordinate emergency response procedures with local police, fire and emergency medical services, and the selection, installation, and maintenance of intrusion detection, access control and closed circuit television systems.

Vernon Public Schools Climate and Safety staff receive comprehensive training in responding to and handling emergency situations and are all trained in First Aid, CPR, AED and Stop the Bleed.

Emergency Response Drills
Throughout the school year, students are expected to practice the appropriate actions, responses, and behaviors for emergency situations. These emergencies may include, but are not limited to, fire drills, intruder simulations, dangers from natural disasters (hurricanes, severe lightning) or medical emergencies and evacuations. The purpose of these drills is to give students a rehearsal of the expected behaviors so that in the unfortunate event of an emergency situation, students will respond in a safe manner. The key to making these drills successful is for each student to carefully follow the instructions of staff members. Any student who disregards safety drill protocol or instruction may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Lockdown
If there is an emergency or hazardous condition in the building or on school grounds, an announcement will be made if a lockdown is necessary. The terms of the lockdown will be indicated in plain language, stating a modified or full lockdown. A modified lockdown allows for classroom activities to continue. In a full lockdown students should remain in the classroom out of sight and silent until an Administrator ends the lockdown via intercom. Passage outside of the classroom is restricted; there is no movement in the building.

Fire Alarm
When a fire alarm sounds, students must leave the building according to directions posted in the classroom. Teachers should lead the group, and the last student should close the door and turn off the lights. If the fire alarm sounds during passing time or lunch, students must leave the building by the nearest exit. Fire extinguishers are placed throughout the school for emergency use only. Misuse, tampering, and/or discharge of any fire extinguisher for any reason other than its intended use will result in serious school disciplinary action and referral to appropriate authorities.

Student/Parent Reunification
In the event of an emergency situation that warrants building evacuation or early school closing, the school is prepared to provide an orderly and coordinated reunification of students and families. It is imperative that parents/ guardians cooperate with school personnel during the reunification process and follow the established procedures. In some situations, students will only be released to their parent/guardian; however, in some situations students may also be released to an emergency contact identified in ASPEN. Because an emergency could involve the local police and fire departments, it is critical that the streets and parking lots surrounding the school be kept completely clear. Parents are not to come to the school to pick up their child(ren) unless directed to do by a school administrator.

Defibrillators in Schools (AEDs)
In order to assist individuals who may experience cardiac arrest on school property, the Vernon Board of Education has acquired external defibrillators for use in each school building. The AED and trained personnel shall be available during the school's normal operational hours and during school-sponsored athletic events and practices on school grounds. It is the policy of the Board of Education to support the use of these automatic external defibrillators by trained personnel on

school property. Each school shall have school staff trained in the use of AEDs and in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The Board recognizes that in accordance with applicable legislation, it does not have to comply with these provisions if state, federal, or private funding is not available for AED purchasing and for school personnel training.

Emergency Notification-School Cancellations/Delays
In addition to ParentSquare communications, information relating to school cancellations, delayed openings and early dismissals will also be available from local media as well as the district website. Please do not call media outlets, the police department or Board of Education Office for school closing information. Students should have a plan for getting into their home when school closes early. In the rare event of an emergency while school is in session (i.e., power failure, weather emergency), a protocol has been established in each school which will ensure the safety of all students and staff. In addition, emergency plans are in place with the Vernon Police and Fire Departments.

Visitors
Refer to BOE policy 1250
The Board welcomes and encourages parents and guardians to visit their student's school, by appointment with the applicable school administrator at appropriate times that do not interfere with the educational process.

An appointment must be made to minimize disruption of administrative, teaching or staff duties. Requests for appointments should be made through the applicable school administrator or designee at least 24 hours in advance on those days in which a school is normally in session and received during the normal hours of a school day.

All visitors will report to the main office or a designated central location at each building, and will be required to provide a valid, government-issued photo identification. Any person who does not possess a valid, government-issued photo identification, or refuses to produce a valid, government-issued photo identification, will not be permitted unescorted access to secure areas of any school property.

All visitors will be subject to a pre-screening process prior to being issued a visitor's pass. Such a process may include, but is not limited to, verifying the visitor is not a registered sexual offender.

A visitor's pass (badge), as determined by the Superintendent or designee, will be issued to, and worn by, those visitors who are authorized to be in the school building or on the school grounds during school hours or any school sponsored event. Visitors will be instructed as to this requirement upon receipt of their badge.

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Institutions

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive federal funds.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. When a student reaches the age of eighteen or attends a post-secondary school or college, the parent's rights transfer to the student and the student is then an "eligible student" under the law.

Under FERPA, parents and eligible students have the following rights:

To inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within forty-five days of the school's receipt of a written request: The request should identify the record(s) being inspected. The school is not required to provide copies of records and may charge a fee if copies are requested. The following staff person may be contacted to seek access to your child's record: Mr. James Harrison, Principal, at 860-870-6070 or e-mail Jim.Harrison@vernonct.org. You will be notified of the place and time the record(s) may be available for review.

To request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading: The request must be in writing and clearly specify: (a) the part of the record requesting to be changed, and (b) why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to a hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement in the record about the contested information. The school is not required to consider requests for grade or disciplinary decisions, opinions of school officials in the education record, or the child's special education determination. The following staff person may be contacted to request an amendment to your child's record: Mr. David Caruso, Principal, at 860-870-6070 or e-mail David.Caruso@vernonct.org.

To control the disclosure of their child's personally identifiable information from their education record: The school or district must, with certain exceptions, obtain parent written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records. An exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school staff with legitimate educational interests, such as a person employed by the district; a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a grievance or disciplinary committee or assisting another school official; and/or an official of another school district in which a student seeks to enroll. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a professional responsibility. A school district may also disclose personally identifiable information from education records without prior written consent to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. Student directory information may also be disclosed without prior consent if the categories to be disclosed are designated and parents are given the opportunity to opt out prior to disclosure.

You have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at the following address if you feel the school district has failed to comply with the requirements of FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4605

Annual Notice to Parents of Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (see included page)

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Suspected Challenging Behavior Incident Investigation Form

This form is to be completed by the school administrator within a reasonable amount of time. Pursuant to the Federal Education Confidentiality Law (FERPA), student, parents or guardians, and school employees that completed the challenging behavior form cannot receive a copy of this "Investigation Form" but will be provided with a copy of the "Responsive Process(es) Notification Form" after as assessment is completed.

TODAY'S DATE:_____

SCHOOL PERSONNEL COMPLETING FORM:_____

POSITION:_____

NAME OF PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT:_____

CONTACT INFORMATION (EMAIL/PHONE #):_____

NAME OF STUDENT OR STUDENTS WHO WERE ALLEGEDLY SUBJECTED TO CHALLENGING

BEHAVIOR:_____

NAME(S) OF ALLEGED OFFENDERS (if known):_____

DATES OF INCIDENTS:_____

INVESTIGATION

1. Describe in as much detail as possible, what happened.

07/2025

2. Investigator Notes: Any evidence collected and/or received during the investigation (including statements from complainant, respondent, witnesses)

3. What corrective actions were taken in this case? (Choose all that apply)

☐None were required, this was a false allegation
☐Student conference
☐Student warning
☐Letter of apology
☐Mediation
☐Utilization of restorative practices
☐Safety Plan
☐Sent for consideration for Expulsion

☐Threat Assessment
☐Parent Letter
☐Parent phone call
☐Parent conference
☐Detention
☐Community service
☐In-school suspension
☐Out-of-school suspension
☐Assigned online reteaching course
Other (specify)_____

4. Explain supportive measures offered/extended to a party:

5. Result of the Investigation:

Was this a verified act of bullying? YES ☐NO ☐
Was this a verified act of cyberbullying? YES ☐NO ☐
Was this verified teen dating violence? YES ☐ or NO ☐
Was this a verified assault? YES ☐ or NO ☐
Was this investigated as an act of physical violence? YES ☐ or NO ☐
Was this investigated as a protected class violation/ harassment? YES ☐ NO ☐
Was the parent/guardian contacted? YES ☐ NO ☐

Signature _____ Date _____

07/2025