

Van Buren County High School Alma Mater

*In among the wooded mountains
Stands Van Buren High
Watching 'ere her sons and daughters
March to glory and fame.
Sing it proudly,
Be it known,
Loud her praises tell.
Hail! O Hail!
Van Buren High
Hail! O Hail! to thee.*

—Mrs. Stanley Yusk

Van Buren County High School



2026-2027 Student Handbook



337 Sparta Street
Spencer, TN 38585
(931) 946-2442

Van Buren County High School's Mission	Van Buren County High School's Vision
"Serving as a pillar of our community, Van Buren County High School is committed to equipping our Eagles with the academic skills and character to embrace opportunities, achieve lifelong success, and better their world."	"Van Buren County High School empowers every Eagle to achieve excellence, lead with integrity, and step boldly into tomorrow." 

At Van Buren County High School, we expect that:

All students will have an opportunity to learn/lead in a "welcoming and respectful" environment while in each classroom.

All students will receive/be engaged in high-quality instruction for the duration of the scheduled block (bell to bell).

All students will receive instruction and complete tasks that are aligned to content-specific, grade-level standards that are visible in the classroom daily.

All students will have the opportunity to lead instruction while teachers pose as facilitators in the classroom environment.

All student will be encouraged to make connections from curriculum to real-world applicable concepts through sound instruction.

"Equipping minds, building character, and inspiring every Eagle to own their opportunity both inside and outside the classroom."

VAN BUREN COUNTY MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

Student Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement

Please tear this page out and return to school.

ATTENTION PARENTS/GUARDIANS: Please review the student handbook with your child. Acknowledging these policies ensures a safe, productive, and orderly learning environment for everyone. Once read, please sign, date, and return this page to the school.

Statement of Commitment & Agreement

By signing below, I/we acknowledge and agree to the following:

- **Handbook Review:** My child and I have received, read, and discussed the Van Buren County Middle/High School Student Handbook. We understand that these policies and procedures are updated annually to reflect local, state, and federal guidelines.
- **Compliance & Support:** My child agrees to abide by all stated policies, rules, regulations, and behavior expectations. I will actively support and encourage my child in upholding these standards.
- **Discipline & School Safety:** I/we have specifically read and understood the school's discipline procedures. We recognize that these guidelines are strictly enforced in an effort to maintain a safe, respectful, and productive environment for all faculty, staff, and students.
- **Wireless Communications Device Policy:** We have read and agree to comply with the school's policy regarding personal electronic devices. We understand that personal wireless communication devices—including, but not limited to, cell phones, ear buds/headphones, smartwatches, and tablets—must be turned off and stored away according to school rules during restricted hours. Unauthorized use will result in the device being confiscated and/or further disciplinary action.
- **School Technology & Acceptable Use:** We understand that access to school technology and the internet is a privilege, and we agree to comply with the school's Acceptable Use Policy regarding digital devices and online behavior.
- **Accountability:** I understand that violation of handbook policies or disciplinary rules will result in corrective actions or disciplinary consequences as outlined in the guidelines.
- **Communication:** I know that I can contact the school principal or administration during regular school hours if I have any questions or concerns regarding these policies or my child's academic and behavioral performance.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

PHILOSOPHY OF VAN BUREN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

The curriculum at Van Buren County High School was developed based upon the varied ability levels of the student body. It is the desire of the faculty to help each student achieve to his/her maximum potential. Therefore, the classes are designed to challenge individuals of all ability levels.

The faculty attempts to get all students to do their best. The idea is that those who work hard will be better prepared to enter the adult world, will lead a more rewarding life, and will make greater contributions to his/her community, state, and nation.

INTRODUCTION

This current handbook underwent an extensive revision and update throughout the spring of 2016 and is revised annually. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook were developed with input from students, faculty, staff, community leaders, the Van Buren County Board of Education, and the Tennessee State Department of Education.

Information and policies supplied in this handbook are in effect at the publication date, but are not inclusive and are subject to change as the need arises by school administration to ensure the most effective and safe learning environment.

WELCOME TO VAN BUREN COUNTY MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

337 Sparta Street
Spencer, TN 38585
Telephone: (931) 946-2442
Fax: (931) 946-2265
School Website: www.vanburenschools.org

Registration Day for New Students
Thursday, August 6, 2026

Handbook Updated and Revised: June 2026



Van Buren County High School Sports, Clubs, and Organizations Parent Permission Form

Please complete this page, cut out, and return to school along with the reverse side.

Under **Tennessee State Law**, your child cannot participate in any club, activity, or organization without your permission. If you do want them to participate, please complete this form and return it to the Van Buren County High School Front Office. If at any point you wish to withdraw permission, please give written notice to the school administration.

By signing this form and granting permission for your student to participate it **DOES NOT** automatically enroll your student in the club, activity, or organization. This is at the discretion of the activity sponsor and/or coach.

I give permission to my child to participate in the below school-sponsored club, activity, organization, and I certify that I am the parent/guardian of the child for whom the application is being made. Please select all that apply.

Student Name: _____ Grade Level: _____

☐ Basketball	☐ Tennis	☐ HOSA (HS Only)	
☐ Cheerleading	☐ Golf	☐ FBLA (HS Only)	
☐ Baseball	☐ Cross Country	☐ Media Club (HS Only)	☐ Bass Fishing
☐ Softball	☐ Archery	☐ Beta Club (HS Only)	☐ 4-H
☐ Volleyball	☐ FFA (HS Only)	☐ SLT4 (HS Only)	☐ Project Grad (Juni only)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ School: _____

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Teachers may allow students to use approved AI programs for instructional purposes. Any such use shall align with approved instructional standards and curriculum. Prior to using AI, teachers shall ensure students are provided with appropriate instruction on the responsible use of AI.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students shall be instructed on responsible use standards including but not limited to the following:

1. Effective use of generative AI;
2. When it is appropriate to use AI in assignments; (ex. It is not appropriate to use AI tools to write and submit assignments for courses like English or other written passages.
3. How to determine whether AI responses are accurate;
4. Users assume responsibility for incorporating AI content responsibly; and
5. The difference between cheating and seeking support.

Students found in violation of Academic Integrity due to the use of AI, are subject to consequences. See the “*Discipline Flowchart*” beginning on p. 44.

STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD ADVISORY MEMBER

Van Buren County High School students have a unique opportunity to serve as a Student Representative to the School Board in a nonvoting, advisory capacity. This position allows one senior student to share student perspectives and represent their peers in matters impacting the school system. The term lasts from August to July of the following calendar year. While the position is unpaid, it offers valuable leadership experience and insight into school governance.

Eligibility & Selection Process:

Interested seniors must complete an official application and submit a letter of interest highlighting their leadership experience and desire to serve. Applicants who meet eligibility criteria will be interviewed by a committee that may include school administrators, the Director of Schools or their designee, and members of the School Board. After the interview process, one student will be nominated by the Director of Schools and approved by the School Board before the school year begins. If no students apply, the school administration may nominate a qualified candidate.

Expectations:

The selected student board member is expected to attend School Board meetings and contribute meaningfully to discussions. However, student board members may not attend meetings related to student discipline appeals, teacher disciplinary actions, legal counsel matters, or confidential school safety plans.

For more qualifications guidelines and more information, see the official Student Board Member policy.

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Van Buren County High School

ADMINISTRATION

Drew Campbell – *Principal*

Email: dcampbell3@vanburenschools.org

Amanda Cronin – *Assistant Principal*

Email: acronin@vanburenschools.org

COUNSELING & ADVISING

Sahara Hall – *School Counselor*

Email: shall@vanburenschools.org

Amanda DeBord –

College Access Counselor – Ayers Foundation Trust

Email: andebord@vanburenschools.org

Allison Dodson – *CIS Site Coordinator*

Email: adodson@vanburenschools.org

TESTING & INSTRUCTION

Teresa Roberts – *District Testing Coordinator/Instructional Coach*

Email: robertst4@vanburenschools.org

Janice Walter – *Instructional Coach*

Email: jwalter@vanburenschools.org

FRONT OFFICE

Stephanie Hankins – *Secretary/Bookkeeper*

Email: stephankins@vanburenschools.org

Debra Miller – *Front Office Assistant & Receptionist*

Email: dmiller@vanburenschools.org

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Clint Holloway – *VBHS School Resource Officer*

Email: cholloway@vanburenschools.org

Van Buren County High School

School-Wide Behavioral Expectations



LOCATION	RESPECT	RESPONSIBILITY	SAFETY
Hallways	- Use quiet voices - Keep hands and feet to yourself	- Move quickly to class - Follow directions	- Walk—don't run - Stay to the right
Classrooms	- Listen when others speak - Use kind language	- Be prepared and on time - Follow procedures	- Keep aisles clear - Use materials properly
Cafeteria	- Use table manners - Talk at a reasonable volume	- Clean up your area - Wait patiently in line - Stay seated	- Walk at all times - Eat only your food - Do not switch seats
Restrooms	- Respect privacy - Use appropriate language - Free up stalls quickly for others	- Go promptly and return to class - Use trash cans	- Wash hands - Keep floors dry
Assemblies	- Listen attentively - Applaud appropriately - No phone usage	- Sit in assigned areas - Follow adult directions	- Stay seated - Enter/exit in an orderly manner
Buses	- Use polite language - Respect the driver	- Follow bus rules - Stay seated	- Keep aisle clear - Stay seated while moving
Arrival/Dismissal	- Follow staff directions - Respect others' space	- Arrive on time - Leave promptly	- Use crosswalks/sidewalks - Walk bikes across the street
Technology Use	- Use appropriate language - Respect other's privacy	- Use for school purposes only - Handle carefully	- Report inappropriate use - Keep passwords secure
Cell Phones	- Keep phones on silent and put away - Use headphones/ear buds in shared spaces - No videos or photos	- Use only during allowed times - Follow teacher and school rules - Keep your phone secured	- Never share personal information online - Report inappropriate content - Avoid using phones while walking

When behavioral issues become repetitive, VBHS is committed to helping families uncover and address the root cause. To support our students, we partner with school and district staff, as well as trusted community organizations, to provide dedicated guidance and resources.

Student Referral to Behavioral Classroom for Behavioral Related Services

Once a student has been placed in ISS or Alternative Placement by Admin for a "Behavioral Related Offense", the following services will be implemented during the ISS placement:

1st Offense ISS Placement	1- 30 minute check-in with Behavior Teacher • Positive Behavior Reinforcement • Review School-Wide Behavioral Expectations w/ focus on violated area(s)
2nd Offense ISS Placement	Daily 30-minute sessions w/ Behavior Teacher • Individual or Group Behavior Intervention related to repeat offense(s) • Complete Behavior Reflection prior to leaving ISS
3rd + Offense ISS Placement	Daily 1-Hour sessions w/ Behavior Teacher • Individual Behavior Education w/ student • Informal Behavior Plan Created w/ student, Behavior Teacher and reviewed by Admin (once signed, distributed to teachers) • Referral to School Counselor for services (<i>School Counselor can refer to other support personnel as needed</i>)

Available Student Support Services

Ms. Sahara Hall VBHS School Counselor	shall@vanburenschools.org 931-946-2442 ext. 68
Mr. Jamey Pack VBCS Behavior Teacher	jpack@vanburenschools.org 931-946-2171
Ms. Jill Bouldin Family Resource Center	jbouldin@vanburenschools.org 931-304-1099
Mrs. Allison Dodson Communities in Schools	adodson@cistn.org 931-946-2442 ext. 72
Mrs. Tammie Gribble School Based Behavioral Health Liaison	wgribble@vbhcs.org 931-946-2171 ext. 59

Van Buren County High School

FACULTY

Hope Baker - bakerj@vanburenschools.org
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Dustin Sullivan - sullivand1@vanburenschools.org
Joey Williamson - awilliamson3@vanburenschools.org

History of Van Buren County High School

Van Buren County High School was built under the plan and direction of Superintendent of Schools James Maurice Taft. At the September 10, 1936 meeting of the Van Buren County Board of Education, James M. Taft, Superintendent, and board members, Sam Gamble, C.L. Russell, Marie Hillis, P.M. Shockley, Albert Jones, Sr., John Deweese, and Charlie Hollingsworth, were appointed to purchase land and materials necessary to build a public high school.

The cost of Superintendent Taft's plan was estimated at \$80,000—a high price for the county in the 1930s. Looking for a budget-wise plan, the board of education bought 103 acres of forested land for \$309. The trees on this land were cut for lumber by volunteers. A sandstone quarry was opened on this land as well. A sawmill was constructed from junk-pile parts, and the lumber was sawed by local men. With the help of students, the school was rushed to completion in the fall of 1940.

The class of 1939 was the first to graduate in the original high school. Though the first to attend school was the graduating class of 1940. The class of 1939 consisted of thirteen students: Velma Hillis, Willene Hollingsworth, Hassie Lee McCormick, Ina Cunningham, Edith Juanita Bouldin, Robbie Hillis, Mary Moore, Leonard Davis, Lois Witt, Ganell Rodgers, Karl J. Rodgers, President, Karl Hillis, Vice-President, and Joene Guy, Secretary and Treasurer. Superintendent Taft was the school principal for the class of '39 and Chester Haston was the class sponsor.

The original structure cost only \$20,000. Additions were made in 1956, 1969, and 1974. In 1956, a stage and dressing room addition was made to the north side of the gym. This also included a new cafeteria and new classrooms and offices. The left wing of the school was added in 1969 and the right wing in 1974. The industrial arts building was completed in 1985.

The original main building was destroyed in a fire on October 3, 1988. No one knows what caused the fire, though there is speculation that it began from faulty wiring in the school's new dishwasher. The industrial arts building and agriculture building were saved through the honorable efforts of local and neighboring fire departments.

The first class to graduate in the new high school building was the class of 1990, but the first to attend was the class of 1991. Additions have been made to the current campus such as the addition to the industrial arts building in 2001 and the completion of the freshman academy and auxiliary gym in January 2012.

Even through hard and pressing times, Van Buren County High School has, and will continue to prevail.

Enrollment is over 400, serving grades 6-12.

Casey Edwards
Class of 2016

Possession of Vape/Tobacco Product	Issued Consequences (Admin Managed):
When in possession at school or school sponsored activity/event:	1st Offense: Parent Contacted + 3 Days ISS + INDEPTH Class with TDOH
Any student who is found in direct, visible possession of a vape and/or tobacco product should be brought to the office or an administrator contacted.	2nd Offense: Parent Contacted + 5 Days ISS + NOT Class with TDOH
Any faculty/staff member who has reasonable suspicion a student is in possession of a vape and/or tobacco product should immediately contact administration at which time a search can be conducted.	3rd Offense: Parent Contacted + 10 Days ISS + Citation Issued
	Additional offenses could result in Alternative Placement and/or additional citations.
Possession of Vape/Tobacco Product	Issued Consequences (Admin Managed):
When in possession on the bus:	1st Offense: Parent Contacted + 3 Days Bus Suspension+ INDEPTH Class with TDOH
Any student who is found in direct, visible possession of a vape and/or tobacco product should be brought to the office or an administrator contacted.	2nd Offense: Parent Contacted + 5 Days Bus Suspension + NOT Class with TDOH
Any faculty/staff member who has reasonable suspicion a student is in possession of a vape and/or tobacco product should immediately contact administration at which time a search can be conducted.	3rd Offense: Parent Contacted + 10 Days Bus Suspension+ Citation Issued
	Additional offenses could result in Alternative Placement and/or additional citations.
Major Infractions	Issued Consequences (Admin Managed):
Does it involve:	
Fighting/Aggression— Subject to UNRULY Charge at any offense	1st Offense: Parent Contacted + 3 Days ISS
Major Defiance (Cussing Faculty/Staff)	
Legitimate Bullying	2nd Offense: Parent Contacted + 5 Days ISS
Harassment	
Theft/Vandalism (Destruction of Property)	3rd Offense: Parent Contacted + 10 Days ISS + Student Charged as "Unruly"
Each offense is situational and can result in the issuance of an "unruly" charge at any level. However, student(s) who have 3 or more major infraction offenses will automatically be charged as "unruly".	
Zero-Tolerance Offenses	Issued Consequences (Admin Managed)
Alcohol Use/Possession Drug Use/Possession Weapon Use/Possession Threat (written, verbal, social media, etc.)	When necessary: Complete Full Behavioral Threat Assessment Complete DHA, Alternative Placement up to one-calendar year, Student Charged

Level 1: Classroom	Issued Consequences:
Does it involve:	1st Offense: <i>Suggested Parent Communication from Teacher</i>, Verbal Warning, Proximity, Change Seating, Confiscate item until the end of the day, Loss of Privilege
Disturbances/Disrespect/Defiance/Foul Language Use?	
Repeated Tardiness?	2nd Offense: <i>Mandatory Parent Communication from Teacher</i>, Silent Lunch, any alternate consequence from the aforementioned list.
Tech Abuse (chromebook/school issued device)?	
Cheating? Academic Dishonesty? (could result in alternative assignment, redo assignment, no credit, etc.)	3rd Offense: <i>Mandatory Parent Communication from Teacher</i>, Conference with Admin, Teacher & Student
Minor Horseplay?	
4th and Beyond: Office Discipline Referral; Lunch Detention, After-School Detention, ISS	
<i>Consequences issued should reflect repeated infractions occurring within an individual classroom setting (not from teacher to teacher). Continued communication between the teacher and parents should also be maintained.</i>	
Wireless Device Misuse (Cell Phone)	Issued Consequences:
Cellphone misuse and issued consequences should be consistent across all classrooms.	1st Classroom Offense: Teacher takes the device until the end of the class period and uses this opportunity to reinforce wireless communication expectations. Any further instances should result in an Office Referral.
<i>T.C.A. § 49-6-320</i> <i>Public schools are required to prohibit students from using personal wireless communication devices during standard instructional time. This restriction applies to cell phones, tablets, laptops, gaming devices, earbuds, smartwatches, and smart glasses.</i>	1st Offense Office Referral: Device turned into office and picked up by parent + Parent Contacted + 1 Day ISS
	2nd Offense Office Referral: Device turned into office and picked up by a parent + Parent Contacted + 3 Days ISS
	3rd Offense Office Referral: Device turned into office and picked up by a parent + Parent Contacted + 5 Days ISS
Dress Code Violation	Issued Consequences:
<i>Any violation of the VBHS Dress Code as listed in the Student Handbook should be addressed immediately and follow the listed consequences:</i>	1st Offense: Student will call home for change of clothes if appropriate item(s) is not available.
	2nd Offense: Administrator Call Home + Student will change clothes (clothes must be brought if appropriate item(s) is not available)
	3rd Offense: Administrator Call Home + Student will change clothes (clothes must be brought if appropriate item(s) is not available) + ISS for 1 day
	<i>Repetitive issues will result in additional days of ISS.</i>

2026-2027 Van Buren County Schools Calendar

AUGUST

Monday 3rd In-service (No Students)
 Tuesday 4th In-service (No Students)
 Wednesday 5th In-service (No Students)
 Thursday 6th Registration for New Students, abbreviated day (8:00am-9:00am)
 Friday 7th In-Service (No Students)
 Monday 10th First Full Day of School

SEPTEMBER

Friday 4th Labor Day Break—No School
 Monday 7th Labor Day—No School
 Thursday 17th Parent/Teacher Conference 3:30-7:00

OCTOBER

Monday 12th—Friday 16th Fall Break—No School

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 3rd—Optional In-service Day (No Students)
 Wednesday 25th—Friday 27th Thanksgiving Break—No School

DECEMBER

Friday 18th Abbreviated Day
 Monday 21st—Friday, Jan. 1st Christmas Break—No School

JANUARY

Monday 4th Students Return
 Monday 18th MLK Day—No School

FEBRUARY

Thursday 11th Parent/Teacher Conference 3:30-7:00
 Monday 15th Presidents' Day—No School

MARCH

Monday, March 22nd - Friday, March 26th Spring Break—No School

MAY

Friday 21st Graduation
 Tuesday 25th Last day of school, Abbreviated Day

*Thirteen days are built into the calendar and may be used in the event of inclement weather, emergencies, and any other type of event requiring the closure of school. Any days missed beyond the initial (13) must be made up and rescheduled according to the discretion of the Director of Schools.

2026-2027 Bell Schedules

MIDDLE SCHOOL

7:40	Warning Bell
7:50-8:25	RTI
8:25-8:30	5 Minute Break
8:30-10:00	1st Block
10:00-10:05	5 Minute Break
10:05-12:30	2nd Block

MS LUNCH/ACTIVITY BLOCK #1
11:00-11:25 MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP #1 LUNCH
MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP #2 ACTIVITY

MS LUNCH/ACTIVITY BLOCK #2:
11:30-11:55 MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP #2 LUNCH
MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP #1 ACTIVITY

12:30-12:35	5 Minute Break
12:35-2:05	3rd Block
2:05-2:10	5 Minute Break
2:10-2:56	4th Block

HIGH SCHOOL

7:50	Warning Bell
8:00-9:30	1st Block
9:30-9:40	10 Minute Break
9:40-11:10	2nd Block
11:10-11:15	5 Minute Break
11:15-1:25	3rd Block

HS LUNCH/ACTIVITY BLOCK #1:
12:00-12:25 HIGH SCHOOL GROUP #1 LUNCH
HIGH SCHOOL GROUP #2 ACTIVITY

HS LUNCH/ACTIVITY BLOCK #2:
12:25-12:50 HIGH SCHOOL GROUP #2 LUNCH
HIGH SCHOOL GROUP #1 ACTIVITY

1:25-1:30	5 Minute Break
1:30-2:56	4th Block

*Dismissal bell will ring at 2:56 to release all students from class. Walkers, car riders, and bus riders will leave at this time. Student drivers are required to wait until all buses have left the back parking lot before leaving the building.

Alternative School/ISS Rules and Procedures for 2026-2027

Students who are placed in ISS or Alternative School for disciplinary reasons will be expected to follow the below list of rules and procedures. For any questions concerning ISS or Alternative School, please contact Mrs. LeAnne Lewis at 931-946-2442 or by email at llewis@vanburenschools.org

Procedures: Times are approximate and subject to change at any time.

8:00 a.m.—Search all Students
8:15 a.m.—Breakfast
10:45 a.m.—Bathroom Break
11:22 a.m.—Lunch
1:45 p.m.—Bathroom Break
2:55 p.m.—Bus/Parent Pick-Up

For Safety Reasons, the following procedures will be implemented.

- Daily searches
- No double layering of clothing
- No jackets and/or coats
- No backpacks
- No electronic devices of any type (ex. Phones, tablets, watches, ear-buds, headphones, etc.)
- No hats
- No jewelry is permitted apart from stud jewelry limited to the face
- Students must use respectful language towards everyone
- No outside food and/or drink
- No holes above the knee in any type of pants
- No leggings unless a shirt completely covers the rear end region
- No sleeping/head propping allowed
- No interaction with other students while outside of the assigned classroom
- There will be a time limit on bathroom breaks—depends upon number of students
- There will be a 20 minute time limit for breakfast and lunch
- No student is allowed to walk to the bus or PPU without a school employee
- No slogans of an adult nature will be allowed on any article of clothing
- Shorts must come to the knee while the student is standing
- No pajamas/house slippers are allowed to be worn

Out of control/defiant behavior will not be tolerated. Failure to comply may result in additional consequences.

Students who receive In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), or are placed in Alternative School at any point during the school year—or on multiple occasions—may lose the privilege of participating in school activities, both during and outside of the regular school day.

WHO TO SEE FOR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Absentee/Verification.....	Mr. Campbell/Mrs. Cronin
Athletics.....	Mr. Sullivan
Announcements.....	Mrs. Hankins/Mrs. Cronin
Car Registration/Parking.....	Mrs. Hankins
Career Vocational Information.....	Mrs. DeBord/Ms. Hall
Check In/Out.....	Mrs. Hankins/Ms. Miller
Class Schedules.....	Ms. Hall
Counseling.....	Ms. Hall
College and School Visitation.....	Mrs. DeBord/Ms. Hall
Disciplinary Matters.....	Mr. Campbell/Mrs. Cronin
First Aid.....	Mrs. Hankins/Nurse Holly Rivera
Free and Reduced Lunches.....	Mrs. Troglen
New Students.....	Ms. Hall
Scholarship Information.....	Mrs. DeBord/Ms. Hall
Student Leadership/Student Council.....	Mrs. Kelly Lewis/Mrs. McGowan
Suspensions.....	Mr. Campbell/Mrs. Cronin

WITHDRAWALS

All students withdrawing from Van Buren County Middle/ High School will secure a withdrawal form from the guidance office. The student must obtain the signature of each teacher on the class schedule. The form must then be signed by the principal, guidance counselor, and the librarian to insure that all obligations have been met. The guidance counselor will initiate this form if the student leaves without obtaining it.

ZERO TOLERANCE

1. ALCOHOL USE/POSSESSION

The use or possession of alcohol products in any form on school grounds and school buses is strictly prohibited on the school campus. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. **The State of Tennessee now requires the school to file charges against the student found with any form of alcohol on school grounds or at school events.**

2. DRUG USE/POSSESSION

The illegal use or possession of drug products and paraphernalia in any form on school grounds and school buses is strictly prohibited on the school campus. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. **The State of Tennessee requires the school to file charges against the student found with any form of illegal drug products on school grounds or at school events.**

3. WEAPON USE/POSSESSION—(*Firearms, Knives, Tasers, Pepper Spray etc.*)

The use or possession of weapons of any kind on school grounds and school buses is strictly prohibited on the school campus. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. **The State of Tennessee now requires the school to file charges against the student found with any form of weapon on school grounds or at school events.**

4. THREAT (VERBAL, WRITTEN, SOCIAL MEDIA, ETC.)

The making of threats of any kind—whether verbal, written, electronic, or via social media—directed toward the school, its students, or staff is strictly prohibited. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. **The State of Tennessee requires the school to report and file charges against any student found to have made a threat to school safety or individuals within the school community.**

***FIGHTING -Students caught engaging in physical altercations will be charged and will be subject to disciplinary action through the school.**

Van Buren County High School

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

1. Students will not use the sidewalk in the rear of the main building to go to and from class, with the exception of walking to and from the CTE Building from the Back Lobby. Classroom exterior doors are for emergency use only. Before, during, and after school hours, these doors are to remain closed at all times.
2. During breaks, students will remain in the building.
3. Students going to the CTE Building will use the rear main building exit, use the sidewalk and are to follow the drive parallel to the Pre-School. STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED AMONG VEHICLES DURING SCHOOL HOURS without prior approval from the office.
4. Middle/High School students are not permitted in the elementary school building during regular school hours unless administrators give permission.
5. It is the intent of faculty, staff, and students to maintain a clean school environment. Trash and recycling receptacles are located throughout the buildings. Students should pick up trash and help keep the school clean.
6. Middle School and High School students must be picked up at the front of VBHS.

ARTICLES PROHIBITED AT VBHS

The following items are prohibited and will be confiscated from the student:

- Alcohol/alcoholic beverages
- Animals/Pets
- Blankets
- Fireworks and/or explosives
- Gang paraphernalia
- Illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Laser pointers
- Prescription drugs without student's name on prescription and turned into the front office.
- Tobacco products including smokeless, e-cig, and vapor products
- Toy or water pistols and any other toy item that mimics a weapon
- Opened drinks/containers not purchased at school are subject to confiscation /search under suspicion of alcohol or other prohibited use.
- Weapons (*Firearms, Knives, Tasers, Pepper Spray etc.*)

This list is not inclusive—any type of object or possession deemed to be inappropriate by school administration will be confiscated.

Please see the “ZERO TOLERANCE” section on p. 42 for more information regarding policy for zero tolerance offences.

AHERA

Required Annual Notice to Parents/Guardians of VBHS Students

As required by Tennessee State law, we are required to notify you that the Van Buren County Schools Asbestos Management Plan is located in the office of the Director of Schools. It is a public document and is open to the public upon request.

AWARDS AND HONORS

All honors, awards, and scholarships will be presented each year to deserving students based upon guidelines established by the faculty and administration. The guidelines were formulated to improve the selection process. The guidelines are located in the principal's office.

Candidates for the following honors must meet specific criteria:

Mr. and Miss VBMS/VBHS

Mr. and Miss VBMS/VBHS is a faculty nominated honor given to one male and one female middle school student and one male and one female high school student. This honor goes to students who have attended VBHS all four years, exhibited scholastic attainment; successful school involvement, interest in one's fellow person, and instincts for leadership. These students are representatives of the school at all times.

Homecoming Court

Homecoming court is nominated and selected by each respective class.

Josten's Achievement Medal/Principal's Inspiration Award

The Josten's/Principal's Award goes yearly to a deserving graduating senior student that exemplifies the spirit of Van Buren County High School and has shown admirable character and outstanding qualities through adversity and hardship.

ATTENDANCE

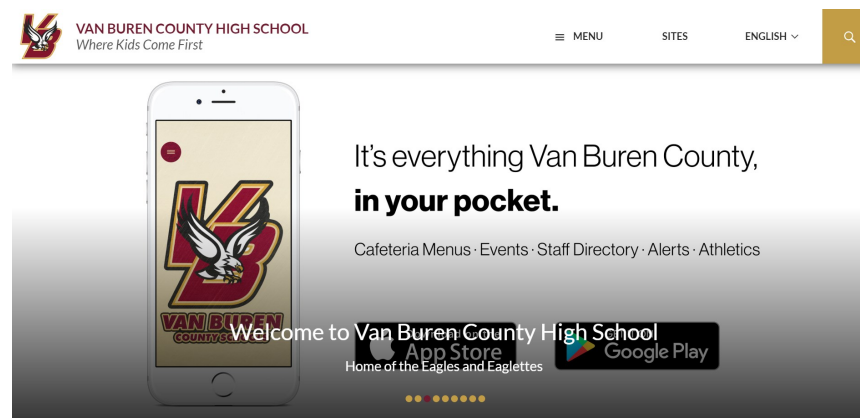
Attendance is a key factor in school achievement, therefore students are required by state law and board policy to be present each day school is in session. In order to be promoted, a student in the Van Buren County school system must attend classes the state mandated minimum amount of time. If a student must be absent for one of the following board policy reasons, the absence will be **EXCUSED**:

- Student's personal illness (parental note/doctor's statement)
- Illness in family requiring temporary help from student (Physician statement required)
- Death in family - Three (3) days maximum (parental note/telephone call)
- Special recognized religious activities (parental note/telephone call)
- School sponsored activities
- Court appearance (documentation required)
- Extenuating circumstances created by emergencies which the student has no control over (parental note/doctor's note)

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The school website is updated weekly and should be checked periodically for the latest news, information, and scholarship opportunities.

www.vanburenschools.org



WORK BASED LEARNING

In an increasingly complex global economy, all students must be prepared with intellectual, technical, and social skills needed to compete and contribute meaningfully to their communities. For most, this will mean completing some postsecondary education or training; for all, it will mean learning about themselves and the world of work.

Work-based learning (WBL) is a proactive approach to bridging the gap between high school and high-demand, high-skill careers in Tennessee. Students build on classroom-based instruction to develop employability skills that prepare them for success in postsecondary education and future careers. Through experiences like internships, apprenticeships, and paid work experience, juniors and seniors (16 years or older) may earn high school credit for capstone WBL experiences. WBL coordinators are educators who are trained and certified by the department to coordinate these WBL experiences for students.

For more information regarding Work-based Learning please contact Drew Campbell, Principal or Jammie Lowery CTE Director at 931-946-2442.

TSSAA (continued)

The TSSAA rules require the following:

- The student shall have made a passing grade in the preceding five out of six subjects or their equivalency, provided the student is in class five days a week.
- A student shall be regularly enrolled, in regular attendance, and carry at least five full courses per term.
- A student shall be ineligible to compete in any sport if he or she attended a secondary school or schools for eight semesters of four and one-half months each. Attendance of forty school days of any semester shall be regarded as a "semester" under this rule.
- No student shall be eligible to participate in any athletic contest during any school year if he or she becomes nineteen years of age on or before September 1st.

Any questions regarding TSSAA/Athletics can be directed to Dustin Sullivan, Athletic Director at (931) 946-2442.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES POLICY

While VBMS/VBHS honors all TSSAA guidelines for sports participation, beginning the 2022-2023 school year Van Buren County High School also requires the following criteria to be met in conjunction with TSSAA guidelines, when applicable:

- Students **MUST** have at least a 60 average in all classes he/she is currently enrolled.
- Students **CANNOT** not owe any Credit Recovery from previous school years or currently enrolled courses.

VISITORS

The school policy is to permit on school grounds only people who have legitimate business at Van Buren County Middle/High School. Visitor parking is located in front of the main school building. All visitors must report to the main office upon arrival at school. All visitors will sign in, receive a visitor pass, and sign out before leaving school grounds. **No one will go directly to a classroom.** Students cannot bring visitors to school. Teachers will send anyone not on their class roll to the office. Unauthorized visitors must leave the school grounds.

DISTRICT & SCHOOLS MOBILE APP

Van Buren County Schools has a mobile app available to download for Apple or Android phones.

Search for "Van Buren Schools, TN" or "VB Eagles" through the App Store or Google Play Store.

ATTENDANCE (continued)

All absences for other reasons will be **UNEXCUSED**. The absences listed above will also be recorded as **UNEXCUSED** if the official documentation is not turned into the office within 2 school days of the absence. Students are allowed 3 parent notes each semester for an excused absence with no other documentation.

Students are allowed six (6) parent note excuses per year. Additional absences will require other official documentation.

The process of truancy proceedings will begin after a student has been absent **UNEXCUSED** three (3) times within a semester.

A student missing more than six (6) days per semester (12 per year) will be expected to make up additional days. All make-up time will be made up at Van Buren County High School through the LEAPS after-school program, scheduled Saturday school, or through other events deemed appropriate by the school principal (participation in school sports' practices or games are not acceptable to make up time). **Students who have to make up time in the schools "Time for Time" program for missing more than the allotted days does not take the place of or intervene in Truancy Proceedings due to unexcused absences (See "Attendance Progressive Intervention Plan" on page 13).**

In order for a tardy to be excused, the student must present a **doctor's statement** at the time of his/her arrival. **Any tardy without official documentation from a doctor or parent will be UNEXCUSED.**

Students receiving 5 unexcused tardies in a 9 week period will be assigned detention and parent/guardians will be notified. The student must attend the assigned day of detention within 10 days of initial notification from school administration. Students will receive additional days for every 5 unexcused tardies accumulated. The same will apply to students checking out early if it is not for one of the reasons for an excused absence. Upon their return, they must present a doctor's statement or a note from the parent or guardian (which counts as one of the three allowable parent notes) for it to be excused. Any student requiring medical treatment for an extended period of time may not be counted absent, but may receive homebound services **when requested by the doctor**.

Students participating in school sponsored activities, whether "on" or "off" campus during regular school hours shall not be counted absent. In order to qualify as "school sponsored" the activity must be school planned with standards, school directed, and teacher supervised. Students scheduled for one of these activities that do not attend will be counted absent using the same criteria as all other absences.

Perfect Attendance is defined as a student who has missed less than seven hours of school.

Any questions regarding attendance can be directed to the VBHS principal or assistant principal or to Amanda Binkley, Van Buren County Schools Attendance/Truancy Supervisor at (931) 946-2242.

ATTENDANCE/SEMESTER EXAM POLICY

See "Semester Exam Policy"

ATTENDANCE PROGRESSIVE INTERVENTION PLAN

TRUANCY

Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan

Prior to referral to juvenile court, the following progressive truancy intervention plan will be implemented.

Tier I

Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all students within the district and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. Each school will be responsible for implementing school-wide prevention-oriented supports for student attendance. These supports will be published annually to parents and students prior to the start of school.

As part of the Tier I plan, students with 3 unexcused absences will meet with the school counselor or social worker to discuss reasons for the absences and a plan to remedy the problem. If they continue to accumulate unexcused absences (5) they will progress to Tier II.

Tier II

Tier II is implemented upon student's accumulation of five unexcused absences and must at least include:

1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardians(s).
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and an attendance supervisor or designee. The contract shall include:
 1. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
 2. The period for which the contract is effective; and
 3. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court; and
3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.
4. Individualized assessment of an employee of reasons student has been absent and
5. If needed, referral to counseling

Tier III

Tier III is implemented if Tier I and II fail. Tier III may consist of 1 or more of the following:

1. School-based community services;
2. Participation in a school-based restorative justice program;
3. Referral to a school-based teen court or
4. Saturday or after-school courses.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council is a group of students elected by peers to participate in designated areas of school government.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students that do not pass their courses and/or make-up time from days missed will be assigned to summer school at the discretion of the Principal. Students are required to attend summer school in-person to complete course work.

TELEPHONES

The office phones are for official use only. All student calls will be made during breaks between classes unless an emergency or illness. If a student is sick and needs to leave school, the teacher is to send him/her to the office. The school nurse will check the student and make a final determination. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO USE THE TELEPHONE DURING CLASS TIME UNLESS AN ABSOLUTE EMERGENCY.** Students are to limit phone calls to three minutes.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished by the State of Tennessee and are issued to each student at the beginning of the school year/semester. Once issued, the textbook becomes the responsibility of the student. If lost or damaged, the student will pay for it before receiving a grade in that subject or before a grade transcript will be released. The same policy will apply to lost or damaged library books, equipment or supplies related to a content area or athletics.

TOBACCO USE

See "zero tolerance"

TSSAA

VBHS athletics are governed by Board Policy and the TSSAA. Each coach is responsible for communicating eligibility requirements to their athletes—*ex. Physicals, concussion forms, etc.* See "Extracurricular Activities Policy" on p. 40 for more academic requirements for athletes.

TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (TCAP) CALENDAR

2026-2027 School Year

Required TCAP Assessments

Assessment Name	Administration	Administration Window
TCAP End-of-Course (EOC)	Fall	Nov. 30—Dec. 17, 2026
TCAP Achievement (ACH) Grades 2*, 3-8 Writing	Spring	Apr. 7 - Apr. 14, 2026
TCAP Achievement (ACH) Grades 2*, 3-8, & EOC	Spring	Apr. 19 - May 6, 2027
TCAP-Alternate Science & Social Studies (Alt) Grades 3-8 & EOC	Spring	Mar. 15 - Apr. 30, 2027
TCAP-ALT ELA & Math	Fall	Sept. 14 - Dec. 18, 2026
TCAP-ALT ELA & Math	Spring	Feb. 1 - May 7, 2027
TCAP Grade 2-Alt (Optional)*	Spring	Mar. 15 - Apr. 30, 2027

**Participation in the Grade 2 Assessment is a district option and includes both the general education and alternate assessments.*

Other Assessment Dates

Assessment Name	Administration	Administration Window
ACT	Fall 2026 Senior Retake	First Window: September 29-30, October 1-2 & 5-9 Second Window: October 13-16 & 19-23 Third Window: October 27-30, November 2-6
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**	Spring	January 25 - March 19, 2027
English Language Learners Assessment	Spring	February 1 - March 26, 2027
ACT	Spring 2027 Junior Testing	First Window: March 9-12 & 15-19 Second Window: March 23-26 & 29-31, April 1-2 Third Window: April 6-9 & 12-16*

**The ACT dates the week of April 12-16 overlap with the first week of the spring EOC administration window.*

***Only a small subset of schools will be selected for national and international assessments administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Districts will be notified of selections in Summer 2027.*

For any questions or concerns you have pertaining to testing administration contact the Van Buren County Schools District Testing Coordinator, Ms. Teresa Roberts at (931) 946-2442.

ATTENDANCE PROGRESSIVE INTERVENTION PLAN (continued)

EXCEPTION: If, at ANY tier, the student is unsuccessful and the school can document the student's guardian is unwilling to cooperate, the Director/designee may report to the court system. Evidence can include:

- 1.Failure/refusal on multiple occasions to attend conferences,
- 2.return phone calls
- 3.attend follow-up meetings
4. enter into a contract

BUS SAFETY COMPLAINTS

The following procedure will govern how students, teachers, staff, and community members shall submit bus safety complaints:

- All complaints shall be submitted to the transportation supervisor.
- Each bus shall be equipped with the phone number for reporting safety complaints.
- This number shall appear on the rear bumper.

The transportation supervisor shall begin an investigation of all bus safety complaints within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.

Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a preliminary report to the director of schools. This report shall include:

- The time and date the complaint was received;
- The name of the bus driver;
- A copy or summary of the complaint; and
- Any prior complaints or disciplinary actions taken against the driver.

Within sixty (60) school days of receiving the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a final written report to the director of schools that details the investigation's findings as well as the action taken in response to the complaint.

Any questions regarding bus safety or transportation can be directed to Dr. Joseph Hensley, Van Buren County Schools Transportation Supervisor at (931) 946-2242.



VAN BUREN COUNTY SCHOOLS BUS ROUTES 2026-2027

YEAR #	BUS #	DRIVER'S NAME	BUS ROUTE
19	5	ROBIN GREEN	PINEY/BAKER MTN Old State Hwy 111, Archie Rhinehart Parkway, Walling Rd., Clendenon Rd., Howard Rd., Bellview Circle Rd., Hwy 111, Piney Rd.
22	6	DALE BOULDIN	NEW MARTIN Highway 30, Jack's Branch, Plainview, Groves Rd., Dewese Rd., Park Rd., Myers Rd., Slater Loop, Gulf Rd., Honeysuckle Rd.
16	7	CAROLYN KELLY-YATES	ROCKY RIVER Harper Rd., Rocky River Rd., Boyd Rd., Earl Ln., Hwy. 30, Russell Rd., Laurelburg Rd., Hillis Cemetery Rd., Westview Rd.
21	11	MICHELLE BROCK	MOONEYHAM Mooneyham/Lonewood Rd., Van Winkle Rd., Wilson Rd., Herb Mooneyham Rd., Doc Roberts Rd., Mockingbird Ln., Earl's Loop, Salzer Mtn. West, Salzer Mtn. East
24	12D	MARLENE LOWEY	SHADY OAKS/GREENBRIER Spring St., College St., Turkey Scratch Rd., Sherwood Dr., Baker and Boyd, Joe Brock St., Shady Oaks Dr., Drake and Shockley St., Greenbrier, Bluff View Dr., Pine Grove Rd., Old State Hwy 111 Phifer Mine Rd, Goforth Rd.
13	15	PEGGY MOONEYHAM	SPENCER Captain Carter Rd., Woodlee St., Andrew K. Parker Rd., Moon Rd., Spokelay, Little Falls Rd., Argo Rd., Hale St., North Hwy 111., Old McMinnville St., Spencer Dr., IB Maynard, Turkey Scratch, Popular St., College St., Old Dunlap Rd., Scenic Dr., Church St., Taft Dr., Billingsly St., Hill Rd.
20	16	RITA GILBERT	CUMMINGSVILLE Cummings Cove Rd., Bald Knob Mtn., Sparkmantown Cummingsville Rd., Hodges Ferry Rd., Sparkmantown Rd., River Side Dr., River Oaks, Cane Creek Rd., Hickory Valley Rd., Lemont and Yates Mtn. Rd., Rd., Hidden River, Del Toro Dr., Brock Ln., Connell Rd., Cummings Chapel, Stoney Point Mt. Rd.
17	17	MARCIE HILLIS	BONE CAVE Mitchell Hollow Rd., Cedar Grove Rd., Bone Cave Rd., Hunter Miller Rd., Post Office Rd., Antioch Rd., Sparkman Town Rd., Baker Mtn. Rd. (Hwy 30 side), R.T. Davis Rd., McCoy Street

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

In an effort to maintain safety and security and through the gracious support of the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department, the Van Buren County School System maintains the presence of a School Resource Officer on campus and is available to administration, staff, and students.

SEARCHES

SEARCHES BY ADMINISTRATION/FACULTY

All students and visitors are subject to being searched for drugs, drug paraphernalia, dangerous weapons, and other property not properly in their possession.

Search of Lockers

In accordance with Tennessee state law, students are notified that lockers and other storage areas are school property and are subject to search. TCA 49-6-4204

Search of Persons

A student may be subject to physical search because of the results of a locker search, or because of information received from a teacher, staff member, student or other person if such action is reasonable to the principal. TCA 49-6-4205

Search of Vehicles

Vehicles located on school property are subject to search in accordance to: TCA 49-6-4206.

SEARCHES BY POLICE

If public health or safety is involved, upon request of the principal who shall be present, police officers may make a general search of students' lockers and desks, and/or students' or non-students' automobiles for drugs, weapons, or other contraband. TCA 49-6-4202 through TCA 49-6-4212

USE OF SEARCH ANIMALS

Dogs or other animals trained to detect drugs or dangerous weapons by odor or otherwise may be used in conducting searches, but such animals shall be used only to pinpoint areas needed to be searched and shall not be used to search the persons of students or visitors. TCA 49-6-4208

SEMESTER EXAM POLICY

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students with consistently good attendance and grades will be rewarded by being given an extra 100% test and 100% daily grade for each class they meet the requirements in. Students with consistently good attendance and grades will be rewarded by being allowed exemption from semester exams. For the Spring Semester, all students who meet the criteria will receive the reward and exemption since the End-of-Year TNReady exam takes the place of the semester exam. This policy is for each individual class.

Have perfect attendance (Miss 0 days) and an overall semester “D” average
Miss no more than 1 day and have at least an overall semester “C” average
Miss no more than 2 days and have at least an overall semester “B” average
Miss no more than 3 days and have at least an overall semester “A” average

**Any student who misses four (4) or more days (excused or unexcused) will not receive the reward.*

***A & B DAY courses (Science/Social Studies) are the only exception to the policy.** Because these few courses have less instructional time the criteria for reward will be different. Students enrolled in these courses must meet these guidelines to be eligible: Miss no more than 2 days with an overall semester “A” average; Miss no more than 1 day with an overall semester “B” average; Have perfect attendance (Miss 0 days) and an overall semester “C” or “D” average.

HIGH SCHOOL

Students with consistently good attendance and grades will be rewarded by being allowed exemption from semester final exams for non-EOC courses or an additional 100% test and 100% daily grade award for EOC courses. This policy is for each individual class.

Students who are exempt must:

Have perfect attendance (Miss 0 days) and an overall semester “D” average
Miss no more than 1 day and have at least an overall semester “C” average
Miss no more than 2 days and have at least an overall semester “B” average
Miss no more than 3 days and have at least an overall semester “A” average

**Any student who misses four (4) or more days (excused or unexcused) will be required to take the semester exam.*

***9-week courses are the only exception to the policy.** Because these few courses have less instructional time the criteria for reward will be different. Students enrolled in these courses must meet these guidelines to be eligible: Miss no more than 2 days with an overall 9-weeks “A” average; Miss no more than 1 day with an overall 9-weeks “B” average; Have perfect attendance (Miss 0 days) and an overall 9-weeks “C” or “D” average.

**Both Middle and High School students who are required to take the final exam will have their score entered as two test grades.*

**Attendance the day/or class period of exams will not be counted against students who are exempt from those respective exams.*

**Students will be allowed to take the exam if they feel it could help their grade.*

School sponsored/excused trips/absences **do not count against a student for the purposes of receiving the reward. (Example: FFA/4-H/Club field trip, etc.)*

**Students who are required to take the final exam due to attendance and/or grades and do not attend to take the exam will receive a “0” for both a daily and test grade.*

BUS TRANSPORTATION/DISCIPLINE 2026-2027

BUS STOP

1	Arrive at the bus stop ten minutes before scheduled pickup time. It is important that your student arrive at the bus stop on time. We cannot wait for your student to come out of the house, off of the porch, or get out of a vehicle once the bus has arrived. While waiting for the bus, students must stand away from the road. Younger students should be permitted to load first.
2	Students are only permitted to get on or off the bus at their assigned stop. To get off the bus at any other location on the assigned route the student is required to have a form signed by the principal. Guest riders with a form are only permitted to ride on a space available basis.
3	Students must depart from the bus in an orderly manner. Students should move away from the bus promptly to a location at least 10 feet from the roadway. If crossing the roadway the student should be at least 10 feet in front of the bus and be able to see the driver's face. They should not cross the road until the driver waves to them that it is safe.

DISCIPLINE

4	Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on the bus, and all reasonable directions given shall be followed by showing consideration and respect for the bus driver and your fellow students. The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior.
5	The principal of the student shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. Upon recommendation by the bus driver, a student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that the student's behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or if the student disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation.
6	All Van Buren County School Buses are equipped with camera systems. These cameras record at all times and the video will be used as needed to settle misbehavior problems on the bus as the principal sees fit.

SAFETY

7	Emergency exits must be free from obstructions at all times. The bus driver may prohibit any equipment or object considered to be dangerous to the safety and welfare of those on board. Student possessions may not be placed in the aisle, in front of the bus or on the floor. Ball equipment and class projects will be permitted only when they can be held on the student's lap, and not obstruct the student's view.
8	No food or drink will be consumed on the bus during regular scheduled routes. Every child should have a backpack for loose papers. Lunches may be carried in their backpack.
9	Students are not allowed to have in hand or mouth any objects, food, candy, gum, etc...while on the bus.
10	Students must remain seated at all times. They are not permitted to use the emergency windows, emergency doors or touch the safety equipment without the driver's permission.
11	No glass containers or objects, balloons, or animals are permitted on the bus.
12	Students are not permitted to open or close windows without the permission of the driver. Keep hands, arms, and heads inside the bus. Throwing objects in or out of the bus is prohibited.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

13	Do not fight, engage in rough play, or use profane language or obscenities while waiting for the school bus, on the bus or after leaving the bus.
14	Students should not deface or cause damage to the bus in any way. If a student causes any damages to property, it is the students responsibility to cover the cost.
15	Tobacco products and paraphernalia are prohibited on the bus.
16	The Bus Driver has the authority to seat any or all students for any reason.

CAFETERIA

All students are required to eat in the cafeteria unless supervised by a teacher whether they eat the cafeteria food or not. A large number of people must be fed in a short time. Therefore, it is important to leave the table and surrounding area clean. Any disruptive behavior in the cafeteria could result in a number of reprimands including but not limited to arranged/assigned seating, separation from cafeteria, placement in the alternative program or suspension from school.

As a result of a federal grant all Van Buren County students receive (1) breakfast meal and (1) lunch meal free of charge. Students who choose extra items of food must pay the cashier for them. Students are not allowed to charge for extra food items.

Students are allowed to set up an "account" to be used for meals. Students may deposit money into the meal account and may use the last four digits of their social security number to purchase items from the account.

Any questions regarding food and nutrition or the VBHS cafeteria can be directed to Christy Troglen, Van Buren County Schools Nutrition Supervisor at (931) 946-2242 or Tina Tarantino, VBHS Cafeteria Manager at (931) 946-7303.

For lunch schedules please refer to the bell schedule listing at the front of the handbook.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF STUDENTS (2026-2027)

The following MINIMUM earned credits denotes a student's classification:

0-3	Freshman
4-10	Sophomore
11-19	Junior
20+	Senior

A student must have twenty credits on the day school starts to be classified as a senior for SY 2026-2027 (transfer students' credits from schools participating in block scheduling will be adjusted). However, a student may meet the graduation requirements (26 credits) through dual-credit classes. In order for a student to march in the graduation ceremony, he/she must be classified as a senior at least the semester before graduation. All Juniors must meet the minimum number of required credits to be classified as a senior and meet attendance policy requirements to participate in the graduation ceremony. All Seniors must meet the minimum number of required credits required to receive a high school diploma. All Seniors must meet the attendance policy requirements to participate in the graduation ceremony.

COLLEGE/TECHNICAL SCHOOL VISITATIONS

-Juniors at VBHS have the opportunity for **one** school-excused college/technical school visit.

-Seniors at VBHS have the opportunity for **two** school-excused college/technical school visits.

PARKING ON CAMPUS

In an effort to protect the vehicles of students and faculty, the following rules are in effect:

- Speed Limit on campus is **5** mph.
- Speeding and reckless driving may result in the loss of parking privileges.
- Students must purchase a parking permit tag from the front office.
- Student parking is permitted only in the parking area behind the school building and the fenced baseball parking lot. Each student driver will be assigned a specific parking space upon presenting a valid Tennessee Driver's License and the payment of a parking fee.
- If a parent/guardian, spouse or friend exchanges a vehicle with a student during the school day, the exchange **MUST** be reported to the office. The exchanged vehicle will be parked in the student's assigned space. Any vehicle not displaying a parking permit or parked illegally may be towed at owner's expense and the student is subject to school disciplinary action.
- Students will leave their vehicles immediately after parking it and enter the building. Students are **NOT** to return to vehicles for any reason unless the administration grants permission.

RECORDS

Student records/diplomas will be held until the student fulfills all financial obligations and returns any equipment, books, picture proofs, fees, etc. to the appropriate department.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 7:50am for Middle School and 8:00am for High School each day. Teachers will be in or near their classrooms at that time. The school day ends at 3:00pm each day for students and 3:15 P. M. for teachers. Students can begin arriving at 7:30am and should report to their 1st Block classroom. Breakfast will be available to students beginning at 7:30am which can be picked up in the cafeteria prior to reporting to first block.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) applies to the programs and activities of a state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA), or other recipient of funds under any program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It governs the administration to students of a survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight protected areas:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
8. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

PPRA also concerns marketing surveys and other areas of student privacy, parental access to information, and the administration of certain physical examinations to minors. The rights under PPRA transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

Effective July 1, 2025, Tennessee law mandates that all public schools implement policies restricting student use of personal electronic devices—including cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, and gaming devices—during instructional time. These policies aim to minimize classroom distractions and enhance student focus. *Exceptions are permitted for educational purposes, emergencies, and for students with documented medical needs or disabilities as outlined in an IEP or 504 plan.*

Using electronic devices such as earbuds, headphones, iPods, tablets, hand-held games, mp3 players, etc. during classroom instruction time does not promote an effective learning environment and will be confiscated **unless given permission of use by the teacher or administrator.**

While Students are responsible for their actions and use of cell phones/electronic devices while on the VBHS campus, Teachers are responsible for establishing how and where cell phones and other wireless communication devices are stored while in their classroom.

Cell phones/Wireless Communication Devices **SHOULD NOT** be used in the classroom unless the teacher has given consent. **Cell Phones must be placed in the appropriate classroom location at the beginning of every class unless the teacher instructs otherwise.** If the teacher does not give consent and a student is caught using it then it will be taken up and sent to the office under the normal write-up procedure.

Students will have the opportunity to use cell phones at breaks and at lunch.

The taking of pictures and videos is prohibited at all times.

1st Classroom Offense: Teacher takes the device until the end of the class period and uses this opportunity to reinforce wireless communication expectations. **Any further instances should result in an Office Referral.**

Consequences for unauthorized use of cell phones/electronic devices that has been escalated to an office referral:

1st Offense—Cell phone turned into the office with Discipline Referral Form. Parent must pick up the phone. ISS (1 day)

2nd Offense—Cell phone turned into the office with Discipline Referral Form. Parent must pick up the phone. ISS (3 days)

3rd Offense—Cell phone turned into the office with Discipline Referral Form. Parent must pick up the phone, ISS (5 days)

Additional Offenses—Each additional offense will result in additional days of ISS.

DRESS CODE

School dress and grooming shall be modest, moderate, and decent. Apparel or appearance that tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. In matters of opinion, the judgment of school administrators will prevail. Please keep in mind that every unique dress situation cannot be addressed. The dress code for VBHS will not permit inappropriate dress during school hours by faculty, staff, or students.

- No visible body piercing except for ears and facial piercing(s) in tasteful moderation is allowed.
- No clothing with suggestive, offensive, vulgar, racist, or profane words, slogans, or pictures is allowed. Clothing that advertises items that are illegal in the possession of a minor will not be allowed.
- No see-through type garments. **Undergarments should not be visible.**
- Clothing exposing the midriff will not be allowed. Outer clothing must cover the torso while standing or sitting. Shirts/blouses may not expose any part of the breast. Excessively low-cut tops will not be allowed.
- Heavy or long metal chains that are not formal jewelry are not allowed. This includes chains attached to wallets.
- No hats or head coverings, except for religious purposes, should be worn. These items **must be kept in cars or placed in lockers by 7:50 a.m.** NO hats are to be out during school hours.

**Administration reserves the right to address any clothing or accessory deemed inappropriate.*

Acceptable Shirts

- Polo-style
- T-shirts (crew neck, high-rise v-neck)
- Blouses
- Button-down
- Any color or pattern
- Size appropriate

Unacceptable Shirts

- Any shirt with writing, pictures or advertisements that depict drug, alcohol, tobacco, sex, or gangs.
- Sleeveless shirts, tank tops, spaghetti straps, and muscle shirts
- Revealing (no cleavage or bare midriff, off the shoulder, open back, or sheer tops)

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Report Cards on Statewide Academic Assessment: You can view our annual report card by visiting <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html>. You will be able to find student achievement, accountability and teacher qualifications.

Achievement on State Assessment: You will receive the individual student interpretive, descriptive and diagnostic reports for the state's standardized test. This information includes your child's achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards. (ESEA 1111 (b)(2)(B)(x))

National Assessment of Education Progress: Our district may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). You will be informed before the assessment is administered. Your child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish this assessment or not required to answer any test question. Please inform the office of your wishes. (ESEA Title VI, Part C, 411 (c)(1))

Schoolwide Programs: Spencer Elementary School is considered Title I with a school wide program. Our district plan may be found at <https://eplan.tn.gov>

English Learner Programs: Our school will inform you no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year if your child was identified for participation in the ESL program.

Homeless Children: Students who are experiencing homelessness have the right to receive educational services that provide full and equal opportunities to succeed in school. Homeless students have the right to immediately enroll in school, even if they do not have proof of residence or any other required school or health records. If any required documentation is missing, it can be obtained after the student is enrolled. Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin, if feasible, and receive transportation services. Public notices are located near the office. (ESSA Title IX, Part C 722 (g)(3)(B))

Waiver Request: If our school district requests the U.S. Secretary of Education to waive any provision or regulation of the ESEA, we will provide notice and information about the waiver to you in a public notice.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The following parent notifications are in compliance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):

Teacher Qualifications and Highly Effective Teachers: Upon parental request regarding whether professionals are highly effective, including qualification of the student's teachers and paraprofessional, Van Buren County School System will provide appropriate information including state qualifications and licensure. (ESSA 1112(e)(1)(A))

Student Privacy: Our school system will send dates home to parents so they are informed of:

- activities involving the collection, disclosure or use of personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- administration of surveys
- non-emergency, physical examination, scheduled in advance (with parents approval)

Parents may inspect:

- third-party surveys or any instrument used to collect information before they are administered to students
- any instructional materials
- physical examinations or screening of students
- the collection, disclosure or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information

Public Release of Student Directory Information: Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose, without consent, "directory information", such as a student's name, address, telephone number and honors or awards. You may, at any time, request in writing to the school that your child's information not be disclosed. (ESEA 8025)

Military Recruiter Access to Student Information: You may, at any time, request in writing to the school that your child's name, address and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without your prior written consent. (ESEA 8528 (a)(2)(B))

Parent and Family Engagement: Van Buren County School System has developed, jointly with parents from all schools, a district wide parent involvement plan. Each individual school has a written parent and family engagement plan that is located on the district and school website. Our school:

- holds one annual meeting for Title I parents (beginning of the each school year)
- numerous meetings throughout the year
- if you would like to share your comments or concerns about the school's improvement plan or family engagement plan, please contact the school principals.
- you will receive a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of your child and the school (ESEA Title I, Part A, 1116 (c))

DRESS CODE (continued)

Acceptable Pants or Shorts

- Khaki-style pants, jeans/denim, or loose-fitting sweats
- Shorts, of acceptable length, and capris; shorts can be khaki or jean/denim/athletic
- Size appropriate

Unacceptable Pants

- Shorts, as well as any rips, tears, or holes in clothing, must extend to a length no higher than 3 inches above the top of the knee when standing.
- Any Spandex, leggings, Jeggings, and/or stretchy/tight-fitting pants, regardless of pockets, that are not covered by a top that covers the front and rear of the mid-section.
- Mini-skirts
- Sagging/oversized pants

Acceptable Outerwear

- Hoodies (*hoods CANNOT be worn during the school day*)
- Sweaters
- Fleece

Unacceptable Outerwear

- Heavy coats or jackets in hallways or classrooms
* If outerwear is removed what is underneath must meet dress code.
- Heavy coats may be worn outside to and from the Agriculture/CTE building but must be removed in the buildings.
- Winter coats, heavy jackets, dusters, trench coats, etc. are not to be worn in the school building during the school day. Clothing of this type must be placed in a locker upon arrival to school.

Acceptable Footwear

- Tennis shoes
- Sandals and flip-flops
- Boots
- Dress shoes
- Shoes must have outdoor sole

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replace it with an acceptable item. Any student refusing to remove or modify his/her appearance shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day and will receive an unexcused absence from classes for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension/expulsion.

DISCIPLINE

The conduct of the student body at Van Buren County High School has been a source of pride for years. The administration and faculty are sure this will continue since all extra-curricular activities are dependent on it.

No student has the right to keep another student from acquiring an education. It is the responsibility of the teacher to maintain discipline. When a problem arises, the teacher chooses the appropriate mode of punishment. The choices may include, but are not limited to, the following. For more detailed discipline information, see the flowcharts beginning on p. 44.

- Have a conference with the student, parent, or both
- Students kept in the classroom during breaks
- Corporal punishment
- Assign write-off or other behavioral modifications
- Refer the student to the principal after teacher efforts are not successful.
- Assign silent lunch (**teacher**)
- Assign lunch detention (**principal**)
- Assign after-school detention or in-school suspension as part of the alternative program (**principal**)
- Assign student to the alternative school (**principal**).
- Assign student to out-of-school suspension or expulsion from school (**principal**).

Criteria for "Unruly" Charges - A student may be officially charged as unruly under the following circumstances:

Physical Fighting: *Engaging in any physical altercation on school property.*

Repetitive Behaviors: *Accumulating three (3) or more office referrals and subsequent in-school placements during the school year.*

Students who receive In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), or are placed in Alternative School at any point during the school year—or on multiple occasions—may lose the privilege of participating in school activities, both during and outside of the regular school day.

Discipline should be reasonable, humane, and administered with kindness in accordance with the policies of the Van Buren County Board of Education.

DRIVERS LICENSE/PERMIT

CERTIFICATE OF COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

The Department of Transportation requires any student enrolled in school to bring a signed "Certificate of Compulsory Attendance" with them to obtain their permit/license. These can be obtained from the front office.

Students must have acceptable attendance to obtain the certificate.

DRIVERS LICENSE REVOCATION-Statement of TN State Law

Any student fifteen (15) years of age or older can have his/her driver license revoked by the State of Tennessee for the following reasons:

- *The student withdraws from school.*
- *10 consecutive or 15 cumulative absences per semester*

Students are notified in writing of the revocation of their driver license. If the student remedies the cause of revocation (at the earliest, the end of the next semester), reapplication for license can be made to the state.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Medication shall be administered only when the student's health requires that it be given during school hours. It is the parent's responsibility to bring this medication to school and give it to the school nurse/designee and to remove any unused medication when treatment is completed. All prescription medication must be brought to school in the original container. The pharmacy label must include the following information:

- Name of student
- Prescription number
- Name of medication and dosage
- Administration route or other directions ---- DATE
- Licensed prescriber's name
- Pharmacy name, address and phone number

All non-prescription medication must be brought to school in the original manufacturer's labeled container with the ingredients listed and the child's name affixed on the container. Medication will be administered in accordance with the dosage requirements on the label. No more than one month's supply of any medication should be brought to school.

NON-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Students and school employees shall be provided a school environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee to discriminate against or harass an individual through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature.

Such discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

NOTIFICATION OF UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION

The schools at Van Buren County shall notify parents if their child is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code annotated 40-38-111(g). Upon determination that a student has been victimized, and within (10) days of the event, the director of schools shall offer the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) a chance to change the student's schedule to remove him/her from the existing situation. All incidents will be evaluated immediately to insure that proper policies will be developed to make sure incidents do not occur again.

LOCKERS

Lockers are the property of Van Buren County Middle/High School and may be searched or inspected at any time.

Student lockers are located in the main lobby, Freshman Academy wing, and the middle school hallway and will be rented at the beginning of the school year. Lockers must be maintained in good condition. Anyone damaging a locker will have to pay for all repairs.

All lockers are to be kept locked at all times. Students should not keep money or valuables in them. The locks are provided, but any student who misplaces one will have to pay for it at current replacement costs. Payment is due at the time the lock is lost and the student will be issued another one. All locks will be collected at the end of the school year. Any missing locks will have to be paid for at that time. Each locker will be assigned to only one student. Therefore, only one student's possessions should be kept in it. **Sharing a locker is not permitted.**

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found is located in the front lobby and/or the main office. All items that are turned in to the office will remain there for ten (10) days. After ten days, all items will be subject to disposal. It is the responsibility of students to keep up with personal belongings. **VBHS is not liable for any lost or stolen items.**

MAKE-UP WORK

Any assignment missed due to an EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED absence will be given to the student upon request by the student. Arrangements for missed assignments or tests will be made up on the day the student returns to school. It is the responsibility of the **STUDENT, NOT the TEACHER**, to initiate the request for all make-up work, including the test. However, the teachers will encourage all students to get their make-up work in on schedule, and those instructing younger students will be more tolerable.

Students will be given the same number of days to complete the daily make-up work that they missed. Teachers will schedule a make-up test that is convenient for both parties.

MILITARY RECRUITERS

Parents of secondary school students have a right to request that their child's name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior written consent. Requests should be addressed to the school counselor at Van Buren County High School.

Recruiters come to VBHS periodically throughout the year to set up a booth in the back lobby to allow interested students an opportunity to speak with them during the lunch hour.

DRIVER LICENSE SUSPENSION

Reinstate Driver's License/Tennessee Drug-Free Youth Act (TCA 49-6-451) in compliance with Juvenile Offender Act TCA 55-10-70; more information may be obtained from the Department of Safety.

The Tennessee Drug-Free Youth Act provides for the denial of driver's licenses for alcohol and other drug convictions of persons ages 13-17. For the first offense, the driver's license can be revoked by the Department of Safety for one (1) year or until the person becomes 17, whichever is longer. For second and subsequent offenses, the license can be denied for two (2) years or until the person becomes 18, whichever is longer. For persons ages 12 or under, the Tennessee Drug-Free Youth Act does not provide a penalty for alcohol-drug related offenses; therefore, the Juvenile Court will designate the penalty according to the offense.

If a student's ability to operate a motor vehicle is suspended due to a drug or weapon charge heard by Juvenile Court, the student must return to Juvenile Court in order to have the driving restrictions lifted. The student may apply for reinstatement by filing of a motion obtained from the Juvenile Court Clerk's office. To qualify for a reinstatement, the student must have attended a court ordered class and the student's suspension must have expired. Alternatively, the student may apply for an early reinstatement or restricted license under certain circumstances

DRIVING/CAMPUS PARKING

See "Parking On Campus"

DROPPING AND ADDING COURSES

Senior High students may request a change in their schedule of classes during the first week of a semester. The request can be approved or denied by the principal or guidance counselor after a review of the student's record.

A student shall not request enrollment in a new subject after the first week of a semester unless the student's record indicates a deficiency that must be corrected.

Students will be enrolled in a course each of the periods during the school day. The principal or guidance counselor must approve drop of courses. Certain courses completed for a semester may earn ½ unit of credit. Students should contact the guidance counselor regarding partial credit.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

The school holds emergency drills monthly. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. Classroom teachers will instruct students where to go and what to do in case of an emergency. All teachers and substitutes have safety plans and procedures at their convenience in the classroom.

ACTUAL EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In the event of an emergency, students should follow all instructions given to them and remain calm and collected. In the event of a true emergency cell phones can jam the emergency services system and could cause delay in emergency management response.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT AND INFORMATION

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school must have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date as needed through the school office throughout the school year.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Any student who leaves the VBHS campus on a school related trip must not have exceeded 6 absences per semester. The student must also have a grade of 60 in all classes.

The two amendments to the rule are:

1. If a student is in the process of making up the time for time.
2. If a student has a passing progress report and/or a note from the failing teacher.

GANG RELATED ACTIVITY

Any gang related activity will not be tolerated at Van Buren County High School. Any such activity will result in In-School Suspension with parental notification on first offense and Out-Of-School Suspension with parental notification and Disorderly Conduct charges on second offense.

LIBRARY POLICY

All students are encouraged to use the library. Teachers should plan and schedule well in advance with the librarian class work, which requires visits to the library or extensive checkout. The following guidelines are to be followed by the faculty and students:

- Reference books should only be used in the library. These include encyclopedias, dictionaries, and/or any books labeled REF.
- Reserve books may be borrowed for one period or at the close of the school day. IF borrowed before the end of the day, they must be returned before first period the following school day.
- All books on regular checkout may be retained for two weeks.
- Students may checkout a maximum of two books.
- There will be a fine of ten cents per day for each overdue book on regular book checkout.
- Heavily used books and materials will be placed on RESERVE to be used in the Library only so these may remain available for everyone.
- A five-dollar fee will be charged to any student or teacher with a bar code damaged or missing.
- Damage to books beyond reasonable use will result in student/teacher paying for replacement book at cost.
- Middle School reading class will have preference scheduling of library.
- During regular school hours a Library/Hall Pass will be required. Classroom teachers will issue these. Any student without a teacher note signed by the librarian will be considered tardy with all penalties following.
- The library is not a cut-through to the other side of the building.

Any questions regarding the library can be directed to Ms. Abbie Bouldin, Librarian at (931) 946-2442 ext. 24.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the view of the fact that the health and safety of children are a priority, schools will not be in session when it is considered unsafe for buses to travel on the streets and roads of the district or any other emergency that presents a threat.

Radio station(s) and T. V. station(s) will be notified if schools will not be in session. Stations are requested to broadcast the school-closing announcement as often as possible. Additional announcements of closure information shall be available by calling the Board of Education at 946-2242. The Global messaging system will also be used for notification services.

When emergencies make it necessary to dismiss school during the school day, radio and T. V. stations shall be notified and requested to make the announcement and repeat it as often as possible in order for parents to expect students early or to make arrangements for their early arrival. The Global messaging system will also be used for notification services.

INTERFERENCE/DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES“BULLYING”

The staff is authorized to take reasonable measures to establish appropriate school behavior. Any professional employee shall have the authority to control the conduct of any student while under the supervision of the school system. This authority shall extend to all activities of the school, including all games and public performances of athletic teams and other school groups, trips, excursions and all other activities under school sponsorship and direction.

A student shall not use violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct which causes the disruption, interference or obstruction of any school purpose while on school property, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity, function or event, whether on or off campus. Neither shall s/he urge other students to engage in such conduct.

Harassment, intimidation and other conduct that may be considered “bullying” will not be tolerated. Students shall not engage in conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with another student’s academic development or that creates a hostile or offensive learning environment.

A student found guilty of misbehavior may receive punishment ranging from verbal reprimand to suspension and/or expulsion dependent on the severity of the offense and the offender’s prior record.

Van Buren County School System provides “Bullying Prevention” activities throughout the school year to promote awareness of the harmful effects of bullying and to develop bullying prevention strategies for students and staff.

GRADING

The grading scale at Van Buren County Middle/High School is as follows:

A = 4.0 = 90 to 100

B = 3.0 = 80 to 89

C = 2.0 = 70 to 79

D = 1.0 = 60 to 69

F = 0.0 = 0 to 59

Written reports of student grades or performance in each class or subject area are issued to parents at least once every 4 1/2 weeks. Report cards and progress reports will be given to each child. Refer to the calendar for dates.

The nine weeks grades are determined by the following criteria:

Fifty Percent (50%)

Daily assignments

Fifty Percent (50%)

Test average (3-5 Tests per grading period)

A semester exam will be given at the end of each semester and will count as two test grades for the grading period.

TCAP/EOC will count according to School Board Policy (10% of final course grade) will be displayed on student report cards at the end of the final grading period.

The **semester grade** is determined by adding the two nine weeks grades and dividing by two for an average. All I’s (incomplete) become F’s with a numeric value of zero(0) at the end of the school year. Exception can be made for those hospitalized or under a physician’s care.

SEMESTER EXAM POLICY

See “Semester Exam Policy” found on p. 36 of the Student Handbook.

DATES TO KNOW:

PROGRESS REPORTS GO HOME:	END OF 9-WEEKS GRADING PERIOD:	SUBMIT GRADES:	REPORT CARDS GO HOME:
09/17/2026	1 ST QTR – 10/09/2026	1 ST QTR – 10/20/2026	10/23/2026
11/20/2026	2 ND QTR – 12/17/2026	2 ND QTR – 01/05/2027	01/08/2027
02/11/2027	3 RD QTR – 03/05/2027	3 RD QTR – 03/09/2027	03/12/2027
04/16/2027	4 TH QTR – 05/19/2027	4 TH QTR – 05/20/2027	05/25/2027

*Dates are subject to change.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (2026 - 2027)

26 Required Credits for Graduation.

- English**- 4 years/credits required (English I, II, III, IV)
 - Math**- 4 years required (Algebra I A&B, Algebra II A&B*, Geometry*, or Bridge, SAILS Math, College Math*)
 - Science**- 3 years/credits required (Biology, Agriscience, Chemistry, Physics* -**when offered*)
 - World History** required
 - Wellness**- 1 year/credit required
 - US History** required
 - Half Credit required in:** Government, Physical Education, Economics, & Personal Finance
 - ACT Prep** required for Sophomores
- Dual-Enrollment College Credit courses* are available through a partnership with Motlow Community College. Course offerings are subject to the colleges' discretion.

Required Focus- 3 credits required (Spanish I, II*, Fine Arts) or another 3 credit focus if parents and student agree that student will not attend college.

Elective Focus- 3 credits required

**Denotes weighted course.*

VBHS Elective Focuses:

- Business** (Computer Applications, Business Mgt, Business Communications)
- Agriculture** (Agri-science, Ag Mechanics, Ag Power, Ag Engineering)
- Agriculture** (Agri-science, Natural Resource Mgt, Applied Environmental)
- Agriculture** (Agri-science, Greenhouse, Landscape)
- Fine Arts** (Art I,II, Theater Arts, Journalism, Psychology, Sociology)
- Health Services** (Health Science, Medical Therapeutics, A & P, CNA)
- Liberal Arts** (Anatomy and Physiology, Agri-science, Psychology, Sociology, Dual Enrollment Classes, Journalism, Computer Applications, Spanish I)

2018 and beyond will need 26 total credits to Graduate from VBHS.

EARLY GRADUATION

For the Class of 2023 and beyond, students who have met all Tennessee and Van Buren County Board of Education requirements for graduation by December of their senior year will be permitted to graduate early, if they so choose and have applied for and obtained permission from school and district administration. The application and more information for early graduation can be found in the counseling office.

HALL AND CLASSROOM USE

Be prompt to class. Any student not in their assigned class when the bell rings is considered tardy. Students with excessive tardies are subject to disciplinary action. Students tardy for class are to be sent to the office for an admission slip.

The teacher, not the bell, dismisses class.

It is the students' responsibility to report to class with materials as required by their teacher (paper, book pencil, etc.). Students are not permitted to leave class to retrieve these materials unless given permission.

Classes are not to be disturbed. The office will notify teachers and students of messages. Students are not to disturb class in session.

Students are not permitted in the halls during class time without a teacher issued pass. Verbal permission is not acceptable.

No food or drinks are allowed in the classroom unless under teacher discretion.

The entrance area of the auditorium is off limits unless entering the auditorium for a program. Students are not allowed behind columns in front of the library.

HOMELESS INFORMATION

If you have lost your housing and now live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, camp ground, or on the street, please get in touch with our Homeless Liaison, Dr. Denise Whittenberg at (931) 946-2242 ext#23 or Ms. Vanessa Waters, State Homeless Coordinator at (615) 917-3750 for information and/or resources.

IMMUNIZATION

No students entering school, including those entering kindergarten or seventh grade, those from out-of-state and those from non-public school, will be permitted to enroll (or attend) without proof of required immunizations. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school that the student is to attend. All certificates of immunization shall be on forms furnished by the Department of Health. Per TCA 49-6-5005 Schools are required to provide parents with info about meningococcal disease and the effectiveness of the vaccination. Parents/Guardians can contact the school, health department, or their doctor to determine if they want their child vaccinated.

INFLUENZA COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENT

Pursuant to Public Chapter 22, schools must annually provide parents and guardians with information about influenza disease and the effectiveness of vaccination against influenza at the beginning of every school year. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the TN Department of Health encourage everyone six months of age and older to get a flu shot each year. Everyone can benefit from getting a flu vaccine, but it is especially important for young children who are among the most at risk for serious illness and death from influenza.