

**VBPS Elementary School**  
**Student Handbook**  
**2021-2022**



# **Van Buren Public School's Statements**

## ***Mission***

The mission of Van Buren Public Schools is to "Provide a high quality, dynamic education that empowers every student to reach their full potential."

## ***Vision***

To empower curious, collaborative and creative leaders able to adapt to a rapidly changing global society.

## ***We believe***

- Every student is capable of learning in varied ways.
- Students and staff learn best in a positive, safe and respectful learning environment.
- A well rounded education is essential to personal success and includes a blend of academics, arts, technology and student choice.
- Learning is a lifelong process for all.
- High expectations for students and staff lead to greater achievement.
- Continuous development of partnerships among families, students, staff and the community is vital for our success.
- When staff learn and grow, so do our students.
- Education and leadership are enriched by diversity.
- Students can be leaders in many different ways.

## **SCHOOL ORGANIZATION**

### **SCHOOL BOARD**

Amy Pearce  
Darlene Gerrick

Kelly Owen  
Simone Pinter  
Dionne Falconer

Susan Featheringill  
Calvin Hawkins

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Van Buren Public Schools District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment. Should you need to contact someone about discrimination of any kind in the school district, contact the Personnel Department at 555 West Columbia Avenue, Belleville, MI 48111 or (734)697-9123, ext. 1010.

Questions or concerns that relate to sex discrimination should be directed to:

Coordinator of Title IX  
Abdul Madyun  
Karen Johnston  
Coordinator of Title VI (Discrimination)  
Abdul Madyun  
Van Buren Public Schools  
555 West Columbia Avenue  
Belleville, Michigan 48111  
Phone (734) 697-9123

Personnel Department  
Abdul Madyun  
Van Buren Public Schools  
555 West Columbia Avenue  
Belleville, Michigan 48111  
Phone (734) 697-9123

Inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of handicaps should be directed to:

Director of Special Services  
Coordinator of Section 504  
Karen Johnston  
Van Buren Public Schools  
555 W. Columbia Avenue  
Belleville, Michigan 48111  
Phone (734) 697-9123

## **DIRECTORY NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights include the following:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.
  - A. Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the school principal indicating as precisely as possible the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
  - B. If a record contains information about students other than a parent's child or the eligible student, the parent or eligible student may not inspect and review the portion of the record which pertains to other students.
  - C. If the student's record involves answers to a standardized test, the District will not provide a parent a copy of standardized test questions.
  - D. The District will not provide a parent or eligible student a copy of the student's education record unless failure to do so would effectively prevent the parent or eligible student the right to inspect and review the records. The fee for copies will be 10 cents per page.
  - E. Students have no expectation of privacy in public and open areas, such as the hallway, which are openly monitored by video cameras. Please note that video camera systems may be located inside VBPS school buildings and on VBPS Busses. To the extent that video images are used in student discipline, videos may be viewed by school personnel and by the parents of students who are subject to discipline as a result of the same; however, copies of the videos will not be released to parents/guardians.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
  - A. Parent or eligible students may ask Van Buren Public Schools to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. This request should be made in writing and given to the principal. The request should clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and should specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The District may or may not comply with the request.
  - B. If the District determines that the challenged information is not inaccurate or misleading and declines to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
  - A. FERPA permits disclosure of school records without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health person or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical

consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

- B. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
  - C. Upon request, Van Buren Public Schools will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
  - D. Van Buren Public Schools will disclose education records to the armed services of the United States.
  - E. Additionally, Van Buren Public Schools will disclose education records as required by state and/or federal law.
  - F. *PLEASE NOTE:* Van Buren Public Schools may make available certain student “directory information” without consent. “Directory information” includes the following: the student’s name, address, photograph, participation in and eligibility for officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, grade placement, degrees and awards received. This information will be disclosed without consent unless the building principal is notified in writing to the contrary by the end of the third week of classes.
4. Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Against Students**

The District prohibits unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment and retaliation. The District will investigate all allegations of unlawful discrimination and will take appropriate action, including discipline, against any person who, following an investigation, is determined to have engaged in unlawful discrimination.

[Board Policy 5202](#)

## **ACADEMICS**

Our elementary schools offer a variety of courses in general and specific areas to meet the needs of our students. Our curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. For further information, please contact your child's school.

### **VAN BUREN PUBLIC SCHOOLS GRADING**

1. Grading Philosophy: All Van Buren Public Schools grading and reporting will support the learning process and encourage student success. Grades measure a student's mastery of the course content expectations.
2. Purposes for Grading Students' Work
  - A. Primary Purpose
    - Communicate achievement to students, parents, and others
  - B. Secondary Purposes
    - Provide information that students can use for self-evaluation and growth
    - Encourage student growth and progress in learning
    - Identify students for available educational opportunities
    - Evaluate the effectiveness of curricular, instructional, and assessment practices and programs
3. Homework
  - A. The purpose of homework is to provide students with an opportunity to practice those skills and concepts that have been taught in class. All homework assignments should meet the following criteria:
    - Have a clear academic purpose
    - Be appropriate to the age and skill level of the student
    - Instill a sense of competence
  - B. For grading purposes, homework should not:
    - Be used for new learning
    - Require help to complete
    - Be assigned as a punishment

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

If a student is absent from school, he or she will be responsible for making up any assignments missed. Students with absences, including out of school suspensions, will be allowed to make up any class work or tests within a period of time equal to the number of school days absent. Arrangements for make-up work will be at the discretion of the teacher.

### **POTENTIAL FAILURE – STUDENT PROGRESS NOTICES**

Parents can expect to be contacted if progress has been unsatisfactory. Student progress notices may be sent at any time.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are given out at the end of every marking period. The grades are printed and distributed to students. The cards are the property of the parent and are not returned to the school.

# **SERVICES AND PROCEDURES**

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Board Policy 5301 - Compulsory Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy**

#### **VBPS Attendance and Truancy Protocol**

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order to not miss a significant portion of their education. Important lessons result from active participation in the classroom which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the school wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

## **TRUANCY**

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant. The student and his/her parents shall be subject to truancy laws of the State. If a student, under the age of eighteen (18), is truant for more than ten (10) total days during a school year, he/she may be reported to the proper authorities. This can result in:

- A. Assignment to detention, suspension, or community service with loss of participation in school activities and events
- B. A hearing before a judge in a court of law
- C. A report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child

## **SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL**

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused or unexcused. Suspended students are not allowed on school property, or to attend any school related activities either on or off school property.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments will be uploaded into Google Classroom where students can access it from their Chromebook. . Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school. The student will be given credit for properly completed assignments and a grade on any make up tests.

## **NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

If a student is going to be absent, the parents should notify the school in advance and provide an explanation. If prior notification is not possible, the parents should provide an excuse upon re-entry. When health problems or other emergencies require students to be absent from school, the school may request verification from the parents / guardians. If the absences of a student appear questionable or excessive, the school staff will attempt to assist parents in improving their child's attendance.

An excused absence allows the student to make up work. It is the responsibility of the **student** to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of school work such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, alternative work may be given. Note: Poor attendance may negatively affect mastery of the content.

### **TARDINESS**

It is the expectation that you are on time for class. High levels of learning can only occur when you are on time, present and actively involved in your learning. Students who are excessively tardy could face disciplinary action.

### **VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. If a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the student's teacher(s) prior to vacation to make the necessary arrangements for obtaining schoolwork. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that can be completed during the trip.

### **MAKE-UP OF TESTS AND OTHER SCHOOL WORK**

Students who are absent from school, or who have been suspended, will be given an opportunity to make up work that has been missed. The parent should contact his/her teacher(s) as soon as possible to obtain assignments. Make-up work due to suspension must be completed. The length of time for completion of make-up work shall be commensurate with the length of the absence.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to an excused absence, he/she may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If he/she misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the parent should consult the school to arrange for taking the test, if available.

## **ACTIVITIES, OPPORTUNITIES, PROGRAMS**

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We will have extracurricular opportunities available throughout the school year. You will receive more information regarding these activities prior to the beginning of the program.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The school staff, under the direction of the administration, will take reasonable steps to safeguard the physical and educational welfare of all students participating in field trips. The District reserves the right to place restrictions upon a student's participation in a field trip or outing when, in the District's judgment, the student's welfare or the welfare of others require it. This includes, but is not limited to, preclusion from participation in the field trip or activity and/or attendance only if accompanied by a parent or adult family member. The decision of the Superintendent is final.



# **GENERAL PRACTICES**

## **ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum and are considered part of the normal school day. As such, they are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. All school activities are subject to school rules and regulations governing student behavior.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

Parents should drop off students no later than 15 minutes after the doors open or they may be tardy for school. Please do not drop off children before school starts because there will not be any adult supervision. This includes dropping them off in the parking lot or playground. Please be mindful that when the school day ends there is limited supervision unless it is a school sponsored activity.

## **BUSES – BUS RULES**

For the safety of all students, VBPS has specific rules for riding our buses. Failure to follow these rules could result in bus privileges being revoked.

[VBPS Transportation Rules](#)

## **CAFETERIA**

Hot lunch and a la carte will be available or students may bring lunches from home. Students are expected to remain in the cafeteria during the entire lunch period. Students who feel that they qualify for a free or reduced price lunch should obtain an application form located on our website at: [Free and Reduced Lunch Application](#). Ten days should be allowed for processing after the application has been completed and returned.

It is possible to prepay for meals in the cafeteria. Using cash, a check, or PaySchools, parents can deposit any amount into their child's personalized cafeteria account. These funds are automatically deducted from this account eliminating the need for bringing cash to school. Cafeteria accounts have been established for all students. Speak to a lunchroom personnel to make deposits. If your child's account exceeds a \$6.00 unpaid balance, You may be contacted by food service.

## **CAFETERIA REGULATIONS**

**COVID PROTOCOL: Students should sit at tables where indicated to promote social distancing. For the 2021-2022 school year, all students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch.**

- A. Students must follow the directions of any and all adults working in the lunchroom.
- B. Students must eat their lunch in the cafeteria.
- C. Violation of these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The uses of all electronic devices are restricted during school hours. If a student is in violation of this policy, his/her device may be confiscated by staff. A parent/guardian will be allowed to pick-up the confiscated device from the main office after school.

The following items are examples of electronic devices that are prohibited during school hours and are subject to confiscation: cell phones, music devices, video equipment, cameras, headsets, personal safety devices, laser lights, and any other type of electronic entertainment equipment for personal use.

The school is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices. Furthermore, the school is not required to investigate matters regarding lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices including those that have been confiscated by staff or administration. Please be advised that the District reserves the right to inspect, review and/or access any and all data on any confiscated device upon reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule may have been violated.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Parents must inform the main office if they have a change of address or a new telephone number and be prepared to present proper identification and documentation. All students must have emergency information on file that includes up-to-date names, addresses and telephone numbers. The purpose of this is so that school personnel can reach a student contact in time of medical or other emergency.

## **COMPUTER USE**

Please be advised that any off-campus computer use or activity that results in a material and substantial disruption of the purpose and ordinary operation of the school district may be subject to discipline in accordance with the penalties set forth in the student handbook and/or acceptable use policy.

### **SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

- A. Computer crimes include unlawful copying of programs, theft of hardware or software, unauthorized access to computer files, unauthorized access to hardware.
- B. No hardware is to be unplugged, moved, tampered with, altered, or misused.
- C. The network system and software is not to be abused.
- D. Students should not use software programs that have not been designated for their use by staff, make copies of programs, install software to the system, or gain access to files other than their own.

Inappropriate use of computers and the Internet or destruction of computer equipment will result in disciplinary action and restitution.

## **INTERNET**

1. Acceptable Use – The purpose of the networks making up the Internet is to support research and education. Its use must be in support of education and research, as well as consistent with the educational objectives of the Van Buren Public School District. Transmission of any material in violation of any national or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted materials, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. (Note, in particular, that copyrighted software may not be transferred electronically.)

2. Network Etiquette – Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
- A. Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages.
  - B. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
  - C. Do not reveal the personal address or phone number of students or yourself.
  - D. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Other people who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
  - E. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
  - F. Use of public property for personal gain is a felony; also the use of commercial activities by for-profit organizations, product promotion, political lobbying or illegal activities is strictly prohibited and is subject to prosecution.
3. Vandalism – Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and possible restitution, suspension, and legal action.

### [Acceptable Use Agreement](#)

## **CURRICULUM REVIEW**

Parents or guardians wishing to review the curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials used by Van Buren Public Schools and its instructional staff may request the administration to allow such review. The school administration shall make arrangements for the review of the instructional materials at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students should be dressed in a manner that is appropriate for an educational setting. Examples of inappropriate attire include but are not limited to the following: bare midriffs, mini-skirts, short shorts, mesh shirts, low-cut tops, spaghetti straps and shirts with straps less than 3 fingers in width, or T-shirts in poor taste (relating to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence, illegal activity, etc.). Students wearing shorts or a skirt must be covered to a point on their thigh so when they are standing with their arms in a relaxed position, straight down at their sides, their fingertips do not extend beyond the hem of the bottom of the dress, skirt, or shorts. All pants must fit around the waist and be properly fastened. Hats and hoodies are not allowed to be worn in class. If in violation of the dress code, parents may be contacted to bring their child a change of clothing. Continued dress code violations may result in suspension from school. In compliance with health department suggestions, students are required to wear shoes while in the building. Final interpretation of the dress code is at the discretion of the administration. Students may not display, in any fashion, symbols which promote violence or discrimination of others on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, creed, religion or gender, or that are affiliated with gangs or gang activity.

All personal belongings should be clearly labeled with the student's name using a permanent marker.

## **DRUG/VAPING/SMOKING-TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS**

In accordance with federal and state laws, the Board of Education prohibits the use, possession, concealment, sale or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles or at any school-related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, any illegal substance, dangerous controlled substance as defined by state statute or substance that could be considered a “look alike” controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with due process and as specified in the student handbook, up to and including expulsion from school. The district will also notify law enforcement officials. [Michigan Penal Code Tobacco Free Schools](#)

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire drills, tornado drills, and Homeland Security lock-down drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. The teacher in each classroom will give the students instructions. Failure to comply with instructions or to clear the building will be grounds for suspension.

## **HEALTH SERVICES – ILLNESS/MEDICATION**

A school nurse is not available to provide health services. If a student is unable to attend class for any health related reason, he or she should report directly to the office. If there is a necessity to go home, the office will inform the parent and the student will be released from school.

Parents of students with special health problems should inform the building administrator if the need arises for special consideration. Special health problems might include vision problems, hearing problems, diabetes, epilepsy, rheumatic fever, allergies, recent surgery, need for prescribed medication during the day or anything that might affect school performance. Students with special needs may need to provide documentation from their physician.

If it is necessary for a student to receive prescription medication during school hours, a parent or guardian must complete a medical release form that has been completed by a physician and is signed by the parent/guardian. The form must include instructions by the physician for administering the medication. The parent/guardian must provide the school with written permission to administer non-prescription medication. The medication must be left with the respective administrator/secretary for distribution to the student and must be in the original prescription (or over-the-counter) bottle. No medication, including aspirin, cough drops or other over the counter medications may be kept in a student’s possession. Exceptions may be made by the building administrator on a case by case basis to allow a student to carry an inhaler or emergency self-injectable such as an Epi-Pen provided medical documentation from the student’s physician is on file with the appropriate principal.

In the event of illness or accident, school personnel will give emergency care only. Parents are responsible for any additional care needed.

Any student reasonably suspected of having a communicable disease, defined as “an illness due to a specific infectious agent or its toxic products that results from transmission of that infectious agent or its products from

a reservoir to a susceptible host, directly as from an infected individual or animal, or indirectly through the agency of an intermediate plant or animal host, vector, or the inanimate environment," will be contacted and may be excluded from school until the individual's physician submits a written recommendation for continuation of attendance. Section 5101 of the Public Health Code, MCL 333.5101(1)

Accurate immunization records must be up to date and on file. Failure to comply with county health regulations will result in a student's exclusion from school.

### **IDEA / SECTION 504 / AND A.D.A. COMPLIANCE**

The school will comply with all state and federal regulations related to IDEA, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the designated lost and found area where they can be claimed by their owners. The lost and found will be cleaned out regularly and remaining items will be donated to a charitable organization.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event adverse weather conditions create extremely hazardous school bus operations, it may be necessary to cancel school. If this is necessary, the school closing announcement will be sent out through our school messaging system and through local media outlets.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

To maintain order and discipline in the Van Buren Public Schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and staff, school officials have the right to conduct reasonable searches of a student and his/her personal property.

### **TESTING SERVICES**

Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP): This test is intended to measure performance in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies for specific grade levels.

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA): NWEA assessments provide detailed data about where each child is on their unique learning path. It provides information teachers can use in the classroom to help every student.

### **LIBRARY BOOKS AND TEXTBOOKS**

Library books and Textbooks for courses are provided to students on a loan basis by the Van Buren Public Schools. Students will be held responsible for exercising reasonable care and consideration for these materials. At the end of the school year, books are to be returned to the appropriate teachers. If a book is lost, misused, or damaged, full replacement cost will be assessed. Fines must be paid by cash or money order; personal checks will not be accepted.

## **VISITORS**

**COVID PROTOCOL: Visitors will not be allowed to enter the building 2021-22**

All volunteers must have a background check completed prior to volunteering.

Parents or guardians wishing to visit a class in session must adhere to the following procedures:

- A. Notify the main office of the intent to visit in advance.
- B. Upon arrival at the school, report to the school office and receive a visitors' pass.
- C. All visitors must sign in/sign out in the main office.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

### **SCHOOL/STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The objective of student discipline is to produce a safe and orderly school environment in which complete attention can be directed to the teaching-learning activities. Every student and every member of the school staff has the right to expect that he/she may go about his/her business any place on the school premises in an atmosphere that is orderly, safe, free from disruption, and conducive to him/her putting forth his/her best effort.

### **GENERAL**

- 1. Section 614 of the Michigan School Code authorizes local Boards of Education to establish reasonable rules and regulations relative to anything necessary for the proper establishment and management of the schools.
- 2. Each student has the responsibility to: a) be aware of and adhere to school rules; b) respect the rights and authority of others; c) achieve academic and social goals; d) be present and punctual; e) refrain from libel, slanderous remarks and obscenity in verbal and written expression; f) dress in a manner that meets standards of health, cleanliness, and safety.
- 3. In keeping with the Family Rights and Privacy Acts (FRPA), students' records and information will be protected.

[Board Policy 5206 - Student Discipline](#)

[Board Policy 5207 - Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[Board Policy 5209 - Student Use of Cell Phone and Electronic Communication Devices](#)

### **DUE PROCESS**

The constitutional rights of individuals assure the protection of due process of law; therefore, this system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures is developed with regard to the administration of discipline in the schools of Michigan.

- 1. The hallmarks of the exercise of disciplinary authority shall be reasonableness and fairness.
- 2. Every effort shall be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems through effective utilization of school district resources in cooperation with the student and his parent or guardian.
- 3. Students will be given an opportunity for a hearing with the appropriate school administrator if they or their parents or guardian indicate the desire for one. The hearing will provide the student and his/her

parent or guardian the opportunity to contest the facts which may lead to disciplinary action, or to contest the appropriateness of the sanction imposed by a disciplinary authority.

4. A student shall not be judged guilty solely by virtue of being accused by a fellow student.

### **OFFICE PROCEDURES**

1. Upon entering the office area, students will sit quietly and not disrupt office operations.
2. Not following these guidelines may be cause for an out-of-school suspension and/or a request for a parental conference.

### **BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES**

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Community Service is a disciplinary alternative available to administrators in dealing with some behavioral problems. Students must fulfill community service obligations. Failure to complete assigned community service hours could result in an out-of-school suspension.

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

In-school suspension is a disciplinary alternative available to administrators in dealing with some less serious behavioral problems.

Students assigned to in-school suspension must:

1. Report to the in-school suspension designated area on time and obey all ISS rules.
2. Not leave the in-school suspension area during the period(s) assigned.
3. Sit in the desk assigned to them, remain quiet, and wait for dismissal by the staff member in charge.
4. Students may complete classroom work while in in-school suspension.

Breaking any of these rules could be cause for out-of-school suspension and, in most cases, a request for a parental conference.

#### **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

The Revised School Code provides each school board with the authority to establish a local discipline policy in order to provide for the safety and welfare of its students. The Student Code of Conduct at Van Buren Public Schools applies to student conduct whether in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school sponsored activity whether or not the event is held on school premises. The District also reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus activity including internet activity that materially and substantially disrupts the educational environment. Pupils guilty of gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience may be suspended or expelled.

## **TYPES OF SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

The length of time a student is suspended or expelled is based upon the seriousness and severity of the behavior. The consequences may range from a one-day in-school suspension to permanent expulsion.

1. Suspension Pending Parental Conference –Administration requires a parental conference before the student returns to school.
2. Short Term Suspensions - These suspensions may be 10 consecutive days or less. Suspensions that are for 10 consecutive days or less in length require minimal due process protection, including oral or written notice of accusation(s), explanation of evidence to support the charges, defined disciplinary measures, and an opportunity for the pupil to respond.
3. Long Term Suspensions or Expulsions – Imposed for more serious infractions. Additionally, the Michigan School Code provides that a local board of education may authorize or order the suspension or expulsion from school for a pupil guilty of a “gross misdemeanor” or “persistent disobedience” for a period up to 180 days.
4. Expulsions – Imposed for serious infractions or pursuant to the mandatory expulsion requirements under the Michigan School Code. Please be advised that the district is required to permanently expel a pupil from the district for weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct, or physical assault to an employee, volunteer, or a person contracted by the school district.

## **SUSPENSION PROCEDURES**

It is the policy of Van Buren Public Schools to exhaust, when appropriate, reasonable alternatives available before the exclusion of a student is used as a solution to a problem, recognizing that exclusion at times may be necessary. Where exclusion is imposed:

1. The student will be informed of the specific charges against him or her which could be the basis for disciplinary action.
2. The student may present to the school administrator any relevant or exculpatory information which will support his/her defense.
3. Should the student be suspended by the school administrator, that administrator will notify the parent or guardian as soon as possible of the suspension, the reason for it, and the steps necessary to effectuate the student's return. The administrator may meet with the parent or guardian and the student to plan the satisfactory return of the student to the school setting.
4. Students are expected to complete their assignments for credit while suspended. Homework will be provided for suspensions up to and including 10 days.
5. If the parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the decision of the assistant principal or dean of students, he/she may appeal to the building principal. Decision of the building principal on suspensions of 10 days or less is final.
6. While on suspension, a student will not enter onto district property without the permission of a building administrator.

## **EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

Students may be long term suspended or expelled pursuant to the hearing procedures outlined below:

1. Written notice of charges against a student will be provided to the parent or guardian at his or her last known address or in-person. The Office of the Superintendent will contact the parent or guardian to establish the time and place for a hearing, which will be reasonable for the parties concerned.
2. The student and his/her parent or guardian have the right to attend the hearing.
3. The student will be given an opportunity to give his/her version of the facts, offer the testimony of witnesses and provide any exculpatory evidence on his/her behalf.



4. The student or his/her adult representative will be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him/her.
5. The student may be represented by legal counsel at his/her expense.
6. The hearing will be conducted by the Superintendent or his/her designee and his determination will be made solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing.
7. The findings of the hearing authority will be reduced to writing and sent to the student and his/her parent or guardian.
8. The student and his/her parent or guardian will be made aware of his/her right to appeal the decision of the hearing authority to the appropriate authority.
9. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

### **SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS**

All Rules and Regulations apply at all school sponsored events whether they occur on or off school property. Proper conduct is expected. The school has the right to refuse any student entrance to school sponsored events for violations of school rules and/or policies.

### **OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT**

Administration may discipline a student for any activity, whether or not school is in session, if such off-campus activity may be reasonably interpreted to impede the ability of the district to maintain a safe, orderly and disciplined educational environment or if the activity results in a material disruption to the learning environment. At such time that the Administration learns of the behavior, an investigation will be conducted. Upon completion of an investigation, the administration will initiate appropriate disciplinary action if the action warrants, up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the same fashion as if the action had occurred on campus.

### **DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT CONDUCT**

The authority of the Board of Education to make reasonable rules and regulations regarding discipline and to authorize suspension and expulsion is granted in Section 340.613 and 340.614 of the General School Laws of Michigan 1970 which is as follows:

“The Board may authorize or order the suspension or expulsion from school of any pupil guilty of gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience, or having habits or bodily conditions detrimental to the school, whenever in its judgment the interests of the school may demand it; provided, that except in a case in which the parents or legal guardian of a child refuses to have the child medically or clinically examined, not child may be expelled or suspended from school upon the basis of physical handicap unless the Board has obtained a certified statement from a physician that the child is so physically handicapped that he should not attend school, or on the basis of mental handicap unless the Board has obtained a statement from a psychiatrist or a child center or clinic or other appropriate agency approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction that the child is incapable of benefiting from public school attendance.”

“Every Board shall have authority to make reasonable rules and regulations relative to anything whatever necessary for the proper establishment, maintenance, management and carrying on of the public schools of such district, including regulations relative to the conduct of pupils concerning their safety while in attendance at school or en route to and from school.”

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT**

The primary intent of society in establishing the public schools is to provide an opportunity for learning. While in the school setting, students have full rights of citizenship as delineated in the United States Constitution and its amendments. These rights must not be abridged, obstructed, or in other ways altered except in accordance with due process of law. It is further recognized that education is one of these rights.

While full recognition is given to the rights of the individual, equal recognition is given to the rights of all other students to an education in an atmosphere that will provide for safety and general welfare regardless of race, religion, or economic status. All students are entitled to an education free from fear and disruption.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL**

Administrators and teachers also have rights and duties. Individual building principals are authorized to develop and enforce additional reasonable rules of student conduct for the pupils of their specific buildings which are not inconsistent with District policy. Classroom teachers are responsible for maintaining a suitable environment for learning, and administrators have the responsibility for maintaining and facilitating the educational program and process. Teachers are authorized to impose reasonable rules for the conduct of students within their classrooms which are not inconsistent with District policy, subject to the review and approval of the building principal.

Further, if at any time, in the opinion of the building principal, it is necessary for the safety and welfare of the student or the school to have a student removed from a given class or school building, a student may be suspended by that principal in accordance with District policies and any applicable laws. A teacher has the authority to recommend the suspension of students from a class for cause. The regulations and due process procedures are designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISCIPLINE**

In the final analysis, parents are responsible for the behavior and attitudes of their children. Teachers, administrators, and counselors deal with such problems to the extent the student will accept their help to ensure proper respect for school authority and acceptable behavior on the part of their child.

## **DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINE**

Definition: The control of conduct by the individual himself/herself or by external authority. Good discipline will attempt to help the learner grow, rather than just serve as punishment. Respect, both for individual rights and for the rights of the group, is basic to sound discipline.

## **WEAPONS-FREE SCHOOL**

Under Michigan law, a student who is found to possess a dangerous weapon in a Weapons-Free School Zone, or who commits arson in a school building or on school grounds, or who commits criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school grounds shall be expelled from the school district permanently, subject to possible reinstatement.

A dangerous weapon includes, but is not limited to, a firearm (i.e., handgun, rifle, pellet gun or starter pistol), dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with blade over three inches in length, pocket knife opened by mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles.

A student thus expelled will be referred to the criminal justice system and the appropriate County Department of Social Services or community mental health agency. Notification of the referral will be provided to the parent, legal guardian and/or student.

### **ASSAULT ON ANOTHER WITH A DANGEROUS WEAPON IN A WEAPONS-FREE SCHOOL ZONE**

Public Act 158 of 1994 provides that persons who assault others on school property or in school vehicles with a firearm or weapon are guilty of a felony punishable by one or more of the following: imprisonment for not more than four years, community service for not more than 150 hours, and/or a fine of not more than \$6000.

### **PARENTAL LIABILITY FOR MINORS WHO COMMIT WEAPONS-FREE SCHOOL ZONE VIOLATIONS**

A parent of a minor who commits a weapon violation is guilty of a misdemeanor if the parent knows of the intended violation and acts to further the violation or fails to report it. The misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of not more than \$2000 and/or community service for not more than 100 hours or probation.

### **ASSAULT ON ANOTHER STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER**

The State of Michigan mandates under Section 380.1310 of the Revised School Code that a student who physically assaults another student on school property at any school sponsored activity or in a school-related vehicle will be suspended or expelled for up to 180 school days.

## **ANTI-BULLYING**

### **NOTIFICATION**

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of name and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

## **PROCEDURE**

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

A student may also submit a report or complaint to any of the above designated individuals through email, voicemail, regular mail, or by leaving a sealed note addressed to the individual at that person's office or desk. The student may submit a report or complaint anonymously, but this may affect the ability to fully investigate the matter, when the complaining student is not available to provide additional information during the course of the investigation.

The identity of a student who reports bullying, hazing or aggressive behavior, as well as those students who provide information during an investigation will remain confidential to the extent possible and to the extent allowable by law. Only school personnel directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or responsible for remedying any violation will be provided access to the identity of the complaining student(s) and student witnesses, and then only to the extent necessary to effectively deal with the situation.

The identity of the student who files the report or complainant will not be voluntarily shared with the alleged perpetrator(s) of the witnesses unless the student and his/her parent/guardian give written permission to do so. Any investigation report will likewise not be voluntarily produced with the names of the reporting student(s) or witnesses. However, under certain circumstances, the District may be required by law to disclose the report and/or the student(s) names. Also, under certain circumstances, the identity of the reporting student may become obvious even without disclosure by school personnel.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. While reports may be made anonymously, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report without other corroborating evidence.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate the policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyber bullying, The Principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517- Anti-Harassment.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

### **RETALIATION AND FALSE REPORTS**

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegation of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone into trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

“Aggressive Behavior” is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough or serious enough to negatively impact a student’s educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

“At School” is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

“Bullying” is defined as any written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying (i.e. any electronic communication, including, but not limited to electronically transmitted acts, such as internet, telephone, or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district’s educational programs or activities by placing the students in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student’s physical or mental health; and/or causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

“Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g. height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g. from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

“Intimidation/Menacing” includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person’s property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person’s movement without good reason.

“Staff” includes all school employees and Board members.

“Third parties” include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

## SPECIFIC SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Van Buren Public Schools is dedicated to providing an environment where learning is a priority and high levels of learning is a goal for all students. To achieve these goals, certain standards of behavior are required to maintain the school's responsibility to its core mission of learning. An effective learning environment cannot be maintained without proper discipline. In an effort to be consistent throughout the district, we have set some specific policies for dealing with inappropriate behavior.

Students who consistently disrupt the educational process will be placed on a four strike policy resulting in progressive discipline of suspension up to and including expulsion. On a student's fourth office referral:

1. Administrator will require a meeting with both parent and student
2. Administrator will develop an action plan tailored to that particular student's need to prevent infraction from occurring again.
3. If behavior persists, progressive discipline will be implemented
4. Administrator will again require a meeting with parent and student to review the action plan.

Additionally, for certain conduct, the Van Buren Public Schools believes in a zero tolerance approach and will uniformly enforce the following penalties for inappropriate conduct:

1. Fighting (including punching, hitting, fighting, kicking, biting, spitting, etc.).
  - a. A student will not cause or attempt to cause physical injury to a student, or other person.
  - b. Penalty:
    - i. Grades K-2:
      1. **First Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and up to a three day suspension.
      2. **Second Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and three day suspension
      3. **Third Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and minimum three to five day suspension.
    - ii. Grades 3-4:
      1. **First Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and three day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.
      2. **Subsequent Offense:** Parent conference and up to a five day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.
    - iii. Grades 5-6
      1. **First Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and five day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.
      2. **Second Offense:** Parent conference and eight day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion. Students may also be cited by local police authorities for disorderly conduct.
      3. **Third Offense:** Ten day suspension and recommendation for expulsion. Students may also be cited by local police authorities for disorderly conduct.

iv. Grades 7-12

1. **First Offense:** Conference with the parent and/or principal and eight day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion. Students may also be cited by local police authority for disorderly conduct.
2. **Second Offense:** Parent conference and ten day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion. Students may also be cited by local police authority for disorderly conduct.
3. **Third Offense:** Recommendation for expulsion. The student may also be cited by local police authority for disorderly conduct.

2. Drugs/Alcohol, Use of

- a. Possession, use, or under the influence of alcoholic, illegal drugs, look-alike drugs, or other substances which produce irregular or abnormal behavior.
  - i. Grades 3-12
    1. **First Offense:** Referral to police authorities, conference with the parent and/or principal, eight day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.
    2. **Second Offense:** Referral to police authorities, conference with the parent and/or principal and ten day suspension with possible recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.
    3. **Third Offense:** Recommendation for expulsion and referral to police authorities.

3. Distribution of Drugs/Alcohol

- a. The sale, distribution, or transfer of illegal drugs, prescription or look-alike drugs or alcoholic beverages.
  - i. **First Offense:** Referral to police authorities and recommendation for expulsion.

**STUDENT ACTS PROHIBITED**

Student involvement or participation in the following or related activities is prohibited in school buildings, on school property, on school buses, at school-sponsored events, whether on or off campus, and on or against the property of persons of school personnel or their families. Disciplinary action will be taken by the school, (regardless of action by civil authorities), with penalties ranging from administrative intervention to expulsion. Please be advised that police and/or other state agencies may be contacted for any and all offenses that potentially are in violation of state or federal laws.

**ALTERING SCHOOL DOCUMENTS/FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS** – the act of changing, altering or forging any school related document including but not limited to passes, re-entries, progress reports, report cards, transcripts and computer/on-line records.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**ARSON** – The setting of fires or the use of open flames for improper purposes is prohibited.

**PENALTY** – *Mandatory permanent expulsion under the Michigan School Code/Referral to police authorities.*



**BOMB THREAT** – The deliberate attempt through verbal or written communication to disrupt normal school operations by reporting an impending threat of explosives on school property when no such threat exists.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to police authorities.*

**BULLYING** – please refer to the VBPS Anti-Bullying Policy and Response Plan

**CHEATING** – Copying, test sharing, plagiarism, un-cited use of internet source materials and all other forms of cheating are strictly prohibited. Plagiarism is the action of using, without due acknowledgement, the thoughts, scholarship or intervention of another person. All word-for-word quotations, any summaries and any borrowed ideas that are paraphrased or mentioned must have cited sources.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion including a zero on assignments.*

**CRIMINAL ACTS** - The act of committing or participating in any conduct or act defined as a crime by federal or state law or local ordinance.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Referral to police authorities.*

**CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT** – Violation set forth in Chapter LXXVI of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL 750.520b to 750520g).

**PENALTY** – *Mandatory permanent expulsion under the Michigan School Code/Referral to police authorities.*

**DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT** – Includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g. height, weight, complexion), cultural background socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g. from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL** – Inciting and/or contributing to the disruption of the educational process and/or school sponsored activities.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIAL** – The act of distributing or posting unauthorized material on school district property.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**EXTORTION** – The act of taking or attempting to take any money or things of value from a student in school in the presence of either an implied or expressed threat.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Referral to police authorities.*

**FALSE ALARM** – The intentional act of initiating or participating in the setting of a false fire alarm, or making a false fire, bomb, or catastrophe report.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**FALSE ALLEGATIONS** – The act of libel or slander or to make false allegations against another student, district employees, Board of Education members or volunteers.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**FAILURE TO IDENTIFY ONESELF OR GIVE A FALSE NAME** – The act of refusing to provide any staff member with proper name when requested to do so or knowingly providing a false name upon request.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**FIREWORKS/EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS** – The possession, transfer, distribution, or use of fireworks, explosive materials, or smoke-producing devices.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**FORGERY** – The act of fraudulently using, in writing, the name of another person, or falsifying times, dates, grades, addresses, or other data on school forms, documents, or stickers.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**GAMBLING** – The act of possessing or playing any game of chance for money or valuables, including but not limited to card and dice playing.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**GANG ACTIVITY/INSIGNIA** – The act of possessing and/or wearing and/or displaying any clothing, objects, or colors, (headgear, bandanas etc.) jewelry, symbol, or committing any act, verbal or non-verbal (gestures, hand signals, handshakes, etc.), that may reasonably be perceived by a staff member as evidence of membership in or affiliation with or promotion of a gang.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to police and/or other authorities.*

**GROSS DISRESPECT** – Willful and extreme rudeness directed toward school employees or other adults, including derogatory remarks and obscene gestures.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**HABITUAL/PERSISTENT MISCONDUCT** – Any behavior which continues to be disruptive despite previous action taken by school officials.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**HAZING** – Any activity which endangers the physical safety of a student, produces mental or physical discomfort, causes embarrassment, fright, or degrades the student.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**HORSEPLAY OR INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT (PLAY FIGHTING)** – The act of wrestling or inappropriate conduct in classrooms, halls, or other school building properties

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**HUMAN DIGNITY** – Behavior by students which insults, degrades, or stereotypes any race, gender, handicap, physical condition, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnic group, or religion; conduct detrimental to the normal functioning of school activities including but not limited to:

- A. Spoken or written racial or ethnic slurs.
- B. Racial, ethnic, or religious intimidation.
- C. Authorship, publication, and circulation of unauthorized material.
- D. Possession of pornographic or obscene material.
- E. Hazing or initiations.
- F. Sexual harassment

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**IMPROPER COMMUNICATION** – The act of using or making obscene, offensive, threatening, annoying, or vulgar communications, verbally, in writing or by gestures to any student or staff member.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**IMPROPER USE OF TECHNOLOGY** – The act of violating the “Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures” student contract for the use of computers, electronic information, resources, or other technologies (e.g., use of networks operated by the school district, etc.), or verbal or written directions of school district personnel regarding the acceptable use of computers and other technologies.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**INDECENCY** – The act of offending commonly recognized standards of good taste, including offensive displays of affection or use of ethnically or sexually offensive language, images, or writing.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**INSTIGATION** – The act of willfully and continually being a nuisance towards staff and or other students. This includes verbal, physical, or written actions.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**INSUBORDINATION/FAILURE TO COOPERATE** – The failure to respond or carry out a reasonable request by authorized school personnel. This includes the refusal by any student to give up his/her cell phone or electronic device.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**INTERFERENCE WITH/OR INTIMIDATION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL** – The act of preventing or attempting to prevent school personnel from engaging in their lawful duties through actions, threats, violence, harassment, or verbal intimidation.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to police authorities.*

**INTIMIDATION** – includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to police authorities.*

**LEAVING CLASS WITHOUT PERMISSION** – The act of leaving a classroom or assigned location (including office, lunchroom, or in-school suspension room) without permission of the supervising staff member.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**OFF-CAMPUS VIOLATION**– Any act that can reasonably be considered an endangerment to the well-being or safety to a member of the school or district or that materially and substantially disrupts the learning environment.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**OUT OF ASSIGNED AREA** – The act of being found out of the student's assigned location within the building or grounds.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**PARAPHERNALIA** – Items related to or identified with the use of alcohol, tobacco and/or drugs including but not limited to lighters, matches, pipes, rolling papers, etc.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**PERSONAL PROTECTION DEVICES** – The act of possessing, attempting to possess, handling or transmitting a personal protection device (e.g., pepper gas, mace, etc.) capable of inflicting bodily injury or causing physical discomfort to another person.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**PETITIONS** – The act of presenting petitions which are not free from obscene or libelous statements, personal attacks, or are not within bounds of reasonable conduct.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**PHYSICAL ASSAULT - STUDENT** – The willful, unprovoked striking or physically threatening to strike, or act of intentionally injuring any student.

**PENALTY** – *Suspension/expulsion up to 180 days under the Michigan School Code/Referral to police authorities.*

**PHYSICAL ASSAULT – STAFF MEMBER** – The act of striking or physically threatening to strike a school employee.

**PENALTY** – *Mandatory permanent expulsion under the Michigan School Code/Referral to police authorities.*

**SMOKING** – The act of using cigarettes or other tobacco products by students. More specifically: smoking on school grounds at any age. This also includes holding a lit cigarette.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**STEALING OR KNOWING POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY** – The act of dishonesty acquiring the property of others and/or knowing and concealing the location or possession of such property.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to police authorities.*

**TOBACCO POSSESSION** – The act of possessing cigarettes, vape devices or other tobacco products.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**TRESPASSING/LOITERING** – The act of prowling or loitering on foot, in a motor vehicle, or in other manner in or around the school buildings or property without authorization or while serving out of school suspension. This includes the act of trespassing on other school building property (VBPS or other).

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**TRUANCY** – The act of unauthorized and willful absence from a specific class or school for any period of time.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**UNAUTHORIZED PROTEST** – The act of protesting which results in a material disruption of the school without the prior authorization of a principal.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**UNAUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT**– The act of using school equipment (e.g., fax machines, copiers, computer equipment, laboratory equipment, athletic supplies, tools, etc.) in any unauthorized, dangerous or illegal fashion.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**UNLAWFUL DISRUPTION OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS** – Any act of violence; in possession of a weapon, alcohol or drugs, or any act that disrupts the educational process.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Possible referral to authorities.*

**VANDALISM** – The act of willful destruction of property belonging to others, or the destruction, damage, or defacement of school property.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion/Restitution; Possible referral to police authorities.*

**VERBAL ASSAULT** – Any act, oral or written, which can reasonably be expected to induce another person to be in apprehension of danger of bodily injury or harm, or the use of offensive language directed at a person, where such language is likely to provoke a reasonable person to physical violence.

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**WEAPONS-USE/POSSESSION** – The act of possessing, using or threatening to use any weapon not included in the definition of dangerous weapon below; this includes any reasonable facsimile or any instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury (Includes look-a-like weapons and BB guns).

**PENALTY** – *Administrative intervention to expulsion.*

**WEAPONS-DANGEROUS** – Possession of a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles.

**PENALTY** – *Mandatory permanent expulsion under the Michigan School Code/Referral to police authorities.*

# **VAN BUREN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Technology resources, including access to the Internet, are now available to students and employees in the Van Buren Public School District. This service, Wayne-Net, is authorized through the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency (WCRESA).

The purpose of the District-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as a user, a student's use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the District. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access necessitates responsibility.

The Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and employees. Our goal in providing this service to employees and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

### **Students and employees may have access to:**

1. Electronic communication with people all over the world.
2. Public-domain software and graphics of all types for school use.
3. Access too many University Library Catalogs, the Library of Congress, and ERIC, a large collection of information relevant to educators and students.
4. Graphical access to the World Wide Web.

With access to computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The Van Buren Public School District has in place precautions, through supervision as well as other available resources, such as filtering, to restrict access to inappropriate materials. Filtering blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. The Van Buren Public School District firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may violate this policy and procure material that is not consistent with the policies and educational goals of the District.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of regional and state networks with government agencies. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of your privileges and responsibilities. In general this requires responsible, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources.

If a Van Buren Public School District user violates any of these provisions, his or her access will be terminated immediately, and he or she will face possible disciplinary and/or legal action. Additionally, future access may be denied.

### **Internet Terms and Conditions of Use**

1. **Usage** – The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate or improper use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Prior to using the internet, each student or employee who accesses the Internet must take part in a discussion with a designated Van Buren Public School District staff member as to the proper use of the network and the terms and conditions as determined by the District.

**System activity on Wayne-Net will be monitored for occasions of abuse and general system maintenance.**

The supervising staff member and/or the building administrator will deem what is inappropriate use and his/her decision is final.

The administration, faculty, and staff of Van Buren Public School District may request, in writing, that the school's administrator deny, revoke, or suspend the access of a specific user at any time. Additionally, the school's principal may deny access at any time.

2. **Network Etiquette** - You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Be polite. Do not become abusive in your messages.
- B. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.

3. **Acceptable Use** – The purpose of the networks making up the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. Any Internet use must be in support of education and research, as well as consistent with the educational objectives of the Van Buren Public School District. Use of other organizations' network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network and be consistent with the terms and conditions herein. Transmission of any material in violation of any national or state regulations is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret. (Note, in particular, that copyrighted software may not be transferred electronically.)

- A. Do not reveal personal information such as the addresses, telephone numbers, or otherwise personally identifiable information of students, staff members, or yourself.
- B. Note that electronic communication is not guaranteed to be private. Other people who operate the system do have access to all communications. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- C. Do not use the network in such a way that disrupts the use of the network by other users. (i.e., an individual damages software or hardware, or the user introduces a virus or any other contamination into the network.)
- D. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property and should be treated as such. Hacking or any attempt to otherwise compromise system security is absolutely prohibited.
- E. Use for commercial activities by for-profit organizations, product promotion, political lobbying, or illegal activities is strictly prohibited.
- F. Use of public property for personal gain is a felony and is subject to prosecution.
- G. Use of the network to harm or harass others is prohibited.
- H. Use of e-mail, educational chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications is subject to administrative approval and requires teacher supervision and monitoring. Non-educational chat and talk sessions are prohibited.

**Any violation of any of the above will result in loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and possible legal action.**



4. **No Warranties** – Van Buren Public School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing.

Van Buren Public School District will not be held responsible nor held liable for any damages you may suffer as a result of your use of the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mistaken deliveries, or service interruptions caused by, but not limited to, its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the internet is at your own risk. Van Buren Public School District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

5. **Security** – Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you believe that you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must immediately notify the school's supervising staff member or your school's principal or another Van Buren Public Schools' administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users.

Attempts to log-on to the network or Internet as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges and discipline.

Any user identified as a security risk as determined by the building principal or his or her designee may be denied access to the Internet.

6. **Vandalism** – Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges, possible restitution and legal action. Vandalism is defined as, but not limited to, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the network, the Internet, or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.