



**Valley Forge Middle School
Student & Parent Handbook
2009-2010**



Mission Statement

The mission of Tredyffrin/Easttown School District is to inspire a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence, and social responsibility in each student.

**Mr. Matthew Gibson, Principal
Mr. Andrew Phillips, Assistant Principal
Mr. Oscar Torres, Assistant Principal**

**School Phone Number: 610-240-1300
VFMS Activities / Athletics Hotline: 610-240-1315
VFMS Attendance Line: 610-240-1330
VFMS Fax Number: 610-240-1325
School District Hotline: 610-240-1970**

**Mascot – Eagles
Colors – Blue & Gold**

105 W. Walker Road, Wayne, PA 19087

Front cover designed by Jodie Fong. Back cover designed by Emily Han.

This Handbook belongs to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Grade: _____ **Homeroom:** _____

Dear VFMS Students and Parents,

The faculty, staff, and administration extend a warm welcome to you as we enter a new year together at VFMS. We are excited and look forward to providing you with opportunities to learn and grow in a positive manner.

At VFMS you will become an important part of our school theme, “T.E.A.M., Together Everyone Accomplishes More.” Teams of teachers will help you make the most of the many wonderful programs we offer. By participating in school activities you will explore and expand your interests while developing important skills for the future. With all of us working together, we will learn to accept and appreciate the positive contribution each of us makes to the Valley Forge Middle School community.

This handbook provides important information to help you understand school policies and guidelines and to assist both you and your parents in setting your personal and academic goals for the school year. Teachers, counselors and administrators will review the information in this handbook throughout the year.

Valley Forge Middle School students are encouraged and expected to:

- explore and expand interests in music, drama, sports and art.
- find joy in the discovery of skills in a new language or in scientific inquiry.
- take pride in careful craftsmanship in family and consumer sciences and technology education.
- become increasingly independent, self-disciplined and appreciative of lifelong learning.
- dream and wonder about what is and what might be.
- become responsible citizens and treat others with the utmost respect.
- appreciate the uniqueness, characteristics, and personalities of others.

Valley Forge Middle School students are responsible for:

- attending school daily and being on time for all classes.
- attempting to put forth sufficient effort and complete instructional assignments.
- expressing ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- self-monitoring their behavior to create a safe and secure learning environment.
- protecting and taking care of school and personal property.
- dressing and acting in a manner to maintain fair standards of health and safety.
- following specific rules pertaining to individual classrooms, athletic teams, co-curricular activities, clubs and musical activities.

Valley Forge Middle School offers you an excellent teaching staff to help you progress toward your goals. It is up to you to take full advantage of this opportunity. We wish you a successful and enjoyable year, and we are confident that it will be both a time for learning and a time for excitement.

Sincerely,

Matthew L. Gibson
Principal

Andrew Phillips
Assistant Principal

Oscar Torres
Assistant Principal

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General Information

Announcements

Announcements are broadcast each morning into classrooms through our VFMS TV Studio or the PA announcement system.

Assemblies

There are various assemblies held throughout the year. If you are late to an assembly, wait outside the auditorium until there is a pause in the presentation and then take your seat. Exit as directed. No student may leave an assembly without permission. Students will be restricted from attending assemblies if their behavior is not appropriate.

Attendance

Absences

Students are required to be in regular attendance at school unless detained by illness or other urgent reasons.

- Parents should call 610-240-1330 to report a child's absence on the morning that he/she will be absent.
- In addition, a written excuse signed by the parent or legal guardian must be submitted to the attendance office before school on the morning after the absence.
- If after three days no written excuse is received, the student will receive an Unlawful Absence on his/her attendance record.
- Absences are registered as excused for only those reasons cited in the PA School Code: personal illness, health care, death in the family, snow days, approved travel, religious holiday, and religious study. If a student is absent for any other reason, the absence will be recorded as "unexcused."
- Upon returning to school, students should report to teachers and find out what work has been missed.
- In order to participate in interscholastic sporting events, a student must be in attendance by 10:30 am on the day of the event.

Tardiness

Tardiness is excused ONLY upon presentation of a note from a parent, guardian, or doctor indicating that the reason for tardiness is illness or a medical appointment. Lateness to school also is excused for religious study and/or religious holiday.

Unexcused tardiness will be penalized as follows:

- 1st and 2nd Offense: Verbal Warning
- 3rd through 5th Offenses: School Detention
- 6th and Subsequent Offenses: Parent Conference

Excused or Unexcused, a student who is more than 3 hours late (11:00 a.m. or after) to school will be recorded as having been absent for half a day.

CARE Team

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a state-mandated program to help students with drug, alcohol, mental health and other concerns that create obstacles to appropriate academic performance in school. Valley Forge Middle School has titled its SAP team as The CARE Team.

The CARE Team is comprised of a group of teachers, counselors and administrators whose purpose it is to identify students who are in crisis or who are having problems in school because of drug or alcohol abuse (personal or family), mental health issues, frequent absence, social issues, or other concerns affecting success in school. The team collects information, contacts parents, and then refers these students to appropriate resources for help. Early in the school year, members of the CARE Team visit classrooms and explain the student assistance program to the students. The CARE Team also sponsors education groups to which students may self-refer. The education groups are facilitated by counselors and cover topics such as: friendship, social skills, substance abuse, depression, changing families, and grief. Students may be referred to the CARE Team by a parent, a teacher, another staff member, a student or themselves.

Dropping Off & Picking Up Students and Items

Parents who wish to drop off or pick up their children before or after school should do so using parent drop off /pick up circle. If a student arrives at school before 7:15 a.m., they must wait in the designated location until walking the halls or going to their locker. Please do not bring students to school before 7:00 a.m. No cars are permitted to drive through the bus loading area. No parking in the bus loading area will be enforced by Tredyffrin Township Police 7 days a week.

In order to minimize interruptions to class and to encourage student responsibility for their possessions, we ask parents to keep student drop offs to a minimum. We do not interrupt classroom time to contact students about forgotten lunches, homework, books, permission slips, sports equipment, etc. If a student calls home for forgotten items, it becomes their responsibility to check the office for those items. If there is an important message from home, we do our best to get the information to the student.

All items should be dropped off in the main office. Parents are unable to take items directly to classrooms during the day and we discourage drop offs before and after school unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher or student.

At the end of the school day (2:30 p.m.), students may be called to pick up instructional materials or sporting equipment that has been left for them. Lunches dropped off in the morning will be brought to the cafeteria in time for lunch. The school is not responsible for items dropped off in the main office.

All food brought into school for groups of students should be pre-packaged with ingredients listed (or be very obvious e.g. pizza). If it is home-made, a parent may specify what ingredients were included. Ingredients that may cause a medical situation to known allergies (e.g. nuts) will not be allowed. When in doubt, please err on the side of the safety of all of our students.

Fire Drills

When the fire alarm sounds, you are to form a single line and walk out of the building silently.

- Close all doors and windows and turn off the lights
- **Stay in line both inside and outside the building without talking**
- When told to come back in, return to the building.

Guidance Department

The guidance department forms an integral part of Valley Forge Middle School. Counselors are available to help students with their social, emotional and educational development. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselors regarding any concerns they may have.

Grade 5 – Mr. Mullen
Grade 6 – Mrs. McGloin
Grade 7 – Mrs. Neary
Grade 8 – Mrs. DeMaris

Late / Shuttle Bus

The late / shuttle bus run Monday through Thursday for only 5th and 6th grade students who participate in the after school life sports, clubs and music programs. Three buses provide transportation to Valley Forge Elementary, Hillside Elementary and New Eagle Elementary and the students then take their elementary bus home. Students must have a shuttle bus pass from their activity sponsor or the main office. The late / shuttle buses leave VFMS at 3:15 promptly.

Library Information Center

The library is open from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Thursday and from 7:00 to 3:00 pm on Friday. Students may use the library with classroom teachers and or come to the library individually with a pass.

Circulation Policy - Students, teachers, and parents are welcome to checkout library materials. No library card is needed. Books may be checked out for 2 weeks. Reference Books and Encyclopedias may be checked out overnight only. Magazines and videos may be checked out for 3 nights.

Library Resources – The library has more than 17,000 books and many electronic resources available for students to use. Books can be located with the electronic catalog. Electronic resources include CD ROM encyclopedias, special information databases, and on-line research tools. The library also provides research help to students working at home with connections from the library web page, at <http://www.tesd.net/vfsm/library.htm>

Internet Acceptable Use Policy – Students at VFMS may access the Internet for teacher approved topics only and must be supervised by a teacher when they work on-line. Students are responsible for using the Internet in an acceptable manner. Internet access will be denied if a student violates the rules outlined below or any of the rules included in the TESD regulation (6190). Please be aware of the "Network Acceptable Use Agreement for Students" document distributed by Applied Technology teachers at the beginning of the year.

Computer Use – There are computers available for student use in classrooms, labs, and in the library. The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright or other Federal laws.
- Trespassing in others' folders, work, or files
- Wasting limited resources, like paper, ink or toner
- Sharing passwords
- Loading software programs onto District computers
- Entering District administrative programs, networks, or files

The use of school computers is a privilege. Students who are unable to use this privilege in a responsible way may forfeit their opportunity to use this equipment.

Procedures Regarding Intellectual Property – The Tredyffrin Easttown School District expects all students to submit assignments and projects that are their own work, unless otherwise directed. Copying ideas or programs without permission is considered stealing. The United States and most other countries have entered into a copyright agreement that says that the citizens of these countries will respect an individual's creative work. Copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy work will result in disciplinary action.

Lockdown Drills

Lockdown drills will be conducted periodically during the school year. Office personnel will announce when the lockdown is beginning. Students and teachers are to remain in the classroom and position themselves away from the windows and doors. Any students in the hallway or bathroom areas should immediately go into the nearest classroom. After students are secured in the classrooms, the teachers will lock their doors. Teachers will take attendance of their students and any students reporting to their classrooms. Teachers will then immediately contact the office to report the attendance of all students within their classrooms. At the time that the lockdown is concluded, an administrator will announce that the lockdown is over, and administrators and designees will unlock each classroom to signify the formal end of the lockdown. Students are expected to have appropriate behavior during all parts of the lockdown process.

Lockers

The school provides hall lockers for student use during the school year. At no time should the student consider the locker to be his/her own personal property. Lockers are to be kept clean inside and out. To facilitate this, general locker clean-outs are scheduled from time to time during which teachers will inspect lockers for orderliness and their condition. In addition, the administration reserves the right to inspect lockers of students for whom evidence indicates the possible presence of inappropriate, illegal or dangerous items according to District Policy #5412.

Book bags are to be kept in the student's locker from the time he/she arrives in the morning until he/she goes home in the afternoon. They are not to be carried to class. Depending on the Core Team rules, students will be permitted to go to their lockers before school, between classes, before and after lunch and after school.

Lockers are not to be shared and locker combinations are not to be given out to other students. Locker malfunctions should be reported to the main office as soon as possible. Sharing lockers or locker combinations may result in disciplinary action.

Some students like to decorate a friend's locker to celebrate the friend's birthday. This is permitted providing the decorations are temporary and easily removed. All decorations of this type should be removed the day following the birthday.

Decorations inside the locker are permitted. All decorations should be in good taste and temporary in nature. These must be removed before the end of the school year.

The school is not responsible for items lost or stolen from hall or gym lockers.

Lunch

Students may bring their lunches, purchase soup, salads and sandwiches, or purchase the platter of the day. There is a separate line for platters and for soup and sandwiches. Prices for lunch and a la carte items can be found on the District Website: <http://www.tesd.net/foodsvcs/menus.htm> or by calling the Food and Nutrition Services Department at 610-240-1955 or 1956.

Main Office

The main office is located across from the main entrance of the school. Please go to the office only for legitimate business; make visits brief; and leave promptly when finished.

Medical Policy & Information (District Policy/Regulation 5406)

- No medications will be administered in school without specific written orders from a physician.
- Medication provided by the family must be labeled with the prescription label, including the name of the student, date of prescription, time and dosage to be given, and the name of the doctor.
- If the date on the prescription is more than one year old, the medication will not be given in school.
- Except when self-administration is specifically authorized, all medications shall be stored and administered by the nurse.
- EpiPens- For life threatening situations, trained staff shall be authorized to administer the Epi-Pen.
- Students are not permitted to carry medications unless given special permission. Please review District Policy/Regulation 5406 for more specific information regarding the use of medication in school. (see page 23)
- Any injuries suffered while at school should be reported to the teacher in charge and to the school nurse.

Health Screening

- Vision, hearing, height and weight screenings are done by the nurse and letters are sent to parents when further evaluation by a physician is required.
- A scoliosis screening is performed on all grade 7 students and letters are sent to parents when further evaluation by a physician is required.
- All 6th grade and new students must have a state mandated physical before entering school.
- State legislation makes it mandatory for children attending school to have the following immunizations:
 - Diphtheria – 3 doses
 - Tetanus – 3 doses
 - Polio – 3 doses
 - Rubella (German measles) – 1 dose after 12 months of age
 - Measles – 2 doses after 12 months of age
 - Mumps – 1 dose after 12 months of age

In addition all students entering grade 7 must have:

- Hepatitis B Series
- Varricella (Chickenpox) Vaccine or a history of Chickenpox disease

It is important to note that children who have not had these immunizations will not be permitted to attend school. Provisions are made for exceptions for certain medical or religious reasons.

- Students who have contracted the following contagious condition are not permitted to attend school for a set period of time:
 - * Conjunctivitis * Chicken pox * Lice
 - * Impetigo * Measles * Undiagnosed Rash or Fever
 - * Mumps * German Measles
 - * Ringworm * Scarlet Fever
 - * Whooping Cough * Scabies

Please call the Nurse to find out the specific amount of time that your child must remain out of school if he/she contracts one of these diseases.

Moving / Transfers

If a student's family is moving out of the district, the student should go to his/her guidance counselor as far in advance as possible. He/she will receive a checkout form that should be signed by all of his/her teachers. Parents should contact the student's next school to request a transfer of records.

Physical Education

Each student must participate in the regular Physical Education program unless excused by a doctor or other competent authority.

- Each student must wear proper gym clothes to each class. The gym uniform is to be purchased in early September in the school store. It consists of a grey T-shirt (\$8.00), navy shorts (\$7.00), socks and gym shoes. It is recommended that each student also have sweat pants, a sweatshirt, and a gym bag.
- Failure to dress in uniform three (3) or more instances in a marking period will result in administrative detention.
- A gym locker and combination will be assigned to each student. Lockers should remain locked and students should not share their locker combination with others for any reason. The school is not responsible for any items lost or stolen from lockers. Lockers are the property of the school and subject to search according to District Policy #5412.

Procedures Regarding Intellectual Property

The Tredyffrin/Easttown School District expects all students to submit assignments and projects that are their own work, unless otherwise directed. When students copy ideas or programs without permission, they are basically stealing. The United States and most other countries have entered into a copyright agreement that says that the citizens of these countries will respect an individual's creative work. Copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy work will result in disciplinary action.

School Closings & Delays

Serious weather conditions or other emergencies may make it necessary to delay the opening of school or dismiss school early. VFMS does not have a parent phone chain, but we do utilize the T/E All Call system to communicate automatically with parents when there are school closings and/or delays. Parents are urged to have a plan for when school is closed due to weather. Consider coordinating carpools and open lines of communication with neighbors, friends, and/or extended family members. You can call the main office to make changes to your contact information in the T/E All Call, and if there is ever any confusion, you can check:

1. The School District Information Center at 610-240-1970.
2. Radio: KYW 1060 AM, WDOJ 1420 AM, WCHE 1540 AM.
3. TV Stations: KYW (CBS), WTXF (Fox 29), WCAU (NBC 10) & WPVI (ABC)

All school closing information is recorded and communicated as soon as the decision is made. Please call the District Information Line or check the District website before sending your student to school in case there is a change in school status.

School Nurse

The school nurse can be found in the Health Suite. To visit the nurse you must obtain permission from the teacher whose class you will be missing. You should not go to the nurse between classes without first getting a pass from the teacher whose class you will have next. If the nurse is not present you should report to the main office.

Student Photos

In the fall, the school photographer comes to take individual student photographs. These color pictures are available for purchase through the school photograph company. All students will be photographed, and a copy of the picture will be placed in each student's identification folder. A yearbook will also be available for students to purchase at the end of the year.

Telephone Use

When making phone calls, students should ask use the telephone in the Main Office. Students are permitted to use their cell phones after school concludes at 2:34 p.m.

Visitors

All visitors (parent, prospective student, or otherwise) must report to the front desk in the lobby or the main office, register as a visitor, and wear a visitor's badge. Failure to follow this procedure may result in the visitor being asked to leave the school.

Students who are prospective VFMS students may visit with a current student for a defined period of time. Permission should be secured from the principal at least three days prior to the visitation. No visitors will be allowed during the last week of school or during testing times.

Students should NOT open outside doors for any visitors or strangers. Students should tell a teacher or administrator if someone is attempting to enter school through an outside door.

Academic Information

Academic Awards/Honor Roll

At the end of each marking period, each team at all grade levels will gather for a recognition program planned by the respective team of teachers. The following awards for academic excellence will be recognized as follows:

Academic Gold Eagle Award:

- The student must have a combined average grade of 90 or higher in all major subjects.
- The student must have a grade of 80/S or higher in all subjects.

Academic Silver Eagle Award:

- The student must have a combined average grade of 85 or higher in all major subjects.
- The student must have a grade of 80/S or higher in all subjects.

Other awards may be given based on the discretion of the teachers and teams. Additionally, a student of the month is selected by teams each month based on positive contributions to the school environment.

Guidelines for Homework

Students are responsible for obtaining and completing assignments missed as a result of absences from class. If a student is absent for one or two days, the student should call a classmate for assignments. If a student is ill for 3 days or more, parents may call the office before 9 AM and assignments will be obtained from the child's teachers and made available for pick-up in the main office by 3 PM. Assignments may also be obtained from teachers in advance of an absence if the class work makes this appropriate. It is the student's responsibility to obtain assignments when class is missed due to vacation/travel.

The timeline for handing in missed assignments after an absence is as follows:

- 1-day absence – Missed work must be given to the appropriate teacher no later than the beginning of the second day after the student returns to school.
- 2 days absence – Missed work must be given to the appropriate teacher no later than the beginning of the third day after the student returns to school.
- 3 days absence – Missed work must be given to the appropriate teacher non later than the beginning of the fourth day after the student returns to school
- 4 days absence – Missed work must be given to the appropriate teacher no later than the beginning of the fifth day after the student returns to school
- 5 days absence – Missed work must be given to the appropriate teacher no later than the beginning of the sixth day after the student returns to school

Failure to meet these requirements (or the requirements of an exception if the student is granted an exception by an individual teacher) may result in the student receiving a zero for the assignments.

Guidelines for Tests/Test Make-ups

Middle School instructional staff members are encouraged to follow the “Guidelines for Homework” timeline for students who are absent before or during the administration of classroom/curricular tests. However, depending upon individual circumstances, class schedules, and curricular timelines, teachers may decide on an individual basis when to schedule students to take or make-up tests. Students are encouraged to communicate with their teachers about testing schedules when they have been absent before or during tests.

Report Cards

Numerical and letter grades are both used on the middle school report card depending on the subject. Teachers are able to choose two comments per student per subject from a wide selection of computer generated comments on academic performance, work/study skills and social skills.

Each student will receive a comprehensive appraisal of his or her progress by each teacher in all subjects. In conducting the assessment, teachers may include scores on objective and essay tests, portfolios of student work, and performance tasks that demonstrate acquisition and application of concepts and skills.

Interdisciplinary teams aim to challenge students to fulfill their potential. The goal of evaluation is to assess individual progress using objective and subjective methods. Achievement, improvement, effort, ability, and citizenship are all considered in developing a thorough evaluation. Periodic evaluations of each student’s academic, social, physical, and emotional development are provided through student-teacher conferences, parent-teacher conferences, mid-quarter progress reports, and quarterly report cards.

Students will receive report cards four times a year. Numerical grades will be used on the report cards to express academic achievement.

90 - 100	Excellent
80 - 89	Above average
70 - 79	Average
60 - 69	Below average
Below 60	Unsuccessful

Students are advised that unsatisfactory classroom performance may result in an unsuccessful evaluation for the entire year.

Promotion / Retention

Promotion to the next grade level will be contingent on the student passing four or more of his/her majors (the student may not fail more than one major subject area to be promoted). In the event that a student attains a failing academic status for the school year, he/she may complete a summer school program sponsored by the school district

or the intermediate unit. Documented completion of the summer school program for the failed subject areas may result in the student advancing to the next grade level, based on administrative approval.

Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony

The Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony is a special event where eighth graders are identified for their academic performance, participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, citizenship, receipt of various school and grade level awards, as well as other contributions to their school experience at VFMS. The administration and staff regard the Eighth Grade Promotion as a highly visible opportunity to showcase the students' positive achievements and efforts at the conclusion of their middle school experience. For this reason, students must earn the opportunity to be recognized at this event. Academic failures or repeated violation of the student code of conduct may affect a student's participation in the Eighth Grade Promotion ceremony.

Activities and Special Events

After School Life Sports

VFMS offers a variety of after school activities for students to participate in. Students should listen to morning announcements and check the weekly bulletin for specific dates and times. Permission forms are required for some Life Sports activities and are available in room 118, the cafeteria, or from the teacher/sponsor.

Music

Valley Forge Middle School offers a variety of music opportunities for students including band, orchestra, chorus, and handbells.

Choral Music

Our Music Department includes the following choral groups:

- Grade level chorus
- Combined chorus
- Small ensembles

Students are invited to participate in the various choruses. Interest displayed by the student is considered an important requisite. We are eager to see that as many students as possible are given the opportunity to participate in singing activities, and especially choral groups, as music is an important part of their education in middle school. Choral groups rehearse in sectionals and as groups during activity periods in the day. The choruses perform in concerts during the winter and spring sessions, as well as for special events or requests. Piano students are encouraged to audition to be choral accompanists.

Handbells

The handbell choir is open to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. Grade 6 rehearses after school. Grades 7 and 8 practice during activity periods.

Orchestra and Band

Students may be in both band and orchestra. Students may be in both band and orchestra. Students are required to attend a weekly rotating lesson. The instrumental groups perform in winter and spring concerts as well as other concerts throughout the year.

School Dances

Dances are held for the social benefit of the VFMS 7th and 8th graders only. Students are to conduct themselves in such a way that no one's good time is impaired, no facility is damaged and no unreasonable demands are placed on the school's responsibility for the students.

Dances start at 7:30 p.m., and no one will be permitted to enter after 8:00 p.m. unless accompanied by a parent. No one will be permitted to leave before the end of the dance at 9:30 p.m., unless with a parent. All school rules will be in effect. Students will dress in accordance with the requirements determined by the sponsor and the school's dress code. Students not in attendance at the dance are not to be on school property. Tickets will be sold in advance. Students may be excluded from attending dances based on their behavior and discipline record.

Athletics

Students in grades seven and eight are eligible to try out for PIAA (Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association) teams at VFMS. The PIAA is the governing body of the secondary schools in Pennsylvania and sets the policy and regulations concerning all interscholastic sports.

The Mission of Middle School Interscholastic Athletics

The mission of the Tredyffrin/Easttown and Valley Forge Middle School interscholastic athletic programs is to provide an enjoyable educational experience based upon the developmental needs and characteristics of the young adolescent. This period of early adolescence is characterized by the most dramatic changes in physical, psychological, social, emotional and intellectual growth since the first year of life. Therefore, it remains imperative that middle level coaches treat members of this age group with the special care that these students' personalities require. These particular student-athletes are in a period of becoming, striving for the discovery, development and refinement of their own individual personalities. The middle school interscholastic program emphasizes participation, fun, and safety

In order to participate in interscholastic sporting events students must be in attendance by 10:30 am on the day of the event.

Interscholastic Athletic Offerings:

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Girls' Field Hockey	Girls' Basketball	Girls' Softball
Boys' Soccer	Boys' Basketball	Boys' Baseball
Girls' Soccer	Boys' Wrestling	Girls' Lacrosse
Boys' Football (115 lb. and unlimited)		Boys' Lacrosse
Girls' Volleyball		Boys' and Girls' Track

PIAA rules require that all students have the proper forms completed before beginning practice or try-outs for each and every sport:

- PIAA Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation, Sections 1-4 – These forms require parent's signatures and physician's information and signatures. Physicals must be scheduled after June 1st in order for it to be valid for the following school year.
- Emergency Card – This card is for the coaches' reference, and must be filled out and signed on both sides by the parent/guardian for each sport in which the student wants to participate.

Forms are available in the main office and on the school's website. Please return all forms to the athletic office, room 118.

A schedule of athletic events will be provided by coaches and can also be found on the weekly bulletin. The activities / athletics hotline provides updates regarding daily schedule changes or cancellations 610-240-1315.

Athletic Behavior Eligibility

All student-athletes are representing VFMS at practices and at competitions. We consider it a privilege to participate on the school's athletic teams. Therefore, students are expected to be positive school citizens at all times.

Students who repeatedly violate the school code of conduct, will be behaviorally ineligible to participate in both practices and games for a period of time as determined by school administration (see disciplinary probation). Administrative detentions will result in a student automatically missing a practice or a game. If a student is suspended from school, they will be behaviorally ineligible to participate in both practices and games for a period of two weeks.

Athletic Academic Eligibility

The following is an excerpt from the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) bylaws, Article IX – Curriculum:

Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, shall be reported on a weekly basis, and shall be filed in the principal's office.

To be academically eligible for an interscholastic athletic competition the student must be passing at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent as of each Friday during the grading period (**A student who is failing two or more academic subjects is academically ineligible**). **If the student fails to meet this requirement, he/she will be academically ineligible from the following Sunday through the Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which you meet this requirement.**

Where school is closed on a Friday for any reason, the principal may, at his/her discretion, determine whether the student as of that day meets the standards provided for in this section.

Athletic Insurance

Optional insurance is offered to cover the student in school until the time of returning home in the afternoon. The insurance is required of all participants in interscholastic sports. However, a form may be picked up from the Athletic Director in the main office which, when signed by the parent, states that the student is covered by a family insurance policy, relieving the school of all insurance responsibilities.

Selection Policy

VFMS strives to accommodate all interested student-athletes in pursuing participation on an athletic team. However, when facilities, equipment availability, and supervision limit safe involvement, a process of selection is implemented. Because of oversubscription, certain sports, such as basketball, baseball, and soccer, must limit participation based on a tryout period.

Rules / Behavior

Assembly Behavior

- Students are to walk quietly and in an orderly way both to and from assemblies.
- Students are to remain in their assigned groups.
- Students are to behave in such a way that no one in the audience is disturbed and no performer is embarrassed. Appreciation for the performance is to be shown by applause only.
- Students are not to leave or enter the seating area while a performance (speech, etc) is going on. Students who need to enter or exit the assembly after it has begun should do so only at appropriate breaks in the assembly and then only with the permission of a teacher.
- The guidelines above relating to manners also apply to students attending evening performances.
- Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will be removed from the assembly and may be prohibited from attending future assemblies.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms in the school are for convenience and comfort. Students are expected to behave appropriately when in the bathrooms. During class, students must get permission from their teacher to use the bathroom.

Behavior During Morning & Other Announcements

Announcements contain information about the school which students and teachers need to hear. As a result, they are to be listened to silently. Additionally, in the mornings, students are to behave in such a way that no one's right to hear and respectfully participate in the opening exercises is infringed upon.

Behavior at Sporting Events

The school community considers all visiting players and their fans to be our guests. Failure to treat them as such is poor citizenship and poor sportsmanship. Booing and rude remarks to players, coaches, officials or fans is not permitted. Additionally, no food or beverages are permitted in the gyms at any time.

Bus Rules

Bus safety depends upon student cooperation with the driver. It is impossible for the driver to give his/her full attention to the road when student misbehave. The bus is considered to be an extension of the school and the following rules for riders apply:

- Students must remain seated and keep their hands, heads and feet inside the bus.
- There is to be no eating or drinking on the bus at any time.
- The throwing of any object on or at the bus is prohibited.
- Smoking results in suspension of bus privileges, school suspension and a possible civil fine.
- Tampering with the bus or any of its equipment (including the emergency exit when there is not a bona fide emergency) is prohibited.
- Students must ride on their assigned bus and depart only at the assigned stop, unless given approval through the principal's office and the transportation office.
- Students must be courteous and refrain from using profane language.
- Students must follow the directives of the bus driver.
- Violation of school rules while riding the bus or waiting for it may result in the loss of riding privileges.
- Permission to ride a bus other than your own may be granted on a day to day (temporary) basis. **A note from the parents to the main office listing the date, reason and destination (address and bus number) is required. Such requests should be made prior to the start of homeroom and are granted only for supervision reasons.**

Bus Stops

Bus stops are an extension of the school. Misbehavior at a bus stop can be very dangerous. Therefore, students should conduct themselves in such a way that no one will be endangered. Student behavior at bus stops is fully within the jurisdiction of school authorities.

Cafeteria/Activity Period Behavior

The cafeteria should be treated as any restaurant or dining area. Students are to act and eat in such a manner that no other person is prevented from full enjoyment of his/her meal. As a result, the following rules apply:

- Food is not to be thrown or left on the floor.
- Tables are to be clean.
- No disruptive behavior or excessive noise will be tolerated.
- No one may leave the cafeteria until the end of lunch.
- Food may not be taken from the cafeteria into the adjacent hallways or stairwells.
- Students are expected to keep their areas clean.
- Students **MUST** be in designated area during activity period.

Students who do not adhere to these rules may be referred to an assistant principal for disciplinary consequences.

Care of School Property

The facilities at VFMS are for student benefit and use. Therefore, as members of the student body, it is each person's responsibility to maintain the appearance and condition of all school property. Destroying, defacing, or littering on any school property is contrary to the functioning of the school and is strictly prohibited. Students destroying or defacing school property may be referred to the police for further action.

Classroom Behavior

Students must abide by the teacher's rules out of respect for both the teacher and other students. Students should behave in such a way that neither the teacher's program nor the learning process of other students is interrupted.

Behavior Expectations with Guest Teachers: Guest teachers and guest speakers are to be shown the same respect as the regular classroom teacher. Misbehavior in a guest teacher's classroom or during a guest speaker's presentation is looked upon with special disdain. Being referred to the disciplinarian's office by a guest teacher or during a guest speaker's presentation will result in disciplinary action for the offender.

Dress Code

VFMS students are expected to dress tastefully and appropriately for weather conditions. Guidelines apply to all areas of VFMS during school hours, and school sponsored events.

- Shirts and blouses must cover the midriff, chest and back, and substantially cover the shoulders.
- Pants, skirts and tops should be high enough and long enough so that no portion of the posterior or undergarment is revealed.
- Clothing of a revealing or sexually suggestive nature is prohibited.
- Clothing with printed messages or images must not promote a life-style that is inconsistent with good taste, educational values and wellness. The advertisement of violence, drug, alcohol or tobacco products and the depiction of sexually explicit messages or images are prohibited.
- Display of messages, or images with double meanings, and those, which strain interpersonal or inter-group relations, is prohibited.

While a listing of all prohibited items is not possible, the following is a guide. Head coverings including hats, bandanas, combs, scarves, hoods, facemasks, earmuffs and sport head bands; "spaghetti" strap tops, bare midriff tops, halter tops, tube tops, one shoulder tops, and low cut or very short pants and skirts are not permitted.

A student whose attire does not conform to the standards listed will be removed from class attendance until the item of clothing is either replaced or covered or until the school day ends. Serious or repeated violations of the dress code are subject to discipline action.

Field Trips

Field trips are regarded as extensions of the school day. Students are encouraged to participate in field trips only to the extent that they are able to conform to expected standards of behavior. Participation in a field trip may be contingent upon the demonstration of good citizenship and the following of specific rules and deadlines established for the trip. It is the student's responsibility to become aware of and follow the specific expectations for preparation and participation that each field trip has.

The school authorities (teachers and administrators) reserve the right to exclude a student from field trips for disciplinary purposes and/or behavior issues that pose a safety concern. At the recommendation of a student's teacher(s), school administrators will determine whether or not a student will be permitted to attend a school sponsored trip. The following describes behaviors that may exclude a student from field trip participation:

- Any student possessing or distributing illegal drugs and/or alcohol on school property will automatically be prohibited from attending school field trips without eligibility for appeal.
- A student who receives disciplinary consequences for actions that cause concern for safety and concern for disruption/distraction may be excluded from attending field trips.
- Students who accumulate more discipline points than allowed for in the code of conduct will be excluded from attending field trips.

Halls

- Students are NOT permitted in the halls during class, lunch, or activity periods FOR ANY REASON unless they have a pass.
- Students are given four minutes between classes to get to their next class or to lunch/activity. Students are expected to get to their destination within those four minutes.
- While in the halls, students are to walk in a quiet and orderly manner.

Inappropriate Classroom/School Items

The following items are not permitted while students are in school:

- Cell phones
- Cameras
- Chewing Gum
- Hacky Sacks (may be played/used only outside on the grass or in a designated area of the gym)
- Laser Pointers
- iPods and MP3 Players (permitted on trips or after school hours with teacher approval)
- Vehicles such as, but not limited to: Motor Scooters; Skate Boards; Rollerblades; Roller Shoes
- Water Guns
- Yo-Yos (May be played/used with teacher approval and in designated areas.)
- **Any item which interrupts classroom instruction or affects regular school operations**

Cell Phones, iPods and other electronic music players must be turned OFF and kept in the student's locker during the school day (7:15AM -2:33 PM). Students may use their MP3 players or cell phone after school to communicate with parents/guardians. VFMS will not be responsible for any loss or theft of cell phones, MP3 players, or their accessories. They will be confiscated if they are misused or cause a disruption to classroom instruction or affect regular school operations. **They will be returned to the student at the conclusion of the school day for the first offense. All subsequent offenses will require parent pick-up of the device.**

Palm Pilots or Similar Devices:

"Palm pilots" or similar devices may be used in class at the teacher's discretion. These items should be used to support instruction and organization and not be disruptive to classroom learning. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the device being confiscated by the administration and returned to the student's parents. Disciplinary action may also occur.

Leaving School Premises

The school is responsible for your safety from the time you leave your house for school until you return home after school. This responsibility can be fulfilled only if you remain on the property during classes or during school functions (practices, dances, concerts, etc.). **As a result, no student may leave the school premises after arrival at school without permission. Doing so without permission may result in suspension.**

Respect for Adults

A student may receive disciplinary action when he/she behaves in a way that subjects a staff member (or parent volunteer, guest teacher, guest speaker) to rudeness or any other behavior that would disturb, humiliate, endanger or in any other way diminish a staff member's (or parent volunteer, guest teacher, guest speaker) ability to conduct his/her professional responsibilities.

Respect for Students

Students must respect the rights of other students to learn, express opinions, and develop into mature, responsible persons at all times. Disrespecting others verbally or physically is not tolerated.

Bullying/Harassing/Teasing behaviors are a form of disrespect for classmates. The minimum response to such an action will be parental notification and may result in detentions or suspension depending upon the specific details of the offense. VFMS has been implementing a bullying prevention program for several years and has a committee that meets monthly to try and reduce bullying in the school environment. The program contains four rules that students must follow:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will help students who are bullied.
3. We will include students who are left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

These rules appear throughout the school and are reinforced in extended homebase every other week. The school has developed a detailed recording and tracking system for bullying, and issues consistent consequences.

Fighting/ Pushing/ Kicking/ Hitting and any other forms of physical altercation are specifically prohibited and will result in swift disciplinary action by school administrators.

Peer Mediation is suggested to resolve student-to-student conflict and is supervised by guidance counselors.

Staying After School

If you are staying after school, **you must stay with a teacher** and the teacher must know ahead of time that you are staying. Unsupervised activity is not permitted may result in disciplinary action.

If you are staying for athletics, club meetings, the school newspaper, student council activities or music rehearsals, listen carefully to announcements to make sure that there are no schedule changes.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law which protects the confidentiality of student educational records by limiting their disclosure. FERPA guarantees parents or eligible students (age 18 or older) the right to inspect their child's or their own educational records, to receive copies of the records in most cases, and to have a school official explain the records.

When a student moves to a new school or district, a certified copy of a student's discipline record may be transmitted to the school entity to which the student was transferred.

Throwing of Objects

The throwing of **any object** (for example, snowballs, food, and any other object that is potentially distracting or harmful) on school grounds (or at bus stops or at school-related activities off school grounds) is dangerous, irresponsible, accordingly prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline

Prologue

Efforts of the development of student self-discipline are not only critical to a student's growth as a learner, but are also essential to maintain a school climate that encourages learning for all students. While every effort shall be made to assist each student in developing self-discipline, staff members shall respond appropriately to actions or situations that disrupt the learning process. (P5401)

The principal or assistant principals shall have the authority to discipline students for sufficient reason in accordance with PA School Code of 1949 and other applicable state and federal laws and/or regulations. Discipline measures may include warning, detention, suspension or expulsion, and parents shall be promptly notified by the principal or assistant principal. (P5401)

Disciplinary Offenses

Violations of the above mentioned school rules and expectations will be addressed with students in order to maintain a high standard of appropriate behavior and a productive and safe learning environment. Consequences for students are meant to help maintain order, foster self-discipline, and create opportunities for students to learn from their mistakes. Disciplinary offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying, excessive teasing, hazing
- Bus Violation
- Cutting class(es)
- Dangerous behavior / materials
- Dismissal by a guest teacher or guest speaker
- Dismissal from a school detention
- Disrespectful behavior

- Disrupting the educational environment
- Engaging in severe or repeated vulgarity
- Failing to comply with instructions of school personnel
- Fighting or fighting behaviors (for example, kicking, pushing, punching, tripping)
- Forgery/Plagiarism/Dishonesty/Cheating/Copying
- Harassment
- Hitting
- Humiliating another
- Inappropriate behavior
- Insubordination/ Disobeying authority
- Intimidation
- Late to class
- Leaving school premises without authorization
- Lying
- Name calling
- Not attending a teacher or school detention
- Nuisance item
- Out of designated location / remaining in an unsupervised area
- Profanity
- Refusal to cooperate or follow directions from a staff member
- Selling of any item
- Setting off fire alarms
- Sexual Harassment
- Sharing passwords, locker combinations or pin numbers
- Smoking/Drugs/Alcohol
- Stealing
- Taunting
- Theft
- Threatening
- Touching other people
- Using or possessing cigarettes, chewing tobacco, matches or lighters
- Vandalizing school property or personal property while on school grounds
- Verbal abuse
- Violating the school behavior code repeatedly
- Vulgarity
- **Other offenses as deemed appropriate by the Administration**

Discipline Points System

Teacher Detention = 1 Discipline Point

Lunch/Activity Detention = 1 Discipline Point

Administrative Detention = 2 Discipline Points

Extended Administrative Detention = 4 Discipline Points

In-School Suspension (ISS) = 6 Discipline Points

Out of School Suspension (OSS) = 8 Discipline Points

Discipline points are assigned in a consistent manner at the discretion of the administration. As discipline is a learning process, students may have their points reduced as they consistently display appropriate behavior. If a student has no disciplinary referrals for a period of 6 weeks or more, discipline points may be reduced by 4 points at the conclusion of the second marking period and by 2 at the conclusion of the third marking period.

Teacher Detentions

Teacher detentions are assigned by a teacher when the behavior of a student does not meet teacher expectations. Such detentions are normally conducted in the assigning teacher's classroom. Students are expected to stay on the appointed afternoon or lunch/activity period. Students must secure their own transportation home after an afterschool detention. Teacher detentions count for 1 discipline point on a student's record.

Lunch / Activity Detentions

Lunch / Activity detentions are assigned when the behavior of a student does not meet the school's expectations. Such detentions are held during a student's lunch / activity period. Students are assigned a location to eat under the supervision of an adult rather than attend lunch and activity with their peers. Each Lunch / Activity Detention counts for 1 discipline point on a student's record.

Administrative Detentions

Building Administrators may issue a student an administrative detention when students are in violation of the school rules. These detentions are held afterschool in room 118. Students must report to detention by 2:40 p.m. and remain there until 3:25 p.m. Each Administrative Detention counts for 2 discipline points on a student's record.

Extended Administrative Detention

Building Administrators may issue a student an extended administrative detention when students are in violation of the school rules. These detentions are held in assigned locations afterschool. Students must report to detention by 2:40 p.m. and remain there until 4:40 p.m. Each Extended Administrative Detention counts for 4 discipline points on a student's record.

In-School Suspension (I.S.S.)

ISS is an alternative form of student discipline for serious infractions of the school's rules. The purpose of the ISS is to maintain the student's attendance in school while separating the student from his/her peers. Students in ISS must serve the full number of hours assigned. In addition, students in ISS may lose privileges in school activities on the day(s) assigned to ISS. A student not successfully completing the requirements of an ISS may receive additional consequences for violating the guidelines. While in ISS, students should complete all work assigned by their teachers and/or by the ISS Supervisor. Each In-School Suspension counts for 6 discipline points on a student's record.

Out of School Suspension (O.S.S.)

Students may be given an out of school suspension for up to five school days or longer (with superintendent approval) for very serious offenses. During an out of school suspension, students are expected to remain home under adult supervision. Students given an out of school suspension may take home study materials and incomplete work. However, it is the student's responsibility to arrange making up work with his/her teachers. Upon completion of the suspension period, parents must accompany the student back to school and have a conference with an administrator. Each Out of School Suspension counts for 8 discipline points on a student's record.

Disciplinary Probation

- For every eight discipline points that a student accumulates, he/she will be placed on disciplinary probation for a period of two weeks.
- Students and parents will be notified in the event that probation is assigned.
- Students on disciplinary probation may be assigned to Lunch / Activity Detention each day during the two weeks to encourage self-reflection and correction.
- Students on disciplinary probation are not permitted to participate in any after school activities, such as interscholastic sports practices and games, club meetings, dances, concerts, social trips or other evening events, nor are they permitted to remain on school grounds for any reason other than disciplinary action (such as to serve a detention) beyond the departure of the last bus.
- Students who receive a disciplinary office referral while on probation may have their probation extended.
- **If a student accumulates 16 discipline points or more within one academic year, he/she will not be permitted to attend field trips, overnight field trips, dances, or social events for the remainder of the school year.**

Tredyffrin/Easttown School Board Policies and Regulations Summary

The summaries in this section represent the School Board policies and regulations which are most pertinent to student responsibility and school safety. The summarized information is for your quick reference only. The full texts of the policies and regulation are available online at <http://www.tesd.net>. A booklet containing the full texts is available in the main office of each school or by mail. Please call 610-240-1900 to request a booklet my mail.

Note: All policies are subject to revision. Please check the T/E website or call 610-240-1900 for information.

Non-Smoking (P1330)

The smoking of any substance or use of smokeless tobacco by anyone is prohibited within the buildings owned by the District, on school grounds, on school buses, and while participating in school-sponsored activities off school premises. Possession of tobacco or tobacco products by a student is strictly prohibited. At a minimum, violators of this policy will be suspended and fined.

Integrated Pest Management (P8012)

When pesticide applications are planned and scheduled in school buildings and/or on school grounds, the District will provide notification including: (1) posting a pest control sign in an appropriate visible area, (2) providing the pest control information sheet to all individuals working in the school building, and (3) providing required notice to all parents and guardians of students or to a list of parents or guardians who have requested notification of applications of pesticides. Records of the Districts' chemical pest control treatments for the past three (3) are available to the public at the Districts' administrative office.

Video Monitoring in Schools and On School Buses (P8070)

In order to provide a safe environment for students and school personnel, schools may be equipped with video and audio recording devices in public areas such as hallways and classrooms, and school buses may be equipped with video and audio recording devices that provide video and audio surveillance of passengers. When applicable, students and school bus passengers will be notified as to the presence and possible activation of any video and audio recording devices.

Attendance (P5113)

Frequent or prolonged absence without satisfactory reason or in willful violation of the compulsory attendance laws shall be handled in conformity with the procedures stated in the Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949, as amended.

Student Discipline (P5401)

In order to maintain a safe school climate that encourages learning for all students, teachers and administrators shall respond to actions or situations that disrupt this learning process. Discipline measures may include warnings, detentions, suspensions or expulsions.

Offenses that are considered to be of an extremely serious nature, including but not limited to the following, may result in either suspension or expulsion:

1. Inappropriate physical contact, verbal threats or attacks, or fighting on school property or school buses.
2. The use of, distribution of or possession of, any substance subject to Policy 5144. Aiding and abetting any of the above shall be treated in the same way.
3. Carrying of any item which could be considered a weapon or which is dangerous in nature in accordance with State Law
4. Consistent lateness to or cutting of class or detentions
5. Willful destruction or defacing of school property
6. Chronic infraction of building rules
7. Conduct adversely affecting the school routine or otherwise endangering the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

8. Abusive physical or verbal attacks or retaliatory conduct directed at a school staff member, their property, or family.
9. Chronic insubordination

When a suspendable offense occurs, the principal or assistant principal will meet with the student at which time the student will have the opportunity to offer an explanation of the infraction. After that meeting the principal or assistant principal may suspend the student from school for a period of up to three school days. Parents will be notified immediately in writing.

When a suspension exceeding three (3) school days is under consideration, the principal or assistant principal will offer the student and student's parents a hearing as required bylaw. After such hearing the principal or assistant principal may extend the suspension for a period of up to ten (10) school days. Parents will be notified immediately in writing.

Risk Assessment of Threatening Behaviors Protocol (R5401)

The Tredyffrin/Easttown School District is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. Toward that end, the administration, with Board support, has developed a protocol for responding to threatening student behaviors.

When a student makes a verbal or written comment or gesture that could suggest a threat, our protocol involves immediate student suspension followed by a risk assessment arranged by the District and conducted by a certified mental health professional. The majority of assessments are conducted within 72 hours, at District expense, by one of our local contracted providers.

Building administrator or designee conducts initial investigation to verify incident** and probability of student involvement; Office of Individualized Student Services is notified.

Building administrator or designee contacts parent/guardian to review these steps in the protocol:

Student will be suspended out of school pending further investigation and results of mental health assessment conducted by a certified child and adolescent psychiatrist to determine if student poses a threat to self or others and what supports and services may be required to assist student.

Office of Individualized Student Services or designee will contact family to discuss arrangements for assessment. Signed parent/guardian permission will be required.

If suspension exceeds three days, family has the right to an informal hearing.

Police must be notified in the event of a weapons or drug offense.

Police may be notified at the discretion of building administration such as in situations involving assault resulting in serious bodily injury.

Office of Individualized Student Services or designee prepares permission for building administrator to secure parent signature.

Office of Individualized Student Services arranges assessment and contacts parent/guardian and building administrator.

Building administrator prepares summary of incident for Superintendent.

Upon receipt of parental permission, building administrator or designee contacts mental health professional to provide information about the incident and records containing pertinent background information. The administrator or designee makes arrangements with the mental health professional to contact the building administrator or designee immediately following the assessment as to whether the student is safe to return to school.

Following the risk assessment, the mental health professional contacts the building administrator or designee as per previous agreement. The administrator or designee contacts the family.

The mental health professional sends a written report to the Office of Individualized Student Services, which, in turn, disseminates this to the building administrator and to the parent/guardian.

Disciplinary action is determined within the context of the mental health assessment. If student is not considered a threat to self or others, then student returns to school following a term of suspension determined by building administration. Supports and services are determined by appropriate building based team (Student Assistance, IEP). Building and district personnel work with family to discuss and implement recommendations.

*Excerpted from Administrative Regulation 5401

**As per PA Act 126, in the event of a weapons incident, the appropriate procedures are followed including police notification, documentation for state reporting and recommendation to the Superintendent by administration for discretionary action if warranted.

Student Conduct on Buses (P5413)

No student shall be permitted to engage in conduct that could endanger that student's safety or the safety of others. Discipline will be imposed as the situation warrants.

Possession of Weapons in the Schools (P5410)

Possession of a weapon or weapons in the schools or at school activities is specifically prohibited. In addition, with very limited exceptions, Pennsylvania law *requires* public schools to report to police, and expel, for a minimum of one year, any student found in possession of any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting bodily injury in school or school program, while traveling to or from any school or at a school program.

Searches (P5412)

For the safety of the entire school community and to the extent permitted by law, any student is subject to having his/her person searched, and/or personal belongings inspected upon entrance to any school building, program, or conveyance. Under ordinary circumstances, a search will be justified where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the District. Furthermore, lockers, locks, desks, and storage compartments may be provided for the use of students, but remain the property of the District. Consequently, the District has the right to randomly or periodically inspect lockers, desks or other storage areas at any time. Students do not have the right to be present during such searches.

Evaluation of Pupil Progress (P5221)

Each student will receive a comprehensive appraisal of his or her progress by each teacher in all subjects. In conducting the assessment, teachers may include scores on additional objective and essay tests, portfolios of a student's work, and performance tasks that demonstrate the student's acquisition and application of concepts and skills.

Student Publications (P5332)

Student publications represent the students, the staff and the Board to the community at large and, as such, shall be printed and published under the auspices of the District. Student publications shall not be printed or distributed should they contain printed or graphic representation that could be considered libelous, slanderous, obscene or morally objectionable to the community at large.

Graduation (P5227)

To be eligible for graduation, a student must complete successfully twenty-four (24) units of credit from courses as described in the annual *Program of Studies* for grades 9 through 12 as follows:

- 4.0 Credits in English to include 1.0 credit in American Literature
 - 3.0 Credits in Mathematics
 - 3.0 Credits in Science to include 1.0 credit Biology
 - 3.5 Credits in Social Studies including 1.0 credit each in World Cultures, European History and United States History and .5 credit in United States Government
 - 2.1 Credits in Health/Physical
 - 2.0 Credits in Foreign Language to be fulfilled by the completion of a Level II course in a second language or its equivalent
 - 1.0 Credits in Life Skills cluster
 - 1.0 Credits in Visual and Performing Arts cluster
 - 4.4 Credits in electives; any course, including individualized educational programs, that has not been counted to fulfill other graduation requirements as indicated in the Program of Studies.
- 24.0 Credits**

Additionally, to be eligible for graduation a student must successfully complete a culminating project demonstrating the ability to apply, analyze, synthesize and information and communicate significant knowledge and understanding. A student also must demonstrate proficiency or better in reading, writing, and mathematics on either the State assessments administered in grades 11 or 12 or on local assessments aligned with academic standards and State assessments at the proficient level or better.

Students in grades 9 and 10 must schedule at least 30 class periods, or the equivalent, per five-day week. Students in grades 11 and 12 must schedule at least 28 class periods, or the equivalent, per five-day week.

Participation of Financially Disadvantaged Pupils in Curricular Activities (P5312)

No student will be denied the opportunity of participating in school sponsored curricular activities including field and camping trips because of an inability to pay necessary fees.

Use of Medication (P5406)

Administration of medication (both prescription and over-the-counter) to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities is discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well being of the student. Under the special circumstances that require a student to take medication during the school day, he or she must (1) provide the written permission of his or her parent/guardian and (2) provide written instructions for the administration of the medication from his or her treating physician. With limited exceptions, all medications must be delivered to the school nurse for storing and administering and students are not permitted to carry medications on their persons during the school day.

Student Substance Abuse (P5405)

Detected evidence of use of, distribution of, or possession of (1) illegal substances or any other substance which alters behavior or judgment; or (2) simulated medication, also known as “look-alike drugs,” by a student or students while on District property, or engaged in school-related activities shall cause the student or students to be placed on immediate suspension and delivered into the custody of their parents or legal guardian. In addition, proper law enforcement authorities will be notified of such action. Expulsion proceedings may be initiated as warranted.

The use of anabolic steroids by any student, except for a valid medical purpose as prescribed by a licensed healthcare provider, is similarly prohibited conduct.

Upon reasonable suspicion that a student is concealing evidence of substances subject to this policy, the administration may search the person, personal effects, lockers and automobiles of the student, consistent with applicable laws and District policy.

Student Rights and Responsibilities (P5400)

Students, faculty, administrators and Board all share in a commitment to improve the education program in the District. Suggested improvements to the program are constantly sought and always will receive an honest hearing when presented through established procedures. The District, however, will not tolerate any act of dissent which is detrimental to the well-being of the school or which may tend to deprive other students of the right to an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of their educational goals.

Sexual Harassment (P5420)

The District’s policy is to maintain a positive learning environment and to prohibit any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, gestures of a sexual nature, or display of materials which evoke responses not in keeping with the atmosphere intended for the classroom. It shall be a violation of the District’s policy for any student or staff member to harass any student or staff member.

Any student or parent who alleges sexual harassment by any staff member or student may complain directly to a teacher, a guidance counselor, or a building administrator. The allegations will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. If any student or staff member is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in sexual

harassment, he or she shall be subject to disciplinary action. Detailed procedures for resolving complaints involving sexual harassment will be distributed on a periodic basis to students and staff and will be posted in prominent locations in each school building.

Hazing (P5421)

The District's policy is to maintain a safe, positive and respectful environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited at all times. Under the District's policy, "hazing" is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization recognized by the Board.

Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates. Students who have been subjected to, or have knowledge of, hazing are encouraged to report such incidents to the building principal. The District will promptly investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

Non-Discrimination of Students in School and Classroom Practices (P6141)

It is the policy of the District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the school regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin or handicap/disability. The District shall provide to all students, without discrimination, course offerings, counseling assistance, employment, athletics, and extracurricular activities. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and students who become aware of discrimination against a student or students are encouraged to promptly report such alleged incidents to a counselor or administrator. The District takes complaints of discrimination very seriously. Such complaints shall be investigated expediently, and appropriate corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. To the extent permitted by the District's legal and investigative obligations, confidentiality of all parties affected by the investigation will be maintained.

There shall be no reprisals or retaliation as a result of good faith charges of discrimination.

Pupil Records (R5225)

"Pupil records" refer to those documents maintained by the school which are necessary for the educational development of students and for the orderly functioning of the school. The District has developed guidelines for maintaining such pupil information and for providing access to pupil records by parents and students who are 18 years of age or older. Any release or dissemination of pupil records will be made in compliance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Field Trips (P6153)

Students may have the opportunity to participate in supervised, school-sponsored field trips. Students are reminded that all rules and regulations of the District remain in effect. In the event that a trip is cancelled for any reason, the District shall not be responsible for monetary deposits lost due to such cancellation.

Code of Civility - General Public (P1305) & Code of Civility - TESD Employees (P4025)

District properties and District-sponsored events should be places where mutual respect is practiced and reinforced. This Policy is designed to promote an environment in which all members of the school community will be treated with respect and expect the same in return. We refer to this respect as civility.

The District is committed to civility through education, training, and discipline when necessary. The District does not intend this policy to deprive any person of his or her right to appropriate self-expression. Rather, it seeks to

maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, an environment in which people can feel safe and secure. It is in this spirit that we establish this civility policy for the District.

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The District expects all members of the District administrative, instructional and non-instructional staff to be role models of civility while on District property or while attending or participating in a District-sponsored event.

It is the District's position that rude, abusive, or intolerant behavior erodes education. Disrespect shall be addressed when it occurs.

All members of the District administrative, instructional and non-instructional staff are expected to communicate with each other and with District students, volunteers, Board members and members of the general public in an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect.

Classroom Visits by Community Members (P1311)

At times people in the community, including parents with children in the schools and community members, request permission to visit schools to attend one or more class sessions. Such requests must be directed to the building principal in writing in advance of the visit. Each request must provide the name of the visitor, date, time, duration and purpose of the proposed visit.

The building principal or his/her designee shall discuss the request and purpose of the visit with the requesting individual to establish the individual's role during the visit, emphasizing the need to avoid disruption to the educational program. Discussing the performance or behavior of specific children, other than the visitor's own child, is prohibited. The building principal or his/her designee shall schedule the visit with the classroom teacher. The final determination on the arrangements for the visit will be made by the principal or his/her designee. No request will be granted that would disrupt the educational program.

The principal or designee may accompany any visitor during the visit and will address any questions or concerns following the visit. Classroom visits should be limited both in terms of frequency and duration.

Classroom visitors should respect the educational process by refraining from interacting with the teacher or students in the classroom during the visit. Anyone who does not comply with this expectation will be asked to leave school property.