



Vestaburg Community Schools Alternative Education

Student Handbook

2025-26



Approved by the Board of Education on August 11, 2025

*The mission of Vestaburg Community School is to build a foundation and prepare students for their future.
The Vision of Vestaburg Community School is to empower all to create and achieve their goals and dreams.*

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The faculty and staff at Success VCS (Vestaburg Community Schools) welcome you to the 2024-25 school year. This student handbook provides essential information to help make your experiences here rewarding and successful.

At Success VCS, our mission and vision are to provide students with a safe and positive environment for success. We create a unique plan tailored just for you, listen because your story matters, and strive to grow to serve our communities. We encourage you to become familiar with the information in this handbook. Success VCS aims for excellence in every student, and this is achieved through the quality, passion, and enthusiasm of our participants.

We hope that 2024-25 will be a year of positive academic and personal growth. The faculty and staff are committed to helping you achieve your goals and dreams during your time at Success VCS!

Mission & Vision Statement

Our mission and vision at Success VCS are to provide our students with a safe and positive place for their success. Build a unique plan just for them. To Listen, because your story matters, and grow to serve our communities.

Center Information:

LEARNING CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Center Location	Center Director	Phone
Vestaburg Center 7188 Ave. B Vestaburg, MI 48891	Mr. Steve Clements sclements@vcs-k12.net	989-268-6000
Wyoming Center 719 36th St. SW Wyoming, MI 49509	Mr. Daryl Crawford dcrawford@vcs-k12.net	616-226-3812

Website:

Success VCS: <https://www.successvcs.com/>

District Website: <https://www.vcs-k12.net/>

Success VCS Center Administration

Contact Name, Position

Contact Number

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Mr. Brandon Hubbard, Superintendent/Program Principal	989-268-5353
Mrs. Kristine Staines, MTSS/School Improvement	989-268-5343
Mr. Steve Clements, Center Director - Vestaburg	989-268-6000
Mr. Daryl Crawford, Center Director - Wyoming	616-556-3812
Mrs. Katie Bissell, Special Education Coordinator	989-268-5284
Mr. Ken Tiesworth, Technology Specialist	989-268-5353

Vestaburg Community School Board of Education

Name, Position	Email
Mr. Lynn Van Sickler, President	lvansickler@vcs-k12.net
Mrs. Joann Spry-Virgo, Trustee	jspry-virgo@vcs-k12.net
Mrs. Renae Caudill, Secretary	rcaudill@vcs-k12.net
Mr. Brian Zinn, Treasurer	bzinn@vcs-k12.net
Mr. Daryl DeVerney	ddeverney@vcs-k12.net
Mrs. Carol Herman, Trustee	cherman@vcs-k12.net
Mr. Larry Koutz, Trustee	lkoutz@vcs-k12.net

[26-26 School Calendar](#)

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FORWARD

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year. This handbook summarizes and references many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior student handbook and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents.

Because the handbook also contains information about student rights and responsibilities, each student is responsible for knowing its contents. Please take time to become familiar with this handbook and keep it available for you and your parent to use. It can be a valuable reference during the school year and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstanding when questions arise. Should you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, contact your Principal who you will find listed in the Staff Directory section of the handbook. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of August 2024. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2025 the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

DISTRICT VISION

The Vision of Vestaburg Community School is to empower all to create and achieve their goals and dreams.

DISTRICT MISSION

The mission of Vestaburg Community School is to build a foundation and prepare students for their future.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. The right of a student to be admitted to school and to participate fully in curricular, extra-curricular, student services, recreational or other programs or activities shall not be abridged or impaired based on the traits of sex (including transgender status, change of sex, or gender identity), race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other

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characteristic protected by Federal or state civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as “Protected Characteristics”) or other protected characteristics as well as place of residence within District boundaries, or social or economic background.(See Board Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity)

Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, Protected Classes)disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity, should immediately contact one of the School District's Compliance Officers listed below:

Brandon Hubbard, Superintendent
989-268-5353
7188 Ave B
Vestaburg, MI 48891
bhubbard@vcs-k12.net

Cindy Hillary, Elementary Principal
989-268-5284
7188 Ave B
Vestaburg, MI 48811
chillary@vcs-k12.net

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The compliance officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunities.

TITLE IX

It is the policy of this District is to not discriminate on the basis of sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), in its education programs or activities, and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The Board is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

The Board prohibits Sexual Harassment that occurs within its education programs and activities. When the District has actual knowledge of Sexual Harassment in its education program or activity against a person in the United States, it shall promptly respond in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.

Pursuant to its Title IX obligations, the Board is committed to eliminating Sexual Harassment and will take appropriate action when an individual is determined responsible for violating this policy. Board employees, students, third-party vendors and contractors,

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guests, and other members of the School District community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions set forth in this policy. The Board will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the District's education programs and activities.

The Board of Education designates and authorizes the following individual(s) to oversee and coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX and its implementing regulations:

Vestaburg MS/HS Principal
Director
989-268-5343
7188 Avenue B.
Vestaburg, MI 48891
kstaines@vcs-k12.net

Vestaburg MS/HS Dean of Students/Athletic
989-268-5343
7188 Avenue B.
Vestaburg, MI 48891
twarczinsky@vcs-k12.net

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Board of Education recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents and family members in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism. This policy shall serve as the District policy, as well as the Parent and Family Engagement policy for each school in the District.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), defines the term "parent" to include a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

The term "family" is used in order to include a child's primary caregivers, who are not the biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, other family members and responsible adults who play significant roles in providing for the well-being of the child.

Family engagement is a collaborative relationship between families, educators, providers, and partners to support and improve the learning, development and health of every learner. The principles of family

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engagement include relationships as the cornerstone; positive learning environments; efforts tailored to address all families, so all learners are successful; purposeful and intentional efforts that clearly identify learner outcomes; and engaging and supporting families as partners in their child's education.

Through this policy, the Board directs the establishment of a Parental Involvement Plan by which a school partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the District. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Parental Involvement Plan shall reflect the Board's commitment to the following:

1. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
 2. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools;1,2
 3. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers;1,2
 4. providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities.2
- B. Effective Communication
1. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children;
 2. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities;
 3. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;
 4. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable;
 5. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress;
 6. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions;
 7. preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.
- C. Volunteer Opportunities
1. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities;
 2. supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events
- D. Learning at Home Relationships with Families
- E. me
- offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school;
1. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals;
 2. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.
- F. Engaging Families in Decision Making and Advocacy

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1. engaging families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;
 2. engaging families in the development of its District-wide parent and family engagement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.
- G. Collaborating with the Community
1. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources;
 2. coordinating and integrating parent and family engagement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development.

TOBACCO USE/SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Vestaburg Community School is a smoke and tobacco-free environment. Smoking and other uses of tobacco are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco, electronic cigarette.

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SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Any student residing in Michigan and aged 14 - 21 years old and who have been promoted to the 9th grade are eligible for enrollment into the school regardless of their citizenship or immigration status. All information about enrollment requirements and procedures will be made available for parents, students and families who have limited proficiency in English.

MEDICATION & OTHER HEALTH CARE NEEDS

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b, and F1c must be filed with the respective building principal and/or school nurse before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours
- C. All medications must be registered with the school nurse.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
 - Medication may be delivered to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance.
 - Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, backpack, or other means on or about their person.
- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission to release.

ASTHMA INHALERS AND EPI-PENS

Students, with appropriate written permission from a physician and parent/guardian, may possess and use a metered-dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Commencing with the 2014-15 school year, each school in the District shall have at least two (2) epinephrine auto-injectors (Epi-Pens) available at the school site. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to be sure that the supply of Epi-Pens is maintained at the appropriate level and that they have not expired. The Superintendent shall also be responsible for coordinating the training of district employees to administer Epi-Pen injections and to maintain the list of employees authorized to administer such injections. In addition, commencing with the 2018-2019

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school year, Vestaburg School will have the opiate overdose medicine, Naloxone, available at the school site. Naloxone is a medication that is used for any suspected opiate overdose. The Superintendent and/or his designee shall also be responsible for coordinating the training of district employees.

NON-PRESCRIBED (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS

Students shall be permitted to possess and self-administer U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved, over-the-counter topical products while on school property or at a school-sponsored event provided the student has submitted prior written approval of the student's parent/guardian to the Principal or other chief administrator of the student's school.

If a student is found using or possessing a nonprescribed medication without parent authorization, the student will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received.

If a student is found using or possessing a nonprescribed medication without parent authorization, the student will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until authorization is received.

Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. (Board Policy 2260.01 – Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability). This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact Katie Bissell at 989-268-5353 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

The District is committed to identifying, evaluating, and providing a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") to students within its jurisdiction who are disabled within the definition of Section 504, regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities.

STUDENT RECORDS

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

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Neither the Board nor its employees shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. a student's name | B. dates of attendance |
| C. address (except for students participating in the Address Confidentiality Program Act); | D. date of graduation |
| E. telephone number | F. awards received |
| G. date and place of birth | H. honor rolls |
| I. photograph | J. scholarships; |
| K. Major field of study | L. telephone numbers only for inclusion in school or PTO directories; |
| M. participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team | N. names of parents. |

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA),

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice

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identifying requested student records to school office personnel. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, the student's parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or their parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or their family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or their parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

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- A. Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose); and
- B. The administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605
Washington, D.C.
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

FERPA@ED.Gov and PPRA@ED.Gov

ARMED FORCES RECRUITING

The School must provide at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. “Armed forces” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent/guardian of a student submits a signed, written request (Form 8330 F13) to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent/guardian does not want the student’s directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives then the school officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student’s directory information. The Board shall ensure that students, parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of Directory information. Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure of any or all “directory information” including in the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

The school complies with all safety laws and will conduct all safety drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

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SwiftReach (our robo-call system) will be utilized for mass communication efforts. This communication may be done via text message, phone call, or email. For the most updated announcements, accurate contact information is to be provided to the office at the beginning of each academic year.

Vestaburg Community School has an emergency response plan that covers a wide variety of emergency situations. If you would like more information, please contact the school administration. During an emergency situation, school staff may not be available to return phone calls or emails due to being focused on the safety of our staff and students. To keep up to date with the most important information, please make sure that your contact information is updated and correct at all times. The school administration will provide updates when it is feasible and safe.

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SECTION 2 - Academics

COURSE OFFERINGS

High school course offerings are published on the school website, www.vcs-k12.net.

GRADES

Vestaburg Community School has a standard grading procedure for each building level, as well as additional notations that may indicate work in progress or incomplete work. The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based on test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. If a student is not sure how his/her grade will be determined, he/she should ask the teacher.

Students and parents/guardians share responsibility with teachers for monitoring progress and performance.

The school uses the grading system as detailed below:

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Success VCS grades will reflect the demonstration of the understanding, application, and mastery of the curriculum through assessments.

It is expected that all students will achieve a passing grade in each class. Grades are cumulative, per semester and based upon percentages. Corresponding letter grades are listed below.

100-93%	A	82-80%	B-	69-67%	D+
92-90%	A-	79-77%	C+	66-63%	D
89-87%	B+	76-73%	C	62-60%	D-
83-86%	B	72-70%	C-	59% and Below	F

The grading scale is rated "A," "B," "C," "D," in decreasing order for passing work and "F" for failing work. For purposes of calculating high school grade point averages (GPA), the following point equivalents are used:

4.00	A	2.67	B-	1.33	D+
3.67	A-	2.33	C+	1.00	D
3.33	B+	2.00	C	0.67	D-
3.00	B	1.67	C-	0.00	F

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GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

To calculate a grade point average (GPA), assign a weighted point value to each course grade and divide by the total number of credits. For partial-credit courses use the fractional value of the grade. For example, a half credit course with an earned grade of C would be $.5 \times 2 = 1$. Then add this to the other grades earned for total points earned. This total is then divided by the total credits earned for the GPA. This can be done by grading period, semester, year, or for a series of school years.

A semester, and cumulative GPA can be viewed on our online grading system (PowerSchool).

TESTING OUT (HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT)

Students who feel they can demonstrate mastery of course material for core classes, not electives, may request the opportunity to “test out” of a particular course. This policy will not apply to the State-of-Michigan-mandated course of government, physical education, choral, or instrumental music classes. This policy also does not apply to classes previously taken.

Any high school student who wishes to test out of a course in which they are not enrolled must receive a percentage of 78% or better. No actual grade will be earned by testing out of a course, the notation “pass” or “credit” will be applied. Credits earned through this provision will be counted as credit toward graduation.

All requests must be pre-arranged and completed one week prior to the start of the semester/course. All testing out exams must be completed in the center under the supervision of the Center Director. It is the student’s responsibility to study and prove mastery of the material. Students will not be provided with study materials for testing out purposes.

Should a student earn a 78% or higher on a cumulative exam in their course (previous stipulations apply regarding specific courses), who otherwise would fail to earn credit, may apply to earn credit (pass/credit) for the class to the administration.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Diploma

Normally, a student will complete graduation requirements in four (4) years. In order to receive a diploma and graduate, a student will need to meet the school requirements for basic course work, and earn the total number of minimum credits. A student enrolled in special education may be exempted from the State mandated-test. Such an exemption is made by the IEPC Team. The student may still need to earn the required credits indicated by the IEP or in a personal curriculum. For more information about the different methods by which credits can be earned, refer to Board Policy 5460 – Graduation Requirements in the Board Policy manual, a copy of which is accessible either electronically at www.vcs-k12.net or in the central office.

Specific course requirements are:

English	4 Credits
Foreign Language	2 Credits

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Fine Arts, Vocational Education or any combination thereof	1 Credit
Health	.5 Credits
Mathematics (including senior year)	4 Credits
Financial Literacy is required beginning with	
Physical Education	.5 Credits
Science	3 Credits
Social Studies	3 Credits
Financial Literacy (beginning with the class of 2027)	.5 Credits
Total 18 credits for graduation	

DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act and the Career and Technical Preparation Act require school districts to support dual enrollment for pupils in Grades 9 through 12, if eligibility requirements are met, including meeting a [qualifying readiness assessment score, as follows:](#)

1. The pupil has taken the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) or another department-approved readiness assessment and has received qualifying scores in the subject areas in which the pupil wishes to be dually enrolled at a postsecondary institution.
2. The pupil has taken the MME or another department-approved readiness assessment and has received a state endorsement or qualifying scores in mathematics and has received a qualifying score on a department recognized national or industry job skills assessment test.

Once eligibility requirements are met:

1. The pupil may enroll in eligible postsecondary course(s) as defined in [\[388.513\(1\)\(d\)\]](#).
2. The pupil may dually enroll in a Career and Technical Preparation Program at a postsecondary institution in a subject that is not offered through the Career and Technical Education Program at the local or intermediate school district (ISD) or through an area-wide career and technical education program.

The postsecondary course(s):

- must be academic in nature or applicable to career preparation,
- must normally apply toward satisfaction of degree requirements,
- may not be in the subject matter of hobby-craft, recreation, physical education, theology, divinity, or religious education.

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To enroll in one of these programs, please see the guidance department for more information. In addition, you must complete all forms in the [Dual Enrollment Agreement Packet](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Introduction

At Vestaburg/Success VLC, we are dedicated to creating a learning environment grounded in honesty, respect, and a commitment to knowledge growth. This policy defines academic integrity and outlines the expectations for students, faculty, and staff. Our goal is to help each student develop their learning abilities and master course content, ensuring their success in life, further academic pursuits, and their careers.

Expectation:

Vestaburg Community School provides all students with access to technology by issuing each student a Chromebook for educational use. It is the district's expectation that all school work is completed on these Chromebooks.

Definition:

Academic integrity means that all work a student submits is created by that student and is their own original work; meaning the following:

1. The ideas and writing of others are properly cited using course-specific standards, including images used.
2. Students submit their own work for tests and assignments without unauthorized assistance, such as passing off another person's or student's work as their own.
3. Students do not provide unauthorized assistance to others, including sharing their work with others (including on assignment-sharing websites).
4. Students in World Language courses interpret and produce written and spoken language without the assistance of online or print tools or other people unless expressly allowed by the online instructor.
5. Students must produce work individually. Group submissions are not permitted unless explicitly directed by the instructor.

Offenses:

An offense is defined as an assignment submitted that meets any of the criteria listed below:

- Cheating: Cheating occurs when a student represents any other person's work from any source, including (but not limited to) hard drives, software, answer banks, AI Tools, assignment-sharing websites, etc, as their own. Examples of cheating include:
 - Asking for/receiving answers,
 - Student-to-student copying/sharing,
 - Submitting another student's work as your own,

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- Submitting identical coursework.
- Sharing, giving, or receiving other students' usernames and/or passwords
- Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work copied from any published resource such as (but not limited to) internet or printed sources, assignment sharing websites, or any other source without proper credit.
- Student Academic Broker: A student acts as an academic broker when they post work to a secondary source such as (but not limited to) social media, assignment sharing websites, Google docs, or shares virtual or hard copies of files of any work, with or without compensation.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications: Using any time of AI applications such as but not limited to bots, app scripts, or AI websites.
- Using a non-school-issued device: Using in device other than your school-issued device to complete online classes.

Consequences:

Consequences may be issued by a teacher or administrator every incident will result in a PowerSchool log and parent-guardian contact. There may be additional consequences that may include any of the following:

- Revisit (AUP) policy
- Reset assignments
- Required to be at the center/school
- Academic Probation*
- May not “walk” at Graduation
- Remove credits
- Retake Course
- Opt-Out of Program
- Reset Password

*Academic Probation - The student is strictly supervised; usually requiring in-center/school attendance to complete coursework for a period of time determined by the administration.

Resources

- Your teachers are valuable resources to help you understand proper citation methods and how to avoid plagiarism.
- Online plagiarism checkers can be helpful tools, but they should not be solely relied upon to ensure academic integrity.

By adhering to this Academic Integrity Policy, we collectively uphold the values that define our educational community and ensure a fair and enriching learning experience for all.

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STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may take advantage of the School's computer network and the internet, the student and their parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. Copies of the School District's *Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use And Safety Policy* and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed in you beginning of the year paperwork .

Students must complete a mandatory training session/program regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified in Policy 7540.03 – Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety before being permitted to access the Network and/or being assigned an e-mail address.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

To measure student progress, students will be assessed in accordance with state standards and district policy.

Each student will be expected to pass appropriate grade-level assessments. Students will also be expected to take the appropriate state-mandated assessments, including the NWEA, M-STEP, SAT (PSAT), and ACT Work-Keys. Additional assessments may be given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These assessments are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Vocational and interest surveys may be given to identify particular areas of student interest or talent. Students suspected of learning issues may have more thorough assessments. Specific information and/or parent consent will be obtained for testing. Vestaburg Community School will not violate the rights of consent and privacy of a student participating in any form of evaluation.

College entrance testing information for high school students can be obtained from the high school guidance office.

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SECTION 3--STUDENT ACTIVITIES

WORK PERMITS

The Youth Employment Standards Act requires the school district's issuing officer to complete CA- 7 (Work Permit and Age Certificate) for persons age 16-17 and CA-6 for persons 15 and under (MCL 409.10 1 et. seq.) the Department of Education has also promulgated rules for the issuance of work permits (ACR 409.1 et seq.) Work permits may be obtained in the center director's office. A work permit may be revoked for poor academic performance. A work permit is required even if the minor is home/cyber/virtual/online schooled, does not attend school, or out-of-state resident.

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SECTION 4 - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at Success VCS for off-site students is measured in two ways: (1) Active logins; (2) Two-way communication with the mentor teacher & content teacher (if applicable). Students will work to complete a class approximately every three weeks during the school year. All students must have two-way contact with the mentor teacher on a weekly basis.

CENTER VISITS

We are a virtual program; however, there will be times when in-person attendance at the center is required. Some of the reasons for in-person attendance include:

- Orientation
- Testing
- Meeting
- Not meeting program expectations

Please note that once a student leaves the center, they will not be allowed to return that day. Any exceptions to this rule can only be granted by the center director.

DRESS CODE

Students shall dress appropriately when attending a Success VCS center. Students will refrain from wearing any clothes that represent:

- Tobacco products
- Alcohol products
- Drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Profani

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Seniors are reminded that it is a privilege to participate in commencement exercises. In order to participate in the commencement ceremony, all seniors must have meet the following requirements:

- Completed all graduation requirements
- Meet Behavioral expectations of Success VCS
- Wear school appropriate attire to commencement ceremony
- refraining from participating in senior pranks

Seniors no do not meet all of the above requirements will not be able to participate in the commencement ceremony, however they will be considered a graduate and receive their diploma.

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CARE of PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to the center. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables. Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or the student's parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the responsibility of Vestaburg staff to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. We expect our students to act as partners in the maintenance of a learning environment that supports the emotional, social, physical, and learning needs of all students in our schools. Disciplinary actions will follow within the sound discretion of the school's staff and administration when student actions are not compatible with school expectations.

Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after a review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation. The administration will contact parents when removal from the program is deemed necessary. The parent always has the opportunity to meet with administrators to review the disciplinary action, request modification of the disciplinary response, and plan preventative procedures with school staff to support student success.

The following chart provides a list of major areas that could result in disciplinary action. An explanation of each behavior and the possible consequence follows the list. The absence of a behavior or any specific action from the list does not mean that such conduct does not violate the discipline code or cannot be punished.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

As part of the PBIS Process, Vestaburg Community School has created a [document](#) that outlines the terminology and definitions for minor behaviors (staff managed) and major behaviors (office managed),

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locations, perceived motivation, and others involved. In addition to this document, it is imperative to address other behaviors that may occur within an educational setting:

1. **Use of drugs** - A student's use or sale of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and extracurricular participation. The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3.1 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic and extracurricular participation.

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

2. **Use of Breath-Test Instruments** - The Principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever the Principal has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. If a student refuses to take the test, the student will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

3. **Use of Tobacco** - Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies to the use or possession of tobacco product by students in District buildings, on District property (owned or leased), on District buses, and at any District-related event and when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes, inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, or pipe, or any other lighted or heated product containing, made, or derived from nicotine, tobacco, marijuana, or other plant, whether natural or synthetic, that is intended for inhalation (use of a tobacco product

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includes using an electronic smoking device). The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy. The term "tobacco" includes any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine) that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; any electronic smoking device and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; an e-cigarette (including, but not limited to, "JUUL", "NJOY," "BREEZE," "Puff Bar," etc.), e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, or e-hookah; but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence.

4. **Student disorder/demonstration** -Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, the student is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.
5. **Possession of a weapon** - A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without the student's knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if the student brings onto or has in their possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item
 - B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle
 - C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)
6. **Use of an object as a weapon** - Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. () This violation may subject a student to expulsion.
 7. **Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence** - Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required

to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the Principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

8. **Purposely setting a fire** - Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and may subject the student to expulsion.
9. **Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District** - Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and may subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."
10. **Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the district** - Any statement or non-contact action that a staff member, student, or other person associated with the district feels to be a threat will be considered a verbal assault as well as profanity directed toward a staff member in a threatening tone. Verbal threats may result in suspension and expulsion.
11. **Extortion** - Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force or deception to take or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
12. **Gambling** - Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized sports betting and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
13. **Falsification of school work, identification, forgery** - Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false I.D.'s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

14. **False alarms and false reports/Bomb Threats** - A false emergency alarm or report endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community and the persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
15. **Explosives** - Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
16. **Trespassing** - Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the principal. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
17. **Theft** - When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, the student will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the building Principal or disignee. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.
18. **Disobedience** - School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a

reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. () Chronic disobedience can result in expulsion.

19. **Damaging property** - Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.
20. **Persistent absence or tardiness** - Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to suspension from school.
21. **Unauthorized use of school or private property** - Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guideline. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
22. **Refusing to accept discipline** - The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.
23. **Aiding or abetting violation of school rule** - If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.
24. **Displays of affection** - Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.
25. **Possession of Personal Communication Devices (PCDs)** - A student may possess a personal communication devices (PCDs) or other electronic communication devices (ECDs) and electronic storage devices (ESDs) in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school related functions () provided that during school hours, school events, and on a school vehicle its use is not disruptive or distracting to the educational process, the scheduled activity, or other participants, provided that the PCD or other ECD/ESD remains off.

Except as authorized under Board policy, use of PCDs and electronic storage devices in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions will be subject to disciplinary action.

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy.” A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to and including a 10 day suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

“Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or

possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the PCD.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, the student will fail the exam and may receive Alternate Day Assignment or be suspended. The student also faces automatic withdrawal from the class depending on the severity of the incident. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.

26. **Violation of individual school/classroom rules** - Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion
27. **Disruption of the educational process** - Any actions or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.
28. **Harassment** - Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school-sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless handheld device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or the assistant principal, or may report it directly to the office immediately

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for the employee, an exclusion for

parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

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

Harassment

- Submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- Submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Pressure for sexual activity;
- Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety;
- A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

28a. Hazing – The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of

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causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
- Physical punishment or infliction of pain
- Intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
- Dangerous activity;
- Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
- Forced detention or kidnapping;
- Undressing or otherwise exposing intimates.

Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

28b) **Bullying** - It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

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 names and

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allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

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 dean of students. 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.

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. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this 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 that has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, the 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.

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 is taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the superintendent. The superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/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 allegations 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 in 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 it is 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 gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. 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:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- 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:

- **Physical** - Hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, and unwanted physical contact.
- **Verbal** - Taunting, malicious, teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats.

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- **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 the 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 a 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.

29. **Possession of a Firearm, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct** - In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students shall be subject to disciplinary action (Suspension/Expulsion) as required by statute for such specified offenses as physical and verbal assault (see Policy 5610.01).

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the Principal's office.

CRIMINAL ACTS

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

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Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply to going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident. Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

In accordance with our PBIS initiative, the following actions may be taken in response to inappropriate behavior (this is not an all-encompassing list):

- Alternative Placement
- Bus Suspension
- Conference with Student (restorative)
- In School Suspension
- Individualized Instruction
- Loss of Privilege
- Out of School suspension
- Parent Contact
- Restitution/Community Service
- Time in Office/Detention
- Behavior Plan
- Other suggested corrective strategies (ie; Time out, time owed, proximity, verbal redirection, etc.)
- Other actions (ie; Personal plan, threat assessments, bullying investigation, parent visit, behavior plan, etc.).

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Formal discipline removes the student from the classroom. It includes emergency removal for up to 72 hours, suspension for up to 10 school days, suspension for more than 10 school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next academic year. Removal for less than 1 school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

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Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense. If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to the superintendent, and a formal appeal hearing will be held. Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the superintendent and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to be present. The superintendent then takes testimony and determines whether or not expulsion is appropriate. This decision may not be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

Students involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the school rules. This is especially true for infractions involving drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use or harassment.

If a student commits a crime while under the school's jurisdiction, she/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime).

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Should it be necessary to suspend or expel a student from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Suspension from School

When disciplinary action is considered a student will be notified of the charges. The student will be given an opportunity to explain his/her side, and the administrator will explain to the student the evidence supporting the charges. After this student conference, the principal will make a decision on the disciplinary action to be taken. In all cases resulting in suspension, the parents will be contacted and provided information concerning the incident and the response of the principal. The parents will have the option to have a conference with the principal or may be required to meet for a conference depending upon the seriousness of an incident or a perceived need to discuss further preventative measures that will keep a student in school in the future.

Suspension of longer durations will require a parent conference and in some cases may require the involvement of the superintendent.

Expulsion from School

When a student is being considered for expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents, which will contain:

- The charge and related evidence;
- The time and place of the Board meeting;

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- The length of the recommended expulsion;
- A brief description of the hearing procedure;
- A statement that the student may bring parents, guardians or counsel;
- A statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- A statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction.

Students being considered for expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education or official(s) designated by the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within ten days after notification of expulsion, the expulsion can be appealed, in writing, to the Superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature, with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

Vestaburg Community School makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. Disciplinary action that does not result in removal from school may not be appealed. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the principal.

THE DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities will be entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information, please refer to the Vestaburg Community School Special Education Handbook.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches.

No strip searches will be conducted by any employee of the district but may be conducted by law enforcement officials if deemed necessary.

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Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items that have been confiscated.

SECTION 6 - ELECTRONIC INFORMATION ACCESS & USE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Vestaburg Community School District encourages and strongly promotes the use of electronic technologies in educational endeavors. The district provides access to information resources available in a variety of electronic formats, and the development of information management skills. Together these allow learners to access current and relevant resources, provide the opportunity to communicate in a technology-rich environment, and assist them in becoming responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

The use of technology at Vestaburg Community School is a privilege extended to students, faculty, staff and community members to enhance learning and exchange information. Each user of technology shall read the following in its entirety and sign the corresponding “Responsibility Statement” which follows, prior to accessing and using technology (located on the back of the green sheet during enrollment/start of school/registration information).

DEFINITION OF VESTABURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY MEMBERS

All account holders on the Vestaburg Community School District network will be granted access to all services the network offers, based upon need and access privileges. The following people may hold accounts on the Vestaburg Community School Network:

- **Students.** Students who are currently enrolled in the district may be granted a network account upon agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.
- **Faculty and Staff.** Staff members currently employed by the district may be granted a network account upon agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.
- **Community members and others.** Anyone may request a special account on the district network. These requests may be granted on a case-by-case basis, depending on need and availability and agreement to the terms and conditions stated in this policy.

OTHER DEFINITIONS

- **District equipment** includes but is not limited to computers, drives, printers, scanners, networks, video and audio recorders, cameras, photocopiers, telephones, and other related technological resources
- **Software** includes but is not limited to computer software, print, and non-print resources.
- **Networks** include but are not limited to all voice, video, and data systems including the district's internal network, and the Internet.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vestaburg Community School District is responsible for the management of the structure, hardware, and software that the district uses to allow access to informational technologies for educational purposes. These include:

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- Assigning and removing member accounts on the network(s).
- Maintenance and repair of equipment that comprises the network(s).
- Selection of software that the network will support.
- Electronic Information Access and Use Policy.
- Defining the rights/responsibilities of members.
- Providing resources that support the mission of the district.
- Provide training opportunities on the use, care, and application of information technology, including training on new technologies, software, and media as they are acquired and put into use in the district.

The district does not take responsibility for resources located or actions taken by the members that do not support the purposes of the school district.

The district will implement software\hardware measures on all district computers to block materials and web sites that it deems inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use. The district also realizes that it cannot block all web sites or material inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use, but will actively monitor and block sites or material inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use. To meet the requirements of CIPA, we have addressed:

- Access by minors to inappropriate material on the internet and world wide web;
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic communications;
- Unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, regarding minors;
- Measures designed to restrict minors access to materials deemed “harmful to minors”;
- The development and completion of a plan to monitor minors’ use of the internet in school.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights - Members have the right to:

- Use all authorized hardware and software, when available, for which they have received training to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Access information from outside resources, which facilitates learning, and enhances educational information exchange.
- Access district networks and the Internet to retrieve information and facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Sign up for approved listservs and newsgroups on the internet, which facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.

Responsibilities - Members are responsible for:

- Utilizing technology in the school only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of the school.
- Maintaining the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords.

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- All material received via the internet under his/her user account accepts responsibility for keeping all inappropriate material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the school's network, equipment or software from entering the school via the internet.
- Keeping hardware and software from being removed from school premises without prior consent from the technology coordinator.
- Maintaining the integrity of the electronic mail (e-mail) system, reporting any violations of privacy, and making only those e-mail contacts, which facilitate learning and enhance electronic information exchange.
- Make sure that all food and drinks are kept out of the computer labs and away from all computers.
- Preventing and knowingly installing computer viruses on school equipment.
- Properly using and caring for that hardware and software which they have been trained to use and refrain from using any technology for which they have not received training.
- Adhering to copyright guidelines in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of text or files on the Internet or from other resources.
- Adhering to the rules established for the use of hardware, software, labs, and networks in the school or through remote access outside of the school.
- Adhering to district guidelines as it pertains to plagiarism or the unwritten consent from the author from which it is derived.
- Adhering to district policy and guidelines as it pertains to web page development and design.

Members are prohibited from:

- Using the technology for personal or private business, including product advertisement or political lobbying, or for making any financial commitments on the Internet.
- Maliciously using technology to disrupt the use of technology by others, to harass or discriminate against others and to infiltrate unauthorized computer systems.
- Accessing materials that the district deems inappropriate to children or not suitable for school use.
- Revealing the personal address(s), telephone number(s) or identification information of yourself or others.

NETWORK ETIQUETTE

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

- Use appropriate language. Do not use profanity, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Do not use the network in such a way that it would be disruptive to others. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
- All publications, information, files, and programs accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property; therefore, they should be given copyright consideration.

Notes:

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- Files on the network are district property and subject to control and inspection.
- Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Systems operators have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.

CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK BEHAVIOR

- Members violating any of these Rights and Responsibilities may be banned from using school hardware and telecommunications software to access the Internet.
- Members will be required to make full financial restitution for any unauthorized expenses incurred or any damages caused.
- Members violating any of these Rights and Responsibilities may face additional disciplinary and/or legal action deemed appropriate in keeping with the disciplinary policies of the school, state, and federal law.
- The building administrator will determine what is inappropriate use based on the Electronic Information Access and Use Policy. The account may be closed at any time for infractions.

Challenges:

Challenges to district information resources shall be made in writing and shall state the reasons for the challenge. A district appointed panel shall review the challenge and determine its appropriateness.

VESTABURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT SUMMARY

This is a policy summary. Students and staff should read and will be accountable for following the entire policy. Technology covered by this policy includes the use of district software, audio and video media, computers and hardware peripherals, network, telecommunications, video, and audio equipment.

The use of district technology is a privilege that can be revoked at any time by the district. Each individual member is responsible for the reasonable care of technology, including hardware and software while in their possession or while they are using it.

District technology members will be responsible for its use and misuse. Appropriate use of district technology is defined as use in furtherance of the instructional goals and mission of the district. Members should consider any use that does not fall under this definition of appropriate use as being potential misuse for which a loss of technology use and disciplinary consequences may occur.

Staff and students acknowledge that software, audio, and video media is protected by a variety of licensing agreements and copyright laws and that any misuse of these may subject the member, as well as the district, to a variety of legal liabilities.

Members are responsible for the security of the technology, including the ability to use that technology to access confidential information, while such technology is in their possession or under their control.

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Staff and students are not to either use or disclose confidential information except as a part of an appropriate educational use of technology.

Passwords are the property of the member and are not to be used by anyone else.

Checking out District technology for non-classroom use must be in accordance with Current Policies and Guidelines. All technology must be returned and available for instruction whenever students are present for instruction.

SECTION 6- APPENDIX

PARENT/STUDENT/SCHOOL COMPACT

As a Parent/Caring Adult of a Vestaburg student, I will encourage and support my child's learning by:

- Seeing that my child attends school regularly (except when ill), is punctual, and ready to learn.
- Establishing a time and place for homework and checking it regularly.
- Instilling high expectations for my child as an individual and encouraging a positive attitude about learning.
- Keeping the lines of communication open with teachers and/or school officials.
- Showing an interest in my child's well-being by attending (when possible) school functions, supporting school activities, and parent/teacher conferences.
- Encouraging daily reading at home.

As a Vestaburg student, I will actively participate in my learning by:

- Coming to school on time every day, except when ill.
- Coming to class prepared with all materials, homework, and a positive attitude to learn.
- Completing all classroom lessons and homework on time in a way that is accurate and neat.
- Showing respect at all times to everyone and cooperating with others.
- Obeying all school rules and conducting myself accordingly.
- Doing my part in keeping my school clean and safe.

As Vestaburg Staff, we will encourage and support students' learning by:

- Providing a safe and positive learning environment conducive to learning.
- Setting high instructional standards that encompass the content standards and benchmarks.
- Helping students develop responsibility for their own behavior and learning.

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- Creating a warm atmosphere for parents/guardians during classroom visits and participating in activities.
- Communicating regularly and working with families to support students' learning.
- Valuing and respecting the importance of the parents' role in the education of their children.

PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK, ELECTRONIC USE POLICY, AND ATHLETIC CODE BOOK

An up to date Vestaburg Community School Handbook can be found on the school's website at www.vcs-k12.net. Please be advised that by signing the Student Enrollment Form you are agreeing to that you have read and understand all policies as they are presented in this handbook.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

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