

# **VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**2020-2021**

**10694 State Route 118 South  
Van Wert OH 45891**

**Darla Kay Dunlap, Principal  
Ben Collins, Dean of Students  
Sarah White, School Counselor**

***Home of the Cougars***



***A Renaissance School***

***A National and Ohio School to Watch since 2005***

**Principal's Office (419) 238-0727**

**Guidance Office (419) 238-5520**

**FAX (419) 238-7166**

**Superintendent's Office (419) 238-0648**

# WELCOME TO VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL

We at VWMS believe that middle school is a time when students begin to emerge as independent thinkers and start taking ownership of their learning. During these years, students are shaping their beliefs and creating habits while developing the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to be successful in the years to come. Our goal is to provide students with engaging and authentic learning experiences that will allow them to thrive educationally, emotionally and socially. We strive to become partners with families and Van Wert Community stakeholders, so that we can support each student in a positive manner.

As a member of the VWMS community, you are encouraged to display the characteristics of “Cougar Pride in all you do”. “It was once said of a Cougar; a strong proud climber is he. But it is only because of his hope and desire that he can make it up that tree.” Characteristics of Cougar Pride include being trustworthy, respectful, and responsible. Every day you will be asked to **(P.A.W.S)** Presume Positive Intentions, Activate your Agency (own your learning), Work to Grow (persevere) and Share & Listen. We will encourage you to take risks and learn from your failures. We will remind you often that “the only true failure is when you stop trying.” We will ask you to “love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning” (Carol Dweck) because “What You Do Matters” every day at VWMS!

To the class of 2025, 2026, and 2027, we welcome you and your families into the VWMS learning community and remind you that the more you become involved and connected the more you will learn and grow.

Sincerely,

Darla Kay Dunlap & Ben Collins  
Van Wert Middle School

## **Cougar Fight Song**

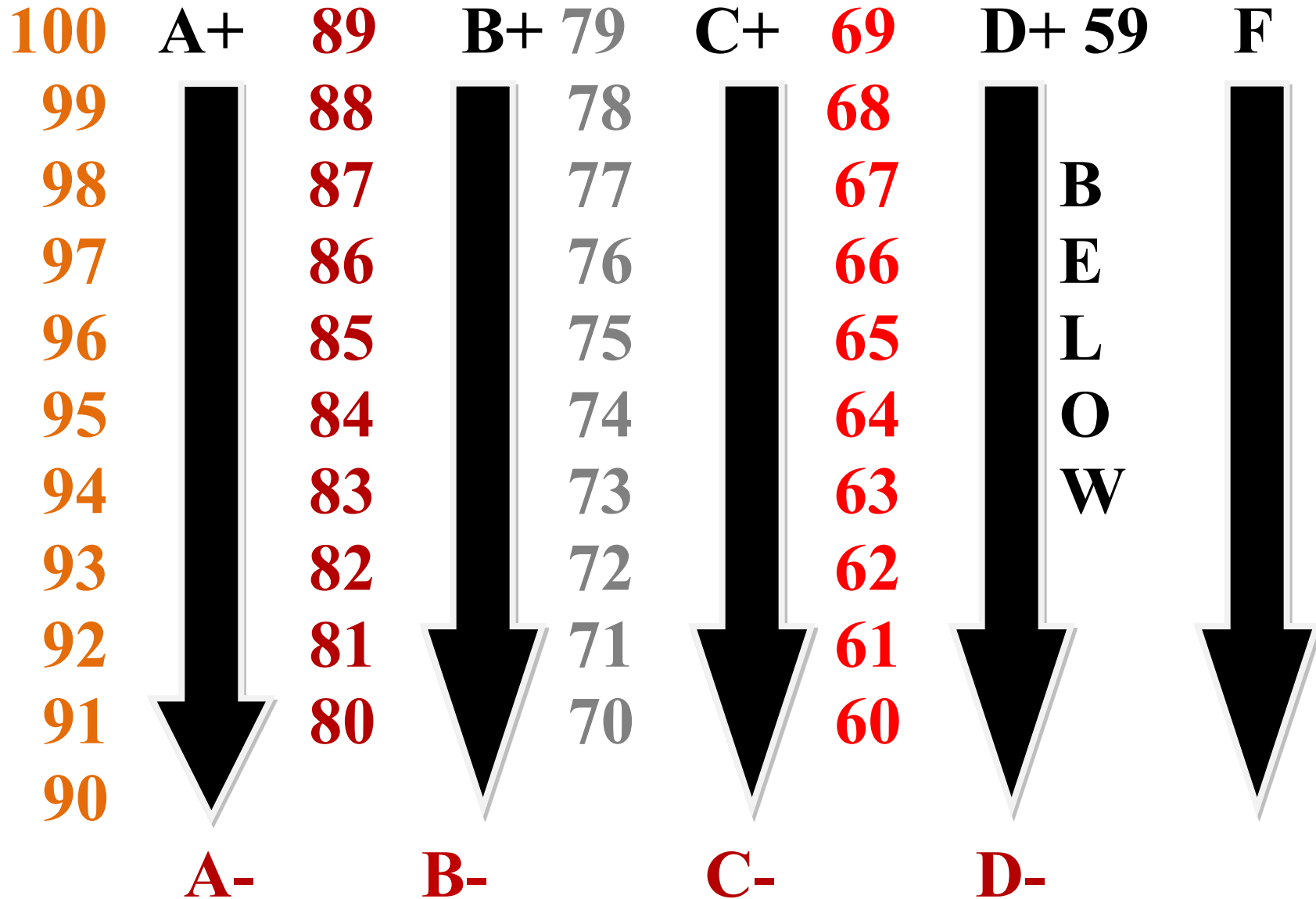
**WE ARE THE MIGHTY COUGARS,  
BEST TEAM IN THE LAND!  
WE ARE THE MIGHTY COUGARS,  
WE SURE THINK WE'RE GRAND!**

**WE ARE THE MIGHTY COUGARS,  
WE FIGHT WITH ALL OUR MIGHT.  
WE ARE THE MIGHTY COUGARS,  
WE'RE GONNA WIN THIS GAME TONIGHT!**

**GO VAN WERT!**

# VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL

## GRADE SCALE



# VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL RENAISSANCE

**\*RENAISSANCE CARDS WILL BE EARNED ONLY DURING TRIMESTERS WHEN STUDENTS ARE BEING EDUCATED IN THE BUILDING**

Renaissance is the philosophy of academic excellence that embraces all activities at the Middle School. The Renaissance mission is to improve school attendance, promote positive attitude and achieve academic excellence - in effect, to create a "Renaissance" in education.

## **RENAISSANCE CARD GUIDELINES**

### **Students meeting the following will be eligible for a renaissance card:**

- Student with no unexcused absences
- Students who have no suspensions during that trimester
- Students who have no evidence of cheating

### **Students meeting the following will be eligible for the end of year reward**

- Students who earn at least one card in Trimester 1 or Trimester 2 and are in good standing at the 3rd trimester check (grades, attendance and attitude on target for 3rd card)
- Students who have not been suspended throughout the year

*If a student meets the above criteria, he/she will be considered for a Renaissance Card for the current trimester under the following terms:*

#### **GOLD AWARD**

**ACADEMICS: 3.6 GPA or higher; No C, D, F or I**

**97% ATTENDANCE rate: 2 excused absences or 2 tardy**

**ATTITUDE: At Team's discretion**

#### **RED AWARD**

**ACADEMICS: All A's and B's with no C, D, F or I**

**95% ATTENDANCE rate: 3 excused absences or 3 tardy**

**ATTITUDE: At Team's discretion**

#### **GREY AWARD**

**ACADEMICS: No D's, F's or I's**

**94% ATTENDANCE rate: 4 excused absences or 4 tardy**

**ATTITUDE: At Team's discretion**

## **RENAISSANCE ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES -**

**THIS IS BEING REVISED and will be communicated to families as soon as we have a new plan**

### **Absences –**

A student is Tardy if they arrive at school between 7:50 and 8:20

A student is absent ½ day if they arrive at school between 8:20 & 11:30 or if they leave school between 11:30 & 2:20 and do not return

A student is absent 1 full day if they arrive at school after 11:30 or if they leave school before 11:30.

A student is not counted as absent if they leave school after 2:20

### **Unexcused Absence**

A student will be considered unexcused when no contact is made by parent and the office is unable to determine why the student is absent. When a student is unexcused, the office will attempt to contact the home and/or speak with the student upon return. An unexcused absence results in no Renaissance Card for that trimester.

### **Doctor Slips**

Sometimes a student is absent due to a doctor's visit. If the student has proof of the visit signed by the doctor this will not count as an absence for the Renaissance Program. This signed document must be turned in to the office within 5 days after the student's return to school.

### **New Students**

A student must be enrolled at VWMS for at least one half of a trimester to participate in the Renaissance Program for that trimester.

### **Vacation**

If a student is absent from school due to a prearranged and principal approved vacation, those days are considered absent for the Renaissance Program.

### **Funerals**

If a student is absent from school due to a funeral, that day is not considered an absence for the Renaissance Program.

### **4H**

If a student is absent due to a 4H project, Renaissance will consider each individual case. To be considered as a non-absence for the Renaissance Program, the student will provide proof of absence in the form of a 4H advisor signature on a note explaining the absence for the student within 5 days after the student's return to school.

# TCB (Taking Care of Business) EXPECTATIONS

Completing all homework is expected; TCB is a natural consequence for not completing or doing quality work. Students will have 3 opportunities to attend a work session before an office consequence is assigned.

1. **After school the night TCB is assigned (from 3:05 – 4:05 pm)**
2. **The next morning (from 7:15 – 7:45 am)**
3. **The next night after the TCB is assigned (from 3:05 – 4:05)**

Work sessions will be held Monday through Thursday from 3:05 – 4:05 pm and Monday through Friday mornings from 7:15 – 7:45 am in the VWMS Media Center. When students are struggling and it becomes necessary, *teams will create individual plans/contracts with students*. If a parent is concerned or has questions about student work they should call the Guidance office (419)-238-5520 to set a meeting with the team. Students are welcome to stay for TCB as a volunteer if they want extra help.

## Student Responsibilities for TCB Work Session

1. A student must know how to access their assignments every day (through their planner, echo, or other team determined method)
2. Hand in TCB work to a TCB teacher so it can be checked off the list
3. If attending TCB, take all books, notebooks, supplies along; some supplies will be in TCB; please ask right away.
4. Students will sign in at the computer during the AM session by 7:15 and PM session by 3:05.
5. If these things are happening, the student will be sent to Contract room with planner and work
  - a. Stop working / refuse to work
  - b. Insubordination / disrespect

## INTERNET USAGE POLICY

In order for the School District to be able to continue to make its computer network and Internet access available, all students must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access. Students must understand that one student's misuse of the network and Internet access may jeopardize the ability of all students to enjoy such access. While the School's teachers and other Staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise student use of network and Internet access, they must have student cooperation in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

Below is the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy ("Policy") of the School District and the Data Acquisition Site that provides Internet access to the School District. This agreement is on file in the office for each student – signed during the 1<sup>st</sup> year in our building.

### 1. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

By signing this Policy, you are agreeing not only to follow the rules in this Policy, but are agreeing to report any misuse of the network to the person designated by the School for such reporting. Misuse means any violations of this Policy or any other use that is not included in the Policy, but has the effect of harming another or his or her property.

### 2. ACCEPTABLE USES

A. Educational Purposes Only. The School District is providing access to its computer networks and the Internet for only educational purposes. If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational, you may consult with the person(s) designated by the School to help you decide if a use is appropriate.

B. Unacceptable Uses of Network. Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this Policy are the following:

1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Don't transmit offensive or harassing messages; offer for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by the School District's Student Discipline Policy; view, transmit or download pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intrude into the networks or computers of others; and download or transmit confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, you should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
2. Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. For example, don't engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); employ another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; upload a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participate in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
3. Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. For example, don't disclose or share your password with others; don't impersonate another user.
4. Uses that are commercial transactions. Students and other users may not sell or buy anything over the Internet. You should not give others private information about you or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers.

C. Netiquette. All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

1. Be polite. Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.
2. Avoid language and uses which may be offensive to other users. Don't use access to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material which is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
3. Don't assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when you know that the individual would have no objection.
4. Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format which the recipient can open.

3. INTERNET SAFETY

A. General Warning: Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users. All users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to the person designated by the School.

B. Personal Safety. Be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, do not reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number. Do not use your real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher. Do not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you "meet" on the computer network or Internet without your parent's permission (if you are under 18). Regardless of your age, you should never agree to meet a person you have only communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.

C. "Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities. It is a violation of this Policy to use the School's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

D. Confidentiality of Student Information. Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian or, if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself/herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release of directory information, as defined by Ohio law, for internal administrative purposes or approved educational projects and activities.

E. Active Restriction Measures. The School, either by itself or in combination with the Data Acquisition Site providing Internet access, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors. The School will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material that is inappropriate for minors.

Internet filtering software or other technology-based protection systems may be disabled by a supervising teacher or school administrator, as necessary, for purposes of bona fide research or other educational projects being conducted by students age 17 and older.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254 [h][7]), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that

- taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals;
- taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

4. PRIVACY

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

5. FAILURE TO FOLLOW POLICY

The user's use of the computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this Policy, shall at a minimum, have his or her access to the computer network and Internet terminated, which the School District may refuse to reinstate for the remainder of the student's enrollment in the School District. A user violates this Policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this Policy if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet, including any user whose access has been denied or terminated. The School District may also take other disciplinary action in such circumstances.

# GENERAL CONDUCT

To provide a structure for acceptable conduct the following rules are to be followed by all students:

1. **SCHOOL BEGINS AT 7:50 A.M. AND STUDENTS SHOULD NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 7:10 A.M.** Upon arrival, you should report directly to your assigned area and be seated (6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the commons, & 7<sup>th</sup> grade in the Gym) Students are not to be in **the academic wings** of the building before 7:41 without a pass from the TCB staff. Students may go to the media center, office, or band room in the morning as needed.
2. **DURING EACH LUNCH PERIOD**, students scheduled to that lunch period are to be present in the commons for lunch. Permission **will not** be granted for students to eat out at a restaurant and please do not bring a fast food lunch or caffeinated beverages including pop or energy drinks to the office for your child. All food is to remain in the commons. Students are expected to remain in their middle school assigned area throughout their lunch unless given permission by supervisors in the commons.
3. **STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE HIGH SCHOOL** except in authorized areas for lunch or classes. Any student in the high school without permission is subject to disciplinary action.
4. **ALL STUDENTS ARE TO BE OUT OF THE BUILDING** and off school property by 3:30 unless taking part in a school activity or working with a staff member including TCB.
5. **ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE** the VWMS building is equipped with operating surveillance cameras.
6. **PRESCRIPTION/NONPRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.** Parents are to notify the school in advance if their child needs to take medications, either prescription or nonprescription, at school. Students are to bring the medication and the doctor's signature to take the medication to the principal's office immediately upon arrival at school. We ask that no more medication (doses) be brought to school than is required for the day. The school will secure and supervise the taking of medications but may not administer medication of any kind to students.
7. **STUDENT CONDUCT AT ATHLETIC EVENTS.** Students attending high school and middle school athletic contests are to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Student Handbook and that respects the rights of others. Conduct should be appropriate to the contest in accordance with all rules and regulations of Van Wert Middle School. Students are to be seated in their designated section if one is provided. Any student who gets into fights, throws objects harmful to others, conducts himself/herself in a manner that endangers him/her or others, or violates the rules as outlined in this handbook may be subject to disciplinary action including suspension from school and/or denial of participation at further extracurricular activities.
8. **CONDUCT IN NON-INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS.** Students are to **stay to the right** in the hallways and leave others alone. Problems generally arise from students pushing or from running during class changes. While changing classes, plan your day to avoid the need to use our locker excessively and report quickly to your next class.
9. **STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY.** When students accumulate instances of poor effort and/or behavior the procedure is as follows:
  - The team of teachers will issue consequences.
  - Upon further instances, students may be assigned consequences from the office (lunch or after school detention, removal from class).
  - If these consequences do not correct the effort/behavior issues, suspensions may result.It is the school's hope that a tier of disciplinary action will provide incentive for students to improve their effort and/or behavior. Based on the severity of the actions, the office has discretion of consequence given.
10. **PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION.** The school setting is not a place for any form of public display of affection, which includes hand-holding, arm in arm, arms around one another, hugging, and kissing. Any act of affection should be considered private and out of respect for all others, will not be tolerated in school.

***Students are expected to abide by the above rules of conduct. Students in violation are subject to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion.***

# **THE ATTENDANCE POLICY AT VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

The administration and faculty at Van Wert Middle School believe that consistent attendance and punctuality are important factors for a student's success at school and in life. The classroom activities, the interaction with the instructor and fellow classmates, and the student's active participation are important parts of any class and cannot be reproduced. As the number of classroom absences continues to increase, a point is reached where not enough time has been spent in the classroom to permit sufficient learning to take place.

## **PROCEDURES**

State Law requires that a parent or guardian must call the school on the day of a student absence before 8:30 am. If there is not contact from the home, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by telephone at home or place of employment as soon as possible as required by the Ohio Compulsory Attendance Code. If there is still no personal contact, the student and parent/guardian is required to submit a written verification of absence upon returning to school.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students are required to make up any course work that was missed.

1. Absences including family vacations with parent/guardian verification not to exceed the hours limits as set forth by ORC.2151.011
2. Illness or medical appointment with medial verification returned to the office within five days of the student's return to school does not count toward the total hour requirement.
3. Other situations including but not limited to; family needs, meaningful situations or emergencies as approved by the Principal up to 10 days or 60 hours.
4. Death of a relative that results in absence that is prearranged and preapproved by the principal will not count toward the total hour requirement.
5. Observation of a religious holiday that is prearranged and approved by the principal's office will not count toward the total hour requirement.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students with Unexcused Absences must still make up all school work missed at a possible reduced grade according to individual teacher policy. With each Unexcused Absence, students may face disciplinary consequences from the Principal's Office that may include Detention(s) or Afternoon(s) assignments. Unexcused absences are defined as:

1. Absences without parent/guardian verification
2. Additional parent/guardian verified absences above the ORC.2151.011
3. Absent from class or assigned area without authorization from any school personnel
4. Students who arrive to school after the 20 minute tardy window are classified as Unexcused from school. This is consistent with the State of Ohio law requiring mandatory attendance.

**HABITUAL TRUANCY** is defined in terms of hours missed under HB 410 and a student is considered to be a habitual truant if they have missed HB410 ORC 2151.011

- 30 or more consecutive school hours
- 42 or more hours in one school month
- 72 or more hours in a school year

## **ATTENDANCE - SPECIAL RULES**

- A. Students that need to leave school during the school day must provide the Principal's office with written or at least verbal permission from the parent.
- B. Failure to follow these rules will result in the absence being automatically recorded as unexcused.
- C. No student is to leave the school building without obtaining permission from the office and signing out.
- D. Students participating in any extracurricular activity (games, meetings, practice, and activities) must be in attendance at least 1/2 day of that activity. If the event is on Saturday the attendance of 1/2 day on the school day before is required unless special permission is given by the Principal. One-half day is defined as arriving by 11:30 a.m. If the schedule is altered for any reason, students must still arrive by 11:30 a.m. and report to the Principal's office. Special situations can be approved by the Principal.

## **TARDY DEFINED**

Tardy: Any unexcused absence from 7:50 a.m. - 8:20 a.m. If you are tardy to school, you will need a pass to enter your first class of the day. This tardy slip will be issued by the school. It is expected that a written explanation or telephone call explaining the tardiness will be given at the time the student reports to school. Students who are tardy more than 3 times per grading period will be subject to detention.



## **DETENTION**

Detention will be in effect Monday through Friday. Students are to report to the teacher who assigned the detention.

The following rules and regulations shall be in effect regarding detention at Van Wert Middle School:

1. All students given detention must be present for detention. Students will be given 24 hours notice on the assigned date.
2. Students are not to be tardy to detention.
3. All students are to bring books and school work to the detention room.
4. Sleeping is not permitted during the detention period.
5. Talking with other students during detention is not allowed.
6. No food or drink is to be brought to the detention room.
7. Failure to serve detention is considered an act of insubordination which will result in further disciplinary action.

## **AFTERNOON SCHOOL DETENTION (\*Note an Afternoon School is NOT the same as a TCB Help session)**

Afternoon School detention is assigned by the office and will be in effect Monday through Thursday. Students are to report to the Media Center to sign in and get room assignment.

The following rules and regulations shall be in effect regarding Afternoon School Detention at Van Wert Middle School:

1. All students given detention must be present for detention from 3:05-4:05.
2. Students will be given 24 hours notice on the assigned date.
3. Students are not to be tardy to detention.
4. All students are to bring books and school work to the detention room.
5. Sleeping is not permitted during the detention period.
6. Talking with other students during detention is not allowed.
7. No food or drink is to be brought to the detention room.
8. Failure to serve detention is considered an act of insubordination which will result in further disciplinary action.

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

Students who are suspended out of school will have the opportunity to make up class work including quizzes, tests and projects given during the time of their suspension. Students who are expelled will not have the opportunity to make up class work.

## **SERIOUS MISCONDUCT CODE**

**A VIOLATION OF ANY OF THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION INCLUDING SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION. THE APPROPRIATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE OR JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AUTHORITY MAY BE NOTIFIED.**

### **BULLYING (SMC-1)**

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. The Board of Education will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property or while en-route to or from school, 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, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education's Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s). 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. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyber bullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

## FIGHTING (SMC-2)

Students have many opportunities to solve differences without resorting to fighting. Teachers, counselors, coaches, and administrators are available for discussion of differences. Fighting is not permitted in the building, on school grounds or in buses.

“Right to Defend” Defined by the Van Wert County Court of Common Pleas: The right to defend is limited. A person has the right to defend himself but an individual can only use reasonable force necessary to defend. If you can safely leave, you are required to do so. If a person shoves another person, the person shoved must leave the area if that can be safely done. The “shoved” person cannot continue the fight in a more aggressive manner, but may only use reasonable force in his/her defense. Words alone do not justify the use of physical force. Name calling, threats, gestures, etc. are NOT a reason to start a fight.

REMEMBER- If two people are fighting, they BOTH are breaking the law. Therefore both will suffer consequences.

## HAZING (SMC-3)

It is the policy of the Van Wert City Board of Education that hazing activities of any type is inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school district shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate any hazing activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

## DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL (SMC-4)

A student shall not by use of violence, force, fear, coercion, threat, intimidation, noise, passive resistance, or through any conduct intentionally cause the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process or function of the school. Neither shall he/she engage in any conduct or urge other students to engage in conduct which would result in a material disruption of school.

Examples are:

- A. Vulgar language- direct or indirect (Board adopted policy, February 2008)
- B. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use
- C. Blocking entrance or exit of any school building, corridor or room with the intent to deprive others of lawful access
- D. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property
- E. Preventing students from attending a class or school activity
- F. Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to disrupt activity in class
- G. Initiating a false fire alarm or bomb threat that may place in danger the lives of those associated with the school

## BRING YOUR OWN DEVICES (BYOD) / SCHOOL ISSUED COMPUTERS (SMC-5)

Students utilizing the opportunity to use various electronic devices to their fullest capacity, within school expectations, will find numerous benefits to instruction, resources, completion of assignments and personal organization.

It is important to understand that the use of student owned electronic devices during the school day is a privilege and not a right. This change to modify the traditional policy of “no use” will depend on the students displaying a level of trust, respect, and responsibility for personal behavior. Any misuse which causes a disruption to the educational process or contributes in any way to violating school rules or policy may result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of this privilege, individually or as a student body.

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of certain electronic devices is permitted in Van Wert City Schools as described below. Electronic devices are classified as **disruptive**, **non-disruptive**, and **cell phone** devices. Permissibility of each type of electronic device is described as follows:

#### Disruptive Electronic Devices

1. Any electronic devices including accessories deemed distracting to the educational environment.
  - a. Use of cameras on non-disruptive devices and cell phones, to take still pictures or video **is not permitted** on school grounds, including transportation, unless under the direction and supervision of school personnel.
2. The misuse of permissible electronic devices in a manner distracting to other students or school personnel is not allowed. The misuse of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Use of any electronic device in a classroom or other area of Van Wert City Schools not authorized by school personnel.
  - b. Violation of the Van Wert City Schools' Acceptable Use Policy.

#### Non-Disruptive Devices

1. Non-Disruptive devices are defined as electronic devices primarily used for educational purposes.
2. These devices may be used during classroom instruction, the Media Center, and lunch as permitted and directed by school personnel.

### Cell Phones, Watches, & Accessories

1. Cell phones, watches & accessories must be left in the student's locker between 7:50 am and 3:00 pm.
2. Cell phones, watches & accessories may be used as directed by school personnel.

### Consequences for inappropriate use of electronic devices

Violation of the appropriate use of electronic devices:

3. May result in detentions, In School Intervention, or Out of School Suspension; and
4. Student may be required to turn the device over to school personnel and the student and/or parent may pick up the device from the Principal's Office at the end of the school day.

### Internet Connection

Wireless Internet connection will be provided by the Van Wert City Schools for students to connect their devices to the Internet. Students must have a completed Acceptable Use Policy signed and on file at Van Wert City Schools.

### Personal Responsibility

Students who bring their personally owned technology/device to school are responsible for the equipment. Van Wert City Schools assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage of an electronic device brought to school. School or District Technicians will not service or repair any technology/device not belonging to the District. Students who bring personally owned devices and use the VWCS network should also have no expectation of privacy including files or email.

### **SPECIFIC USE GUIDELINE**

1. Students that choose to bring items of value to school must understand the school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.
2. Each teacher will determine if these devices will be used in their classroom. If a teacher chooses to allow BYOD, the teacher will provide a written policy that all students in the classroom will be expected to follow.
3. Students must not take any still or video picture of another student during the school day unless under the direction and supervision of school personnel and with that student's consent. Students must not post pictures and/or comments on a social networking site during the course of a school day.
4. Ear buds worn using only ONE ear bud at all times within the school building. Use of headphones is only allowed for educational purposes with teacher.
5. At any teacher or staff member request, BYOD will be turned off or silenced and put away until further notice.
6. Any violation of acceptable use may result in disciplinary action from either the teacher or administration.

### **WARNING**

Sexting – It is the practice of taking, possessing, or transmitting nude or explicit pictures especially by cell phones or other BYOD. If the subject(s) of the nude pictures are minors, very serious school and legal consequences may take place. School authorities are bound by law to report all cases of sexual abuse and child exploitation to the police. Depending on the age of the subjects and how explicit the pictures, a person possessing nude pictures on an electronic device could be charged with child exploitation or child pornography along with suspension and possible expulsion from school. Conviction of the criminal charges is a felony and could lead to being placed on a community sex offender list.

### **INSUBORDINATION (SMC-6)**

Insubordination is the refusal of a student to cooperate with a reasonable request by a staff member of the school system. Any action judged by school officials to involve misconduct or misbehavior and not specifically mentioned in other sections will be dealt with as insubordination.

### **NARCOTICS, DRUGS, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES (SMC-7)**

A student is prohibited from using, possessing, or transmitting any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind. (The only exception would be for a student taking prescription drugs under doctor's orders). This includes: On the school grounds during, before, or after school hours; off the school grounds at any school sponsored activity; and on school buses.

### **COUNTERFEIT DRUGS (SMC-8)**

"Counterfeit controlled substance" means any of the following:

1. Any drug that bears, or whose container or label bears, a trademark, trade name, or other identifying mark used without authorization of the owner of rights to such trademark, trade name, or identifying mark.
2. Any unmarked or unlabeled substance that is represented to be a controlled substance manufactured, processed, packed, or distributed by, a person other than the person that processed, packed, or distributed it.
3. Any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance but is not a controlled substance or is a different controlled substance.
4. Any substance other than a controlled substance that a reasonable person would believe to be a controlled substance because of its similarity in shape, size, and color, or its markings, labeling, packaging, distribution, or the price for which it is sold or offered for sale.

Sec. 2925-37:

- A. No person shall knowingly possess any counterfeit controlled substance.
- B. No person shall knowingly make, sell, offer to sell, or deliver any substance that he knows is a counterfeit substance.
- C. No person shall sell, offer to sell, give, or deliver any counterfeit controlled substance to a person under the age of eighteen.
- D. No person shall directly or indirectly represent a counterfeit controlled substance as a controlled substance by describing its effects as the physical or psychological effects associated with use of a controlled substance.

## **TOBACCO/NICOTINE/E-CIGARETTES/VAPORIZER & ASSOCIATED PRODUCTS INCLUDING PARAPHERNALIA (SMC-9)**

The use of tobacco/nicotine/E-Cigarettes/vaporizer & associated products including paraphernalia by students is prohibited on school property or in the vicinity of the school.

## **WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS (SMC-10)**

A student shall not knowingly possess, handle or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or a look-alike weapon either on the school grounds during and before or after school hours, or off the school grounds at any school activity or on school buses.

## **THEFT (SMC-11)**

Theft of school or other persons' property will not be tolerated. Payment or restitution for loss will be expected where appropriate for those determined to be guilty. Students involved will be subject to school disciplinary measures as well as the possibility of legal action being taken. The borrowing of money or other items by students without the knowledge, understanding or acceptance of the other student is not permitted and may be considered theft.

## **ASSAULT (SMC-12)**

A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury or intentionally behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury:

1. On school grounds during and before or after school.
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function or event.
3. On school buses at any time or on carriers rented by school groups.

## **VANDALISM (SMC-13)**

Students and their parents (guardians) will be held financially responsible for any vandalism that the student commits on school property. Legal action may be taken if deemed necessary.

## **REPEATED VIOLATIONS (SMC-14)**

A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with regulations necessary to operate the educational system within Van Wert Middle School.

## **FRIGHTENING, DEGRADING, OR DISGRACEFUL ACTS (SMC-15)**

A student shall not engage in any act which frightens, degrades, disgraces, or tends to frighten, degrade, or disgrace another person, by written, verbal, or gestural means. These include but are not limited to racial, ethnic, and religious references.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT (SMC-16)**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances or unwanted visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct is improper, immoral and illegal. It is a violation of school policy to conduct oneself in a manner that makes another person feel uncomfortable with comments or actions of a sexual nature. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.
2. Unwelcome leering, staring, sexual flirtation or propositions.
3. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions.
4. Unwelcome graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, or overly personal conversation.
5. Unwelcome sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures, gestures or notes.
6. Unwelcome spreading of sexual rumors.
7. Unwelcome touching of an individual's body, or clothes in a sexual way.
8. Cornering or blocking of normal movements in a sexual manner.
9. Displaying sexually suggestive objects in educational/work environment.

## **CHEATING (SMC-17)**

**CHEATING IN SCHOOL IS WRONG!** According to the dictionary, cheating is defined as "to deceive or to defraud." If you attempt to use someone's work, you are attempting to deceive the teacher by trying to convince him/her that the written work is yours, thus you are trying to defraud the teacher of a grade. When you beg, borrow, steal, or work with another person, or with his or her paper, without permission from the teacher, this action constitutes cheating. When a student, knowingly, offers his/her work to another student, it is cheating. Students who, without permission from their teacher, use "cheat sheets" to complete assignments (i.e. quizzes/test, etc.) are cheating.

## **PLAGIARISM**

When a student presents the ideas or words of another author as his/her own work, it is "plagiarism."

When caught cheating/plagiarizing you will face disciplinary action from the teacher and/or the Principal's Office. Disciplinary action may include any/all of the following:

## FIRST OFFENSE

1. Grade reduction and/or assignment failure from the teacher
2. Teacher reports incident to Principal's Office where violation is recorded
3. Teacher is responsible for contacting parents of the situation. (telephone, letter, e-mail, in person.)
4. May Lose Renaissance card

## 2 OR MORE OFFENSES WHILE AT V.W.M.S. (ANY TEACHER)

1. Grade reduction and/or assignment failure from the teacher
2. Teacher reports incident to Principal's Office where violation is recorded
3. Teacher is responsible for contacting parents of the situation. (telephone, letter, e-mail, in person.)
4. Dismissal from academic organizations
5. Loss of Renaissance Card

Repeated incidents of cheating/plagiarism may result in further disciplinary action from the principal's office that may include detention or suspension from school.

## ADDITIONAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### LOCKERS

All students are assigned to a locker at the beginning of the school year. Your assigned locker is to be used to store books and other personal items and supplies. You are advised that your locker is the property of the school but its care and appearance is your responsibility. In addition, as the locker is the property of the school district, the school has a legal right to inspect lockers at any time with administrative authorization. Lockers are to be kept neat and clean. Pictures, sayings and drawings of an objectionable nature are inappropriate and may not be placed in lockers. Students observed with these posted in their lockers will be required to remove them and may be subject to other disciplinary action.

Do not leave valuables in your locker at any time. The school discourages students from bringing any items of value to school.

The school provides locks for all lockers. Students are expected to keep lockers locked when not in use. Students found to be tampering with locks in order to disable them or damage them in any way, are subject to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion.

Problems with lockers are to be reported to the office. Students may not change lockers without authorization from the principal's office or guidance counselor nor are students to share lockers. **Locker Stops:** Will be issued by the team of teachers to whom that student was assigned.

### DRESS AND GROOMING

The basic responsibility for the dress and grooming of students attending Van Wert Middle School rests with parents and students. The continued cooperation and good taste shown by the large majority of parents and students of the Van Wert district is desired.

The guidelines set forth in this dress code have been approved for ALL students by the Board of Education. Students should wear clothing that reflects a positive learning environment free from distractions. Articles of clothing that become disruptive and distracting to the educational process will not be tolerated.

#### Examples of unacceptable clothing include but not limited to:

- Offensive illustrations, drug, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, sexual slogans, illustration, or innuendos, bizarre or unusual clothing
- Excessively ripped, torn or cut-off clothing that exposes bare skin
- Hats, visors, bandanas, scarves, hoods, or other head gear unless authorized by school personnel for special situations
- Gaping or open T- shirts, spaghetti type straps, tube tops, see-through clothing or tops revealing excessive cleavage. Backs, midribs and upper torso must be covered
- Pants must be worn as to not show undergarments – shorts, micro shorts, skirts, dresses should be worn at appropriate lengths
- Any form of sleepwear is not acceptable for school unless authorized
- For Security Reasons: Outdoor Coats and Jackets and Book bags/Backpacks are not to be worn or carried during school hours and should remain in student lockers

School officials and the Board of Education reserve the right to make final decisions regarding the dress code and may make changes in the dress and grooming of all students. Any class time missed because of dress code problems will be counted as Unexcused Absences. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action that may include suspension/expulsion from school.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements will be made at the start of the day and during PAWS. Announcements are to inform students of school related special events for the day, upcoming activities or report on activities that have already taken place.

### TELEPHONE

The telephone is available for student use through the office.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL**

Students may not leave the school building during school hours without the consent of the principal and parents/guardian or someone else in authority. This requirement has a legal basis and is for the safety of the student. Those not following this requirement are considered truant.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

V.W.M.S. has procedures for emergency situations. These include fire drills, lock down and disaster drills. Students practice these procedures routinely and must respond to each drill as if it is an actual event.

## **MAKE-UP WORK POLICY**

Students with absences will make up academic work that has been missed. To receive full credit this work will be made up in the same amount of time as the student was absent. Example: absent five days, excused; the student has five days to make up work missed. It is the responsibility of the student to check with teachers to determine what work has been missed. **If there is a parental request for homework, this will be granted on the 3rd consecutive day of absence.**

## **ACADEMIC SCHEDULE CHANGES**

All schedule changes are to be made through the guidance office. The school counselor will work with classroom teachers and the administration in providing proper educational placement for students.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

The belief is WHAT YOU DO MATTERS at Van Wert Middle School.

It is our goal to provide your child with direct and indirect support in 3 main areas: Academic, Career, and Personal/Social. By keeping these standards in mind, it is the hope that we will provide your child with a wide range of support to help them succeed both in and out of the school building.

Students should feel free to visit the guidance office at any time. Parents are encouraged to contact the guidance office when in need of assistance with their son or daughter's academic, career, and personal/social growth. Parents may request student progress reports or make arrangements for a parent-teacher conference through this office.

Please do not hesitate in taking advantage of these support services. The School Counselor can be reached by phone at 419-238-5520.

## **ACCIDENT AT SCHOOL**

If you are involved in an accident at school, report it to your teacher at once. If medical attention is required, parents /guardians will be notified.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any books or personal articles found at school that do not belong to you should be turned in at the principal's office.

If you should lose any of your books or personal items at school, you may check at the principal's office with the secretary. If you can describe the lost item and it has been found, it will be returned to you.

## **FEES FOR CLASSES**

Fees may be required for needed supplies in select classes. Classroom teachers will inform students of any needed supplies

## **TEXTBOOKS**

All textbooks used by the students of Van Wert City Schools are furnished to students by the Board of Education at no charge. Each student is responsible for the care of the textbooks issued to him/her. Any student whose book(s) is (are) damaged beyond normal wear and tear will be subject to a fine. Books that are lost, stolen or damaged beyond repair remain the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued and must be paid for at the purchase price.

## **BEING EXCUSED FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

To be excused from participation from physical education classes, students must provide a written excuse from a physician. If you miss more than one week of gym class, a physician's excuse is to be given to your physical education teacher. Standards of dress for physical education classes shall be the same for both boys and girls. Your physical education teacher will notify you as to what specific clothes will be needed.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors are to report to the principal's office upon entering the building.

## **CHANGE OF RESIDENCE FROM THE DISTRICT**

A change of residence by a student outside the school district and not an open-enrollment student, or a withdrawal from school for whatever reason will result in forfeiting any elected position that the student holds at the time of the move or withdrawal, as well as ending any participation in extracurricular activities in which the student is involved.

## **MARITAL/PARENTAL POLICY**

It is the policy of Van Wert City Schools that educational programs and activities are provided without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability. Therefore, the Board affirms the right of a pregnant student and the father (if a student) to continue her/his participation in the Van Wert City Schools.

As soon as a pregnancy is medically confirmed, the Board recommends that the student consult with a counselor or the building principal.

With a staff member involved, the student may elect to pursue the following educational plan or to suggest alternatives:

1. She may remain in her present school program, with modifications as necessary, until the birth of her baby is imminent or until her physician states that continued participation would be detrimental to her or the baby's health.
2. She may then temporarily withdraw from school and, at the school expense, in so far as is practical or possible, receive homebound instruction from the date of her withdrawal until her physician states that she is physically able to return to school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of all students (both male and female) is disrupted as little as possible; that all students receive health and counseling services, as well as instruction; that they be encouraged to return to school after delivery; and, that each student be given the opportunity to complete course work.

## **MEDIA CENTER RULES AND PROCEDURES**

- Library hours are the same as school hours.
- Students may sign out of PAWS time to read a book, do reference work, or read a magazine, in addition to checking materials out. Once you have finished, you are expected to go back to PAWS time promptly (use your time wisely). You must have a planner or library pass to visit the library.
- Sign in as you enter the library. Sign out before you leave.
- Students may sign out two books total at any time from the library, each for two weeks. If you feel you have a special reason to take out more than two, ask for permission. A book may be renewed if it has not been requested in the meantime by another student.
- If the book is not returned within a reasonable length of time, it is presumed lost, and the student will be requested to pay for it.
- No food or candy is permitted in the library.
- Noise should be kept to a minimum. The library is a place to concentrate on reading or work, so students should not disrupt one another. Remember to treat the library and the other people in it respectfully, or you will be asked to leave.
- Remember that the library is here to help you. If you have a problem finding something or you have a question, ask the librarian.

## **SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

### **COUGAR LEADERS**

Cougar Leaders is a group of students that represent the student body of Van Wert Middle School.

The mission of the Cougar Leaders is to promote kindness and an overall positive culture at Van Wert Middle School. This group of middle school students is selected or elected through an application process by VWMS staff, students, and administration. Cougar Leaders focus their efforts on the following activities: welcoming incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders and new students to the district, assisting their classmates in their transition through VWMS, supporting various schoolwide activities, connecting with community through service and leadership training, and providing student voice in decision-making around our school building. Cougar Leaders is mostly about "Kids helping Kids" at Van Wert Middle School.

### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

Athletic eligibility requires compliance with all O.H.S.A.A. eligibility requirements, including residential, medical and academic. In addition, students must meet the Van Wert City Board of Education eligibility policy for middle school students requiring a minimum GPA (grade point average on a 4 point scale) of 1.2 or greater and no more than one failure in a scheduled course during the preceding grading period.

### **INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

For those students who like to compete at a level of organization and competition, our middle school has interscholastic teams in cross-country, basketball, football, track, wrestling, volleyball, and cheerleading. These teams play regular schedules against other schools.

**There are many opportunities to get involved at Van Wert Middle School. Students should listen to announcements for details.**

# **VAN WERT MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY CODE**

**Part I: Rights and Responsibilities:** Students who attend Van Wert Middle School have a wide variety of extracurricular organizations and athletic activities in which they may become active participants. Students are expected to obey all school rules and regulations and any specific regulations that may apply to that particular program. The Student Handbook and this activity code specify the school's expectations. Students have a right to reasonable treatment from the school and its employees. The school, in turn, has a right to expect reasonable and responsible behavior from its students.

**Part II: Code:** A violation of any of the following rules may result in denial of participation from the athletic sport or extracurricular activity for the duration of the season or semester:

1. All school rules apply as stated in the Student Handbook.
2. Suspension or expulsion from school includes non-participation in athletic or extracurricular activities.
3. Students must be present in school a minimum of the latter half of the day on the day of any activity or the Friday afternoon prior to a Saturday activity in order to participate in that activity. This includes dances and athletic events.
4. Students must remain in good standing in their organization (such as fulfilling officer/member obligations and paying dues.)
5. Students must conduct themselves so as not to disrupt meetings and practices. Students must show respect for others and their coach or advisor.
6. Participants in athletics are expected to follow the prescribed training rules and regulations which are in effect 24 hours a day during the season of that particular sport.
7. Students are to attend required meetings and practices unless prior permission is given to be excused by the coach or advisor.
8. Students must meet the academic eligibility requirements of the sport or organization to which they belong.
9. Ohio High School Athletic Association rules apply and are available upon request from the principal, coach or athletic director.
10. An athletic team member who quits one sport may not participate in another interscholastic sport until the current season of the sport which he/she quit comes to an end. Coaches may agree that it's best for an athlete to switch sports and this would be permissible.
11. Denial of participation from a sport shall cause a student to be ineligible for participation in other sport activities during that season. An athletic season begins on the official date for practice to begin as stated by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. If no such date is given, then the first scheduled game, match or meet shall be the beginning of the season. A season ends when all forms of competition and coaching ends.

### **Part III: Procedure:**

1. All head coaches and activity advisors are to publish those specific rules and regulations which are unique to their programs and that are not covered by these general rules. This published set of rules is to be filed with the athletic director and with the principal. A copy of all rules must be given to each participant at the beginning of the program or season to take home to be signed by the participant and the parent or guardian. These papers are to be kept on file with the appropriate coach or advisor.
2. Head coaches or advisors must follow due process procedures when denying participation from the sport or organization.  
The following procedure is to be followed regarding denying participation:
  - A. All participants have been given previous notice of the rules and regulations under which they are operating.
  - B. The coach or advisor will (if it is deemed possible) hold a conference with a student who violates the rules.
  - C. When it becomes necessary to deny a student participation in an activity, the student is to be given written notice that the activity will not be open to him/her with notification of the reason(s) thereof. This notice shall include the "right of appeal" information. A copy must be given to the principal within 24 hours.
  - D. The student or parent has the right to appeal the decision of the coach or advisor to the principal within one week of the notice of action.
  - E. The final authority to deny participation in any school activity rests with the principal.
  - F. A student will not be permitted to participate during the appeal process.



# **SCHOOL CAFETERIA**

Van Wert City Schools participates in the National School Lunch Program sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) which permits the school to offer free and reduced price meals to students who qualify.

Students may purchase their lunch at school, or bring their lunch with them; however, parents bringing "FAST FOOD" lunches to school is prohibited.

Free or reduced priced lunches are available to children who are determined eligible following the return of applications, which will be made available to all families at the beginning of the school year. Applications can also be found in the school office or on the school's website. Applicants are responsible for meals until a free or reduced application is completed and approved.

The cafeteria uses a computerized debit system to purchase lunches.

Money can be deposited into the account whether the student is free, reduced or a full paying student. Money will only be deducted when the student uses the account. Checks should be made payable to Van Wert City Schools and the student's name and /or ID# should be on the check. The student may use this account for meal or ala carte purchases.

This is a completely confidential system. All students access the system in the same manner regardless of whether they receive free, reduced or full price meals. The computer will deduct a meal charge from the student's account according to their pay status.

Van Wert City Schools provides breakfast daily in each of our buildings except when school is delayed.

## **OFFER vs SERVE POLICY**

Offer vs. serve provision of the school lunch program means students are offered five food components each day from within the federally-required traditional lunch pattern. Van Wert City Schools offers this to students in grades 1-12. All students are encouraged to take all items offered, however under offer vs serve, students need only take a minimum of three of five components offered one of which must be a fruit or a vegetable. This allows students to refuse a food item they do not like, encourages freedom of choice, and helps eliminate waste

All menus are subject to change

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **CHARGING POLICY**

In grades 1-5 a student may charge up to 5 lunches. Charge slips are sent home weekly. After 5 lunch charges a peanut butter sandwich, fruit and milk will be served until the account is balanced. A phone call will also be placed to the parent/guardian to resolve this issue.

In grades 6-12 charges for lunch only (no ala carte) may not exceed \$10.00. A peanut butter sandwich and milk will be offered until their account is balanced. The last three weeks of the school year there will be NO CHARGING allowed.

# SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

This information pertains to students on regular bus routes and students taking field trips throughout the school year. The following items of information are given to you for the purpose of attempting to answer some of the questions that may come up for the coming school year regarding the school buses of our school system. We are asking for the cooperation of parents and students to follow the outline of rules and regulations in order that we can operate our buses safely and efficiently.

1. Students will be discharged from the bus at their regular stop. If parents want their child discharged at a place other than the regular stop, they are to send a written note to the principal stating what stop and the date they wish to have their child discharged there.
2. Students are to ride their regular bus each day. If parents wish to have their child ride a bus other than the regular one, they shall send the request to the child's school principal. The principal will issue a permit for the child to ride the different bus. No student will be permitted to ride any bus other than the regular one without a permit signed by his/her school principal.
3. In event of poor driving conditions due to inclement weather whereby buses cannot travel safely, an announcement will be made over Radio Stations WERT and WDOH. If at all possible, this announcement will be made by 7 a.m. or sooner. Do not call the school - our telephones must be free for emergency use when these conditions exist. When an announcement is made to delay or cancel the Van Wert City Schools due to weather conditions, the announcement will be for all district buildings. Buses may be late occasionally because of circumstances beyond our control. We appreciate your patience and understanding.
4. According to the Ohio Pupil Transportation Rules and Regulations, our bus drivers will enforce the following rules and regulations on our school buses:
  - A. Every student will be seated in an assigned seat.
  - B. Seating will be so arranged when loading and unloading in order to have an even distribution of student load on the bus.
  - C. Instruction in emergency evacuation of each bus will be given by each driver.
5. A student on a bus is under the authority of and directly responsible to the bus driver. Each student must obey the driver promptly. Students shall conduct themselves as they would in the classroom, except that reasonable conversation is permissible. Unnecessary noise is not permissible.
  - A. Students shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
  - B. Students must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stops.
  - C. Behavior at a school bus stop must not threaten life, limb or property of any individual.
  - D. Students must go directly to an assigned or available seat.
  - E. Students must remain seated keeping the aisles and exits clear.
  - F. Students are not permitted to move from one seat to another while the bus is in motion.
  - G. Students must observe classroom conduct and obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
  - H. Students must not use profane language.
  - I. Students are not permitted to eat and/or drink on the bus.
  - J. Students must not use or possess tobacco on the bus.
  - K. Students must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus except for required prescription medication.
  - L. Students are not permitted to transport pets or animals on the school bus.
  - M. Firearms, weapons, ammunition, any type of explosives, fireworks or other dangerous materials or objects which may interfere with the safe operation of the bus are not permitted.
  - N. Students must not intentionally do damage to seats or other interior parts of the bus.
  - O. Students must not throw or pass objects on, or from or into the bus.
  - P. Students may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps (Equipment such as band instruments shall be stored at a location designated by the driver).
  - Q. Students must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise.
  - R. Students must not put head, arms or legs out of the bus windows.
  - S. Guidelines will be formulated on an individual basis with the driver for the use and storage of equipment and other means of assistance required by students with special needs.
  - T. Parents shall inform the school so that proper steps can be taken to collect, store and use medical information related to students known to have medical problems which may require driver attention.

**Riding a school bus is a privilege. If a student abuses this privilege to the point that he endangers the safety of other students or damages the bus, it may then be necessary to take away that privilege.**