

# VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT



## STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK 2015-2016

### **VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Van Buren School District will serve the Van Buren community by providing a learning environment that enables students to attain their full potential and that promotes lifelong learning.

## **Members of the Van Buren School Board**

Mr. Kevin Bell

Mrs. Theresa Bell

Mr. Jamie Hammond

Mr. Jeff Lambert

Mrs. Christy Mayo

Mrs. Candice Settle-Beshears

Mrs. Carman Young

## **Van Buren School District Administration**

Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, Superintendent

Mr. Kerry Schneider, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Brian Summerhill, Assistant Superintendent



**Student Policy Handbook**  
**2015-2016**  
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2015-2016 Year

Dear Parent/Guardian:

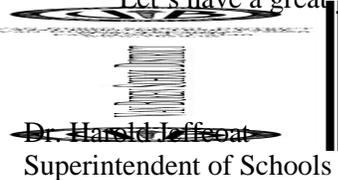
Welcome to the Van Buren School District! It is an honor to serve as superintendent of this outstanding school system. Throughout Arkansas, Van Buren is known as a district of excellence and I am excited to have the opportunity to be part of this continuing legacy.

Our Student Policy Handbook can be found on our district website. The handbook contains general information, rules, regulations and policies of the school district. Please review the contents and indicate that you have done so by signing and returning the appropriate forms to the principal's office of your child's school.

Over the years, education has changed substantially but our primary focus on providing a high quality learning experience remains the same. Of course, this is a shared responsibility between the school and home. The stronger the relationship between the two groups, the more likely it will be that your child will have a successful and enriching school year.

It is imperative that you communicate with us when you have a question or concern. Please make sure that you have contact information for your child's teacher(s) and building administrators. If you need assistance from central administrative staff, but are not sure who to contact, please email or call Mrs. Shari Ross at [slross@vbsd.us](mailto:slross@vbsd.us) or (479) 474-7942. If you would like to contact me directly, you may do so by sending an email to [harold.jeffcoat@vbsd.us](mailto:harold.jeffcoat@vbsd.us).

Let's have a great year! Go Pointers!

Dr. Harold Jeffcoat  
Superintendent of Schools

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade of Student \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that I have received a copy of the Attendance, Discipline, Grading and Technology Policies of the Van Buren School District.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

See *Technology Acceptable Use Policy* form on page 4.



**Technology Acceptable Use Policy  
FORM**

**Student Agreement and Parent Permission Form**

I have read the policies contained in the VBSD Acceptable Use Policy that may be viewed on the Van Buren School District website <http://www.vbsd.us>

Student Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Before access may be granted, signature of user must be submitted on this form to the school office. As a user of the VBSD Network, I have read and hereby agree to comply with the Acceptable Use Policies.

User Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

User Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

*As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access networked computer services. I have read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policies, and I understand that I may be held responsible for violations by my child. I understand that some material on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore, I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to him/her appropriate standards for selecting, sharing, and/or exploring information and media.*

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**GENERAL**

District employees are encouraged to use educational technology, the Internet, and professional/education social networks to help raise student achievement and to improve communication with parents and students. However, technology and social media accounts also offer staff many ways they can present themselves unprofessionally and/or interact with students inappropriately.

It is the duty of each employee to appropriately manage all interactions with students, regardless of whether contact or interaction with a student occurs face-to-face or by means of technology, to ensure that the appropriate staff/student relationship is maintained. This includes instances when students initiate contact or behave inappropriately themselves.

Public school employees are held to a high standard of behavior. District employees are reminded that they will be held to a high standard of conduct in all their interactions with students. Failure to create, enforce and maintain appropriate professional and interpersonal boundaries with students could adversely affect the District's relationship with the community, jeopardize employment with the district, and constitute an ethics violation.

Employees are discouraged from creating personal social media accounts to which they invite students to be friends or followers. Employees taking such action do so at their own risk and are advised to monitor the site's privacy settings.

District employees may set up blogs and other professional/education social media accounts using District resources to promote communications with students, parents, and the community concerning school-related activities and for the purpose of supplementing classroom instruction. Accessing professional or education social media during school hours is permitted.

Employees are reminded that the same relationship, exchange, interaction, information, or behavior that would be unacceptable in a non-technological medium, is unacceptable when done through the use of technology. Due to the increased potential audience, digital dissemination must be exercised cautiously by staff to ensure appropriate use.

Specifically, the following forms of technology based interactivity or connectivity are expressly permitted or forbidden:

## **Privacy of Employee's Social Media Accounts**

In compliance with A.C.A. § 11-2-124, the District shall not require, request, suggest, or cause a current or prospective employee to:

1. Disclose the username and/or password to his/her personal social media account;
2. Add an employee, supervisor, or administrator to the list of contacts associated with his/her personal social media account;
3. Change the privacy settings associated with his/her personal social media account; or
4. Retaliate against the employee for refusing to disclose the username and/or password to his/her personal social media account.

The District may require an employee to disclose his or her username and/or password to a personal social media account if the employee's personal social media account activity is reasonable believed to be relevant to the investigation of an allegation of an employee violating district policy, or state, federal or local laws or regulations. If such an investigation occurs, and the employee refuses, upon request, to supply the username and/or password required to make an investigation, disciplinary action may be taken against the employee, which could include termination or nonrenewal of the employee's contract of employment with the District.

Notwithstanding any other provision in this policy, the District reserves the right to view any information about a current or prospective employee that is publicly available on the Internet.

In the event that the district inadvertently obtains access to information that would enable the district to have access to an employee's personal social media account, the district will not use this information to gain access to the employee's social media account. However, disciplinary action may be taken against an employee in accord with other District policy for using district equipment or network capability to access such an account. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of District issued computers, other electronic device, or use of the District's network.

### **Definitions**

**Social Media Account:** a personal, individual, and non-work related account with an electronic medium or service where users may create, share, or view user-generated content, including videos, photographs, blogs, podcasts, messages, emails or website profiles or locations, such as FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, Instagram.

Professional/education Social Media Account: an account with an electronic medium or service where users may create, share, or view user-generated content, including videos, photographs, blogs, podcasts, messages, emails or website profiles or locations, such as FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, Instagram.

Blogs: a type of networking and can be either social or professional in their orientation. Professional blogs are encouraged and can provide a place for teachers to post homework, keep parents up-to-date, and interact with students concerning school related activities. Social blogs are discouraged to the extent they involve teachers and students in a non-education oriented format.

### Philosophy

The Van Buren School District (VBSD) is committed to using the latest technology to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Technology should be readily available in the classroom and should be used as a tool to make opportunities available for all students and staff to maximize their potential.

### Internet

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. VBSD is connected to the Internet through the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN). APSCN was formed in 1993 in order to link every public school educational cooperative, and the Arkansas Department of Education.

### Internet Safety

Access to the Internet is free of charge and available to all students with valid accounts regardless of gender, age, ethnic background, or religious beliefs.

Congress passed the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) which requires schools and public libraries that access certain federal funds to equip all computers that might be used by students with a system to block sites that are obscene or show material harmful to minors. Required classes will be held yearly for educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response. The state of Arkansas has also passed legislation requiring school districts to provide Acceptable Use Policies which are signed by students, to provide filtered Internet, and to provide online safety classes. The Van Buren School District receives Internet access from the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN), and VBSD provides the Internet Filtering to meet CIPA compliance.

## Acceptable Use

Each user is expected to use accounts responsibly, with purposes for which such accounts are granted. Activities beyond these stated purposes are strictly prohibited and may result in restricted or revoked access to computing resources.

Users of computer software owned by VBSD must agree to abide by the limitations included in the copyright and license agreements entered into with vendors. It is the user's responsibility to become familiar with the specific copyright and licensing agreements for each product before using it. It is unlawful to copy most software products. If other arrangements are made with a vendor, users must abide by the stated provisions. VBSD has many resources of an instructional entertainment nature, which are available to students. Users working on educational projects, however, always have priority when it comes to using the computers.

## Unacceptable Use (Including but Not Limited to the Following)

Users shall not attempt to access, copy, or destroy programs or files that belong to other users or to VBSD without prior authorization. Programs, subroutines, and data provided by VBSD may not be taken to other computer sites without authorization. Programs acquired at other sites should be verified by DTS to check for system compatibility and licensing.

No user is permitted to install software or change the configuration on computers without written consent from the District Technology Staff (DTS).

- Purchase of computers should be reviewed and approved by the DTS.
- Teachers and Administrators: Before you obtain or install new software, please contact the DTS to ensure compatibility on our network.
- Administrators: the best practice for purchasing school site software is to have a member of the DTS review and approve the software before purchase. If you need software placed on your computer, please complete a helpdesk ticket.

Users should minimize the impact of their work upon the work of others. One should not encroach on others' use of the facilities or deprive them of system resources. **Users shall not attempt to modify system facilities in any way.** Intentional compromise of system integrity by virus or other means is a serious offense. Staff should always login to the network with their correct login and store their files inside their "Documents" location on the server to ensure backup. Machines should be turned off after proper log off each day. The district technology staff will not attempt to recover files which are not backed up.

Users shall not subvert restrictions associated with their accounts. The list below does not cover every situation that pertains to proper or improper use of the computing resources on VBSD, but it does suggest some of the responsibilities that you accept if you choose to use a VBSD

computer. Disciplinary action will be taken whenever any user is found to be in violation of the responsible use of the computers or network.

- Revealing personal address or phone numbers or those of other students or colleagues
- Violating the rights of privacy of students and employees
- Using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive to another user
- Using the network illegally in ways that violate federal, state, or local laws or statutes
- Reporting personal communications without the author's prior consent
- Using the network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity
- Using the network to send or retrieve pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network
- Spreading computer viruses, or in any way causing disruption of the network, such as sending large e-mail files, etc.
- Downloading, storing or printing files or messages that are profane, obscene, or that use language that offends or tends to degrade others
- Product advertisement or political lobbying
- Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks
- Attempting to gain access to another's resources, programs, or data
- Falsifying one's identity
- Changing any computer files that do not belong to the user
- Failure to use disk storage space wisely and efficiently - (delete unnecessary e-mails and files)
- Copying multimedia files to local hard drives or network drives unless copyright authorization has been verified.
- Misuse or vandalism of equipment
- Personal online banking on school computers is highly discouraged for your own security.
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Posting anonymous messages
- Violating copyright restrictions (which are the same as for printed materials)

## **STUDENTS**

### E-mail

Personal email can be accessed at school, but should only be used for educational purposes. Any information entered on school-provided email accounts is considered public information.

### Penalties for Improper Network Use

Use of public property for personal gain is a felony and is subject to prosecution.

Classroom: Classroom violations of this policy may result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action.

District: Suspension or cancellation of VBSD network privileges and/or disciplinary action.  
State: Applicable state laws apply.  
Federal: Applicable federal laws apply.

## **PARENTS**

### Guidelines for Parents

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number in a public message such as chat or bulletin boards, and be sure you are dealing with someone that both you and your children know and trust before giving out any information through electronic messages.
- Get to know the services your child uses.
- Never allow a child to arrange a face-to-face meeting with another computer user without parental permission.
- Never respond to messages or items that are suggestive or make you uncomfortable in any way.
- Report suspicion of child pornography to National Center for Missing Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678.
- Remember that people on-line may not be who they seem.
- Remember that everything you read on-line may not be true.
- Establish and enforce reasonable rules and guidelines for computer and/or "on-line" use by your children.
- Make it a family activity. Get to know their on-line friends just as you know their other friends.

## **FACULTY/STAFF**

### E-mail

Personal use of electronic mail is permitted within reason. Sending unprofessional or unethical messages or messages deemed to be disruptive to the education process is in violation of Acceptable Use Guidelines. Personal use should be kept to a minimum. Users are not permitted to conduct a business using any school technology resources. Note: e-mail is not private. The DTS have access to all mail and may read mail if justifiable reasons exist to do so. Users should also be aware that e-mail can be traced to the sender and can be monitored for unacceptable language or inappropriate use. E-mail is backed up. Individuals are responsible for e-mail left on their computers. Do not use distribution lists to send messages to staff unless there is an educational reason to do so. You should consider e-mail received or sent at school as a matter of public record. Remember, if you would not write it in a letter or postcard, do not write it in e-mail or e-mail attachments.

## Internet

Internet service is provided by Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN). It is to be used for educational purposes. Using the Internet for **personal** use must be kept to a minimum in order to provide the bandwidth needed for everyone to use. This includes but not limited to peer-to-peer file sharing programs, chat programs, internet radio, internet video clips, and public bulletin boards. Accessing these things is a security risk and denies bandwidth for legitimate use. All internet traffic can and will be monitored.

## Printers

When using school printers please refrain from printing personal documents. This includes but not limited to coupons, email jokes, tax forms, etc...

## Security

Do not allow students to use your account. Do not store your passwords in your desk or where they are easily available. Your billfold or purse, wherever you keep your driver's license or credit cards, is the best place to keep passwords.

Backup your important files to a network location where they are secure and backed up with the servers in case of disaster recovery. If something happens to your computer, it will be much easier to repair if you have saved all your files to the designated location. The DTS is not responsible for backing up individual data not stored on servers.

## Computers

Computers belong to the school district and must be treated accordingly. They are to be used for educational purposes. Do not change any password other than your own user password. User passwords may be changed as desired. Screen savers, Web Shots, Comet Cursor, Toolbars, and other freeware or shareware should not be installed. Numerous problems have resulted from the use of such software. DTS will not be responsible for problems which occur as a result of installing such software.

## Penalties for Improper Use

Problems will be reported to the building principal and/or the appropriate local, state and federal authorities.

## Reporting Problems

DTS is trying to cut response time for problems. Please use the system DTS has in place for requesting service. Service request forms are submitted through the online helpdesk on the district website. Priority is given to network problems, computer labs, food services, and administration/faculty/staff. If you have an emergency, please call or leave a message at 471-3113.

## Virus Protection

Virus protection has been added to all network computers in an effort to cut down on problems. Please do not open attachments unless you know what they are. Some of the new viruses are very destructive. It is much easier to check with the sender to verify the e-mail than to redo your computer. Do not attempt to alter or remove the anti-virus program. If you are notified of a potential virus threat please forward it immediately to [technology@vbsd.us](mailto:technology@vbsd.us) - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE THE VIRUS WARNING ON A DISTRICT LEVEL.

## Purchasing

The purchase of computers or software should be cleared through DTS. Call or e-mail the Director in the technology department. It is very important that we coordinate our efforts in order to provide the best service to staff, students, and parents. We can also assist in obtaining the best prices for goods and services.

## APPLICABLE LAWS

### Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Public information, such as student photos cannot be published on the Internet, unless: the school is otherwise notified in writing from a parent

### Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

#### House Bill 2503-Act 1747

Requires districts to publish certain items on district web pages, and provide policy regarding the Internet with penalties for violations.

#### A.C.A. § 11-2-124

## RULES GOVERNING THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR ARKANSAS EDUCATORS

### Responsibilities of Employees on Internet Act 1287 of 2001 AUP

#### American Disabilities Act

Approved by Board of Education 03/14/06

Amended by Board of Education 05/10/11

Amended by Board of Education 02/07/12

Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12

Amended by Board of Education 07/16/13

Amended by Board of Education 01/14/14

Dear Van Buren School District Parent/Guardian

Your child has requested access to the Van Buren School District (VBSD) Network. The school district is able to offer network access to all students who agree to abide by the acceptable use policies, sign a contract, and have parent permission.

Access to the network will provide your child with access to the Internet. It is possible that your child may run across areas of adult content and some material that you might find objectionable. While we do not encourage access to such material, it is not possible to block access to all such sites, even though every effort to filter such content has been provided through our state system.

In some classes, students will also have the opportunity to design their own web page which could include information about themselves (including pictures) and links to other sites. Students are cautioned about displaying personal information. Open communication with your children, utilization of such computer resources, and getting on-line yourself will help you obtain the full benefits of these systems and alert you to any potential problem that may occur with their use.

Part of the school district's responsibility in preparing our students for the 21st century is to provide them access to the tools they will be using in postsecondary education and in the work place. We believe that the use of this global information network is one of those tools. The school district will provide training in using the network and endeavor to teach students their responsibility as network citizens and guidelines for ethical conduct in this new global community. Personal email can be accessed at school, but should only be used for educational purposes.

Approved by Board of Education 01/14/14

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR STUDENT(S)**

Act 999 of 1999, the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program (ACTAAP), requires that school personnel develop a Student Academic Improvement Plan for the following students:

Students not performing on grade level in literacy and/or math in grades K-4

Students not scoring at the proficient level on any part of any Benchmark Examination (Primary, Intermediate, Middle Level)

Students not scoring at the proficient level on the End-of-Course Examinations (Literacy, Geometry, Algebra I)

This plan, or a similar plan having the same information, may be used for individual students or a group of students having the same deficiencies.

Copies of the Student Academic Improvement Plans shall be maintained by the appropriate teachers to insure full implementation of the intervention/remediation plan. These documents shall be used by the school in creating and revising its comprehensive school improvement plan and shall be monitored by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Legislation requiring the Student Academic Improvement Plan became effective beginning in the 1999-2000 school year.

- School districts shall notify parents of remediation requirements and retention consequences for failure to participate in the required remediation. This information shall be included in the student handbook.
- Students identified for an AIP who do not participate in the remediation program shall be retained. The local district shall determine the extent of the required participation in remediation as set forth in the student academic improvement plan.
  - Any student required to take an end-of-course assessment that is identified as not meeting the satisfactory pass levels for a particular assessment shall participate in his/her remediation activities as required in his/her individualized academic improvement plan in the school year that the assessment results are reported in order to receive credit on his/her transcript for the course related to the end-of-course assessment.

The health and physical well-being of Van Buren School District students directly affects their ability to learn. Childhood obesity increases the incidence of adult diseases occurring in children and adolescents such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. The increased risk carries forward into their adulthood. Research indicates that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help prevent obesity and the diseases resulting from it. It is understood that the eating habits and exercise patterns of students cannot be magically changed overnight, but at the same time, the board of directors believes it is necessary to strive to create a culture in our schools that consistently promotes good nutrition and physical activity.

The problem of obesity and inactivity is a public health issue. The board is keenly aware that it has taken years for this problem to reach its present level and will similarly take years to correct. The responsibility for addressing the problem lies not only with the schools and the Department of Education, but with the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the district shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions which improve the health and physical activity of our students.

### **Goals**

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the district will adhere to the Arkansas Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Arkansas Public Schools. Adhering to these Rules will include, but is not limited to district efforts to

1. Appoint a district school health coordinator who shall be responsible for ensuring that each school fulfills the requirements of this policy;
2. Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
3. Enforce existing physical education requirements and engage students in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity;
4. Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
5. Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
6. Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances;
7. Ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students;
8. Establish class schedules, and bus routes that don't directly or indirectly restrict meal access;
9. Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
10. Establish no more than nine (9) school wide events which permit exceptions to the food and beverage limitations established by Rule. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar;

11. Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria;
12. Restrict access to vended foods, competitive foods, and foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as required by law and Rule;
13. Conform new and/or renewed vending contracts to the content restrictions contained in the Rules and reduce district dependence on profits from the sale of FMNV.
14. Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
15. Utilize the School Health Index available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to assess how well the district is doing at implementing this wellness policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students;

**Advisory Committee**

To enhance the Van Buren School District's efforts to improve the health of our students, a School Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Committee (SNPAAC) shall be formed. It shall be structured in a way that ensures age-appropriate recommendations are made which correlate to our district's grade configurations. The SNPAAC shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by statute and Rule. The overarching goal of the committee shall be to promote student wellness by monitoring how well the district is doing at implementing this policy. The SNPAAC shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 of the CDC's School Health Index as a basis for assessing each school's progress toward meeting the requirements of this policy. The results of the annual assessment shall be included in each school's ACSIP, provided to each school's principal, and reported to the board.

Approved by Board of Education 05/09/06

School attendance zones are necessary to properly place students in the various schools in the Van Buren School District. The following policies will be followed regarding student assignment to appropriate schools.

- Students are required to attend school in the zone where the parent/guardian resides unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent or designee.
- Boundary lines defining school zones may periodically change due to population shift which affects school enrollment.
- The parent/guardian may request enrollment in a school zone other than the zone in which the parent/guardian resides by using policy 1.31 – ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONES and accompanying forms.
- School principals are allowed to enroll a student in a school outside the student's residential zone ONLY through the approval process provided in Board policy.

Approved by Board of Education: 09/08/09

The following administrative regulations will facilitate any and all requests from parents or staff members requesting an exception for their children to attend a school outside of their assigned residential attendance zones.

1. Parents/Guardians must complete the District application form (Board Policy 1.31F1) requesting a change in Attendance Zone and submit same to the receiving school. Applications must be submitted on an annual basis. Final approval must be granted by the Superintendent or his Designee. Applications will be accepted within the following timelines:
  - Applications will be considered at any time for the current school year.
    - If the Area Exception is filed due to anything other than an address change, the parent must meet with the present school's administrator for the application to be considered for the requested school.
      - If a request is made in the middle of a grading period the request will not be considered until the end of the grading period. The Superintendent or designee can waive waiting period if the situation is warranted.
      - If a student has been approved for an Area Exception once the school year has started, another application for a different school cannot be filed that same school year. Exception: If the parents have moved to a different address during the current school year.
      - If a student is approved to attend another school, they must attend that school for the remainder of the school year.
  - Applications for the Fall Term of the succeeding school year will be accepted between March 1 and April 15.
    - Temporary approval of these applications will be processed as soon as possible. Final approval will be made between the first and fifth day of the Fall Term when enrollment numbers are more accurate.
    - Applications received after April 15 for the succeeding school year will be considered between the first and fifth day of the Fall Term.
2. The Van Buren School District is not obligated to provide transportation to any student who chooses to change attendance zones.
3. For a request in change of attendance zone to be approved, space must be available at the school site. The District will not approve a request that will place the District out of compliance with state regulations on classroom size.

4. The District will not approve a change in attendance zone if the request would adversely affect the racial or socioeconomic balance within the school.
5. Students who are granted a change in attendance zone due to behavior or discipline problems will be placed in the new setting with the understanding that placement in the Alternative School will follow if problems persist.
6. Children of staff members will be allowed to attend the school that is the home base of the staff member.
7. Any and all appeals will be submitted to the Superintendent for final disposition.

Approved by Board of Education 09/08/09

Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12

Amended by Board of Education 05/12/15

All school buses are owned and operated by the Van Buren School District.

The drivers have the same authority on the buses that the teachers have on the school campus. Pupils are under the supervision of the bus driver and are responsible to the driver for their conduct.

The buses will run as nearly on schedule as possible.

Students are urged to be ready and on time.

Ref: A.C.A. 6-19-(101-116)

Approved by Board of Education 11/12/91

**Act 247 of the Regular Session**  
**UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY OF SCHOOL BUSES.**

- (a) As used in this section:
  - (1) "Driver" means the operator of the school bus; and
  - (2) "School bus" means every publicly or privately owned motor vehicle designed for transporting ten (10) or more passengers and is operated for the transportation of children to or from school or school activities.
- (b) A person over eighteen (18) is guilty of a Class B misdemeanor if the person:
  - (1) Enters a school bus with the intent to commit a criminal offense;
  - (2) Enters a school bus and disregards the orders or instructions of the driver;
  - (3) (a) Enters a school bus and refuses to leave the bus after being ordered to leave by the driver.
  - (4) Intentionally causes or attempts to cause a disruption or an annoyance to another person on the bus; or
  - (5) Recklessly engages in conduct that creates a substantial risk of creating apprehension in any person on the bus.

Act 247 Approved: 2/22/2005

Approved by Board of Education 6/05

The entrance age for students will be in accordance with state law. The Van Buren School District shall be open and free through completion of the secondary program to all persons in the state between the ages of five (5), as restricted by state law, and twenty-one (21) whose parents, legal guardians, or other persons having lawful control of the person under an order of a court reside within the school district and to all persons between those ages who have been transferred to the district for education purposes.

A child must be five years of age on or before August 1 of the year in which they are seeking initial enrollment and afterwards in order to be enrolled in kindergarten.

- a. Prior to a child's admission to Van Buren Public Schools, the school district shall request the parent, guardian, or other responsible person to furnish the child's social security number and shall inform the parent, guardian, or other responsible person that, in the alternative, they may request that the school district assign the child a nine-digit number designated by the Department of Education. Students' social security numbers will not be made available to the public.
- b. Prior to a child's admission, the parent, guardian, or responsible person shall provide the school district with one (1) of the following documents indicating the child's age:
  1. A birth certificate;
  2. A statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child's date of birth;
  3. An attested baptismal certificate;
  4. A passport;
  5. An affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child's parent or guardian;
  6. Previous school records; or
  7. A United States military identification.
- c. Prior to a child's admission to Van Buren Public Schools, the parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding.

Prior to a child's admission to the Van Buren Public Schools the parent or guardian, or responsible person shall provide the school district with proof that the child meets all health requirements provided by state law.

Any six year old child who has not completed an accredited kindergarten program prior to initial enrollment shall be evaluated by the school district to determine whether placement for the child shall be in kindergarten or first grade.

Any student who has been enrolled in a state-accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state for at least sixty (60) days, who will become five (5) years old during the year in which he or she is enrolled in kindergarten, and who meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon written request to the school district.

Ref: Act 462 of 2007

Ref: Act 838 of 1991 and Act 363 of 1993

A.C.A. 6-18-201, 6-18-207, 6-18-208

Approved by Board of Education 11/21/91

Amended by Board of Education 11/8/94

Amended by Board of Education 12/08/98

Amended by Board of Education 1/13/04

Amended by Board of Education 5/08/07

**History.** Acts 1959, No. 139, § 1; A.S.A. 1947, § 80-1501.1; Acts 1991, No. 838, § 1; 1993, No. 363, § 1; 1995, No. 574, § 1; 2003, No. 63, § 1; 2005, No. 246, § 1.8

Amended by Board of Education 6/12/07

Amended by Board of Education 6/09/09

Ref: §6-18-207

Amended by Board of Education 6/08/10

Amended by Board of Education 11/09/10

Amended by Board of Education 6/14/11

## **ADMISSION OF NON-RESIDENT & HOME SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**4.1.1**

It is the policy of the Van Buren School District not to admit students from outside the district with the exception of those students deemed by the Board to fall within one or more of the following categories:

- a. Students from outside the Van Buren School District who have been legally adopted by adoptive parents from within the district.
- b. Students from outside the Van Buren School District who are living with residents of the district other than their parents after the legal guardianship procedure has been processed.
- c. Students from outside the Van Buren School District placed in foster homes by court action or awaiting final court action.
- d. Students of Van Buren Schools by way of the legal transfer process or by freedom of choice application per ACT 1227 of 2013, Public School Choice Act of 2013 and ACT 1334 of 2013.

Home School students may participate in academic and/or interscholastic activity per ACT 1469 of 2013.

General Assembly, or ACT 1272 of 2003.  
Adopted by Board of Education 11/14/89  
Amended by Board of Education 05/14/91  
Amended by Board of Education 04/11/00  
Amended by Board of Education 06/10/03  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

The superintendent shall cause public announcements to be made over the broadcast media in either the print media or on the Internet at such times and in such a manner as to inform parents or guardians of students in adjoining districts of the availability of the program, the application deadline, and the requirements and procedure for nonresident students to participate in the program.

Applications will be considered in the order that they are received.

A student's application will be accepted if the following conditions are met:

1. The application is received or postmarked no later than May 1 preceding the fall semester the applicant would begin school in the Van Buren School District;
2. The addition of the applicant does not require the Van Buren School District to add teachers, staff, or classrooms or in any way to exceed the requirements and standards established by existing law;
3. Acceptance of the application does not cause the Van Buren School District to be unable to properly service its resident pupils or would endanger the certifications of the Van Buren School District;
4. If the applicant is currently under expulsion from another district, then the applicant may be rejected by the Van Buren School District after a hearing before the School Board.

The superintendent shall notify the parent or guardian and the applicant's resident district, in writing, of the decision to accept or reject the application by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Students admitted under this policy shall be entitled to continued enrollment until they graduate or are no longer eligible for enrollment in the District's schools.

The Van Buren School District shall not be responsible for the transportation of students admitted under this policy. Transportation is the responsibility of the applicant's parents or guardians. However, the Van Buren School District may, in its discretion, enter into a written agreement with the applicant's resident district regarding transportation, provided that the costs of the transportation are borne by the applicant or the applicant's resident district.

The Van Buren School District shall accept all credits toward graduation of an applicant that were awarded by another district and shall award a diploma if the applicant meets the Van Buren School District's graduation requirements.

Any student admitted to the Van Buren School District under the provisions of this policy who chooses to return to his/her resident district during the school year voids the transfer and must reapply for school choice admission if desiring to return to the Van Buren School District.

The superintendent shall report to the Arkansas Department of Education on an annual basis the race, gender, and other pertinent information needed to properly monitor compliance with the provisions of this section.

Approved by Board of Education 07/14/09

Amended by Board of Education 05/14/13

Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

Amended by Board of Education 04/14/15

**POLICY FOR ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION OF SCHOOL CHOICE  
NONRESIDENT STUDENTS**

**4.1.2.1**

If a nonresident student seeks to attend school in Van Buren School District, the student's parent shall submit an application to the Van Buren School District Administration Office on the Nonresident Student Transfer Form available in the district office, postmarked no later than May 1 of the year in which the student seeks to begin the fall semester. The Van Buren School District will respond in writing no later than July 1 to notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of whether the application has been accepted or denied.

A student's application may be denied by the Van Buren School District for any of the following reasons, as established by the Van Buren School District's Board of Directors (see attached Board Resolution form):

- Lack of capacity in a program, class, grade level, or school building, defined as 90% or more of the maximum authorized student population in a program, class, grade level, or school building; or
- A conflict between the provisions of a district's desegregation plan or court order and the provisions of the Public School Choice Act of 2015 (Act 560 of 2015); or
- The Van Buren School District has reached the maximum number of student transfers that may occur in a school year, which is capped at 3%.

A student's application may not be denied based on the student applicant's athletic or extracurricular abilities, academic achievement, English proficiency level, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, or disability. An application may not be denied on the basis of previous disciplinary proceedings, except that an expulsion from another district may be considered.

Priority will be given to any applicant who has a sibling or stepsibling who resides in the same household and is already enrolled in the Van Buren School District by choice.

The Van Buren School District is not required to accept any application that would cause it to add teachers, staff, or classrooms, or in any way exceed the requirements and standards established by law.

A student may transfer by choice to one nonresident school per year under the Public School Choice Act of 2015. A student who has transferred to our School District may return to his or her resident district at any time, but may only return to our School District by re-application and re-acceptance through the School Choice transfer process, or as otherwise allowed by law. No student is allowed more than one school choice transfer per school year.

A present or future sibling of a student who continues enrollment in the school district under the Public School Choice Act of 2015 and applies for a school choice transfer may enroll in the Van Buren School District if the Van Buren School District has the capacity to accept the sibling without adding teachers, staff, or classrooms or exceeding the regulations and standards established by law.

**POLICY FOR ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION OF SCHOOL CHOICE  
NONRESIDENT STUDENTS**

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**4.1.2.1**

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Students who request a transfer to our School District under Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-430 (academic distress), §6-18-227 (Opportunity School Choice Act), or §6-18-812 (facilities distress) will not count against the 3% cap of our School District.

**Reference:** Act 560 of 2015 (to be codified).

Approved by Board of Education 05/14/13

Amended by Board of Education 04/14/15

**STUDENT TRANSFER - STUDENT ASSIGNMENT TO CLASSES**

**4.1.4**

Children entering Van Buren schools from accredited private or public school shall be assigned to grades according to the records of achievement from their previous schools.

Students entering the Van Buren schools from a school that is not accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education, a Department of Education from another state, the North Central Association, or the Arkansas Non-Public School Accrediting Association, Inc., will be evaluated as follows:

Grades 1-8 – School authorities will use all available information in making the initial grade placement decision, including an appropriate placement exam. Age appropriateness will be a consideration in this decision. During the first semester of the student’s enrollment in Van Buren schools, the principal may subsequently change the placement depending on demonstrated performance by the child.

Grades 9-12 -- Students in grades 9-12 attempting to transfer credits from a non-accredited public or private school or from approved home schooling experiences will be required to take appropriate exams in the academic areas for which credit is desired.

The exams will be determined by school authorities. The percent of material mastered on the test will determine the credit. For example:

PERCENT CREDIT
90-100 Full
80-90 Full
70-80 Full
60-70 Full
59 or less 0

Students have the legal right to receive instruction through home schooling. However, the local school district has the responsibility of determining whether or not high school graduation credit is to be given should a student desire to receive public school credit toward graduation. The following procedures have been established:

- A. Students will be given a general achievement test to determine if the student is eligible to be considered for grade level placement. The district will provide an appropriate achievement test for use by the schools.
- B. If a student is eligible as demonstrated by grade level testing to earn credit for specific classes in grades 9-12, specific tests will be given to the student in each of the four core subject areas, English, math, social studies, and science, in which the student requests the credit. (For example: if the student requests a credit in Algebra I, then the student will be given a test that covers the objectives found in a year-long algebra class, etc.)

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Sixty percent (60%) achievement will be required for passing the test for credit. No grade letter will be issued, only “CR” for “credit earned”.

- C. Any student desiring to re-enter school claiming to have been in home schooling must have proof that application for home schooling has been approved. Copies of home schooling applications are kept on file in the superintendent’s office.
- a. Upon entering, the student will fill out a form stating what courses he/she has taken in home schooling.
  - b. The district will continue to require any student who desired to be a senior to be enrolled for six classes. Thus, if a home school student enrolls as a senior, the student will be required to take six classes regardless of how many credits the student has at the time of enrollment. The student will also be required to be enrolled two consecutive semesters to be considered a senior.
  - c. Should a student not achieve at grade level on a general achievement test, grade placement will be determined by the principal after review of standardized test data.

NOTE: Any student of high school age would not be placed below the seventh grade.

Placement of any student in special education is preceded by an evaluation in accordance with Public Law 94-142, the regulations prorogated under Public Law 94-142, and appropriate Arkansas rules and regulations. This evaluation may include but is not limited to physiological testing and achievement testing.

The Board of Education reserves the right, after a hearing before the Board, not to allow any person who has been expelled from another district to enroll as a student until the time of the person’s expulsion has expired.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-316

A.C.A. § 6-18-510

A.C.A. § 6-15-504 (f)

State Board of Education Standards of Accreditation VII (E) (1)

Adopted by Board of Education 6/07/04

Amended by Board of Education 11/09/10

**STUDENTS EXPELLED IN THEIR FORMER DISTRICT (Act 574 of 1995)**

**4.1.5**

It shall be the policy of the Van Buren School District that when a student, otherwise eligible for enrollment, is currently under an order of expulsion from the last school district he or she attended, a hearing before the School Board shall be held before that student may be enrolled. This hearing may be closed at the request of the student's parent, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-18-507. *See also 28 U.S.C. §1232g.*

Prior to the hearing, the Superintendent shall obtain a full report from the former district concerning the expulsion. At the hearing, the Board shall review the report from the former district, and have an opportunity to question the student and his or her parents concerning the alleged misconduct. The Board may rule that the student may not enroll until the student's expulsion from his or her former district has expired.

Approved by Board of Education 11/14/95

**PLACEMENT OF MULTIPLE BIRTH SIBLINGS: PK -- GRADE SIX (PK – 6) 4.1.6**

Parents of multiple birth siblings in prekindergarten through grade six (pk-6), who are assigned to the same grade level and school, may request in writing, no later than the fourteenth day before the first day of school, that the school place the siblings in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. The school shall provide the placement requested by the parent except in the following cases where the school shall determine the appropriate placement:

- One parent's request differs from another parent's request;
- Thirty (30) instructional days have lapsed since the date the placement was made at the parent's request and after consulting with the teacher of each classroom in which the students are placed, the school determines that the classroom placement is detrimental to the educational achievement of one (1) or more of the siblings, disruptive to the classroom learning environment, or disruptive to the school's educational or disciplinary action;
- The request would require the school district to add an additional class;
- Or placement affects a right or obligation of the school or school district regarding student placement decisions of the school district under The Children with Disabilities Act of 1973, §6-41-201 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq. (as it exist on the effective date of this section), or written school district disciplinary policies.

A parent may appeal the school's classroom placement of multiple birth siblings in the manner provided by school district policy.

Legal References: Act 906 of 2011  
Adopted by Board of Education: 6/14/11

**I. Philosophy and Intent**

- A. The Van Buren School District supports the philosophy that the instructional program is the vital part of a formal public education. We further believe that it is necessary to require that students attend school a maximum number of days for instructional purposes during each school year. Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students out of school for any reason other than family emergencies.
- B. Students are required to maintain a level of attendance which enables them to meet their responsibilities as learners.
- C. Students and their parents/guardians hold the main responsibility for school attendance and for following the attendance policy. The Board asks for the cooperation of both students and parents/guardians in these matters so that the student can receive the best education possible. A copy of the Van Buren School District's student attendance policy shall be provided to the students' parents, guardians, or loco parentis at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment, whichever event first occurs.

**II. Compulsory Attendance Law**

- A. This attendance policy for all students uses the Arkansas Compulsory Attendance Law as a model and prescription, but is not limited to the law's minimum requirements.
- B. Under such penalty for noncompliance as shall be set by law every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the state of Arkansas having custody or charge of any child age five (5), as required by law, through seventeen (17) years shall enroll and send the child to a public, private, or parochial school or provide a home school for the child as described in 6-15-501 et seq. unless the child qualifies for an exception as stated in 6-18-201 et seq.

**III. Student Drop Out (Act 876 of 1991)**

- A. (b)(1) Each public, private, or parochial school shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school.
- B. (2)(A) Upon receipt of such notification, the Department of Finance and Administration shall notify the licensee by certified mail, return receipt requested, that his motor vehicle operator's license shall be suspended unless a hearing is requested *in writing* within thirty (30) days from the date of notice.

**IV. Notification to Prosecuting Attorney**

- A. School officials will take the following action when a student's absences become excessive:
1. Notify the prosecuting attorney according to Act 876 of 1991 which states in part: "Whenever a student exceeds the number of excessive absences as provided for in the district's student attendance policy and the school district notifies the prosecuting or city attorney, the student's parents, guardians, or parents in loco parentis, shall be subject to a civil penalty in such an amount as a court of competent jurisdiction presiding in the presence of a school representative of the school district may prescribe, but not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500) plus costs of court and any reasonable fees assessed by the court...." NOTE: Also, upon notification by the school district that a student is no longer attending school, the Department of Finance and Administration may suspend a student's learner's permit or driver's license.
  2. Notify the student and parents that the student has violated this attendance policy by accumulating an excessive number of absences. Accumulating an excessive number of absences will be a basis for denial of credit, promotion, or graduation.

**V. Absences**

- A. When a student is absent due to emergencies such as illness, death in the family and other extenuating circumstances, the parent or guardian of the student should contact the student's principal or designee and relate the facts causing the emergency. Parents may contact the school by writing a note, in person, or by other means deemed appropriate by the school principal. Make-up work will be allowed for these absences and must be accomplished within a reasonable length of time as determined by individual teachers. All absences not described as excused are unexcused.
- B. Truancies are all failures to attend school other than those specified above. Make-up work for truancies and suspensions will not be allowed unless provisions are made through an alternate program approved by the school principal.

Legal References: A.C.A. 6-15-501, A.C.A. 6-18-201, A.C.A. 6-18-207, ACT 750 of 1999, ACT 876 of 1001

Adopted by Board of Education 06/07/04

Amended by Board of Education 11/09/10

Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12

Amended by Board of Education 12/09/14

**I. Parent Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that the student is in attendance at school. The parent/guardian is to notify the school office when the student is absent.

Students who have a doctor, dental, or other professional appointments on a regular basis are encouraged to stagger the time of such appointments so that they do not miss the same part of class each time.

**II. Student Responsibilities**

If for any reason a student must leave school during regular school hours, the parent/guardian should obtain permission from the office and sign the student out in the office. Students arriving at school late should be signed in at the office by the parent/guardian before reporting to class.

**III. New Enrollees**

The number of days of school missed by a student who enrolls in school after the beginning of a semester are considered absences when determining the maximum number of days a student is in attendance.

**IV. Absences**

When a student is absent due to emergencies such as illness, death in the family and other extenuating circumstances, the parent or guardian of the student should contact the student's principal or designee and relate the facts causing the emergency. Parents may contact the school by writing a note, in person, or by other means deemed appropriate by the school principal. Make-up work will be allowed for these absences and must be accomplished within a reasonable length of time as determined by individual teachers. Truancies are all failures to attend school other than those specified above. Make-up work for truancies and suspensions will not be allowed unless provisions are made through an alternate program approved by the school principal. All absences not described as excused are unexcused.

**V. Suspensions and Expulsions**

Students who are suspended from school will receive no credit for any class work missed during the time they are suspended.

Students who are expelled from school will forfeit all credits for the duration of the expulsion and their permanent records will be marked as "NC" (no credit) in the semester grade column.

**VI. Excessive Absences**

Eleven (11) absences per semester will be considered excessive in elementary schools (K-5). It is at this point that school officials will notify the prosecuting attorney and juvenile court authorities as determined by the principal.

A student’s parent or guardian may petition the school for additional absences before the student has accumulated 10 absences. Exceptions are allowed to satisfy an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Accumulating an excessive number of absences will be a basis for denial of promotion.

**VII. Notification to Parents of Student Absences**

The student’s parents, guardians or persons in loco parentis shall be notified as required by law and as necessary. As a minimum this notification shall occur when the student has accumulated five (5) and ten (8) absences per semester. Notice shall be by telephone contact with the student’s parents, guardians or persons in loco parentis by the end of the school day in which absences occurred or by mail sent no later than the following school day.

**VIII. Excessive Tardies and/or Early Checkouts – Elementary K-5**

Six (6) tardies/early checkouts per semester will be considered excessive.

Once a student has accumulated six (6) tardies and/or early checkouts, the students will acquire a full day absence.

Tardies are defined as students arriving between 8:00 –10:00 am.

Early Checkout will be defined as a student checking out of school between 1:00—3:00 pm.

Approved by Board of Education 06/07/04  
Amended by Board of Education 11/14/06  
Amended by Board of Education 04/19/11  
Amended by Board of Education 05/10/11  
Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12  
Amended by Board of Education 12/09/14

**I. Excessive Absences:**

A. Eleven (11) or more total absences in a semester will be considered excessive. A student's parent or guardian may petition the school for additional absences before the student has accumulated 10 absences. Exceptions are allowed to satisfy an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.

B. Students who accumulate more than ten (10) "regular school absences" and/or "truancy absences" in a class for the semester will not be eligible for credit in that class.

C. Denial of credit may affect promotion or credits toward graduation.

D. Juvenile Court authorities will be notified of all absences in which students under the age of eighteen (18) exceed the ten (10) day limit.

**II. Classification of absences that will count toward the ten (10) day limit in which credit for the course will be denied:**

A. Regular School Absence – A regular school absence is defined as any time the student is not present in class excluding truanancies and the types of absences identified in Section III of this policy. Written documentation of parental consent must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

B. Truancy – A truancy is defined as anytime a student is absent from school without the knowledge of the parent/guardian. This may include anytime a student is not in his/her assigned class during the school day.

C. All absences not described as excused are unexcused.

**III. Classification of Absences that DO NOT count toward the ten (10) day limit.**

The following classification of absences will NOT count toward the ten (10) day limit in which credit for the course will be denied:

A. Campus Activity – School sponsored field trips, assemblies, contest, or any other school activity as determined by the building principal.

B. Medical – Student absences due to the directive of the student's medical doctor or doctor/dental appointments. Documentation of doctor/dental appointments must indicate the day and time the student was seen in the doctor/dental office. Appropriate written documentation from doctor/dental office must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

C. Legal – Student absences due to court or legal appointments. Documentation of court/legal appointments must indicate the day and time of required student presence. Appropriate written documentation must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

D. Death in family - Appropriate documentation such as copy of funeral program must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

E. Suspensions - Absences due to out of school suspensions will not count toward the ten (10) day limit.

F. Other extenuating circumstances as reviewed by the administration.

#### IV. Notification to Parents of Student Absences

A. The student’s parent/guardian shall be notified as required by law and as necessary. At a minimum this notification shall occur when the student has accumulated five (5) and eight (8) absences per class per semester.

B. Notice shall be made by telephone contact or by mail.

C. On the 8th day of absence a letter will notify student and parents that students may attend Saturday school to reverse the number of absences.

D. When a student is absent the eleventh (11th) day in a semester in a specific class, the attendance office will notify student and parent/guardian that the student has violated the attendance policy by accumulating an excessive number of absences. The letter will inform the student and parent of:

1. Credit denial for affected class(es)
2. Appeals process for credit to be reconsidered
3. Name and contact information of attendance clerk at respective school if additional information is needed

#### III. Student Responsibilities

A. Students who are denied credit for a class due to excessive absences must remain in the class in which credit was denied and complete assigned work for the remainder of the semester unless student is transferred to another educational facility or program.

B. Students who accumulate more than ten (10) absences in a class for the semester will not be eligible for credit in that class and will receive an “I” (incomplete) in semester grade column of their permanent transcript. Students may participate in an approved recovery program to regain credit status.

C. Students who wish to participate in a recovery program may apply to do so through the attendance office. The building principal or designee will determine eligibility and guidelines.

IV. Appeal to Reinstate Credit

Students may appeal their denial of credit to the Attendance Committee. The Attendance Committee will operate under the guidelines developed and approved by the principal. The committee shall be made up of at minimum one administrator, one counselor, and one or more faculty members.

The Attendance Committee will take one of the following actions for each appeal:

- A. Uphold the decision to deny credit
- B. Overturn the decision to deny credit and grant an extension
- C. If the decision to deny credit is upheld, the student/parent will be offered a contract that will allow students to attend additional school programs held after school and/or on Saturday to recover the credit if:

- 1. the student has earned a passing grade for the course and
- 2. the student does not accumulate any addition absences other than those noted in section III above.

V. FINS (Family in Need of Services)

Petitions may be filed on any student who has lost credit due to excessive absences.

Approved by Board of Education 07/18/11  
Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12  
Amended by Board of Education 12/09/14

**I. Excessive Absences:**

A. Eleven (11) or more total absences in a semester will be considered excessive. A student's parent or guardian may petition the school for additional absences before the student has accumulated 10 absences. Exceptions are allowed to satisfy an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.

B. Students who accumulate more than ten (10) "regular school absences" and/or "truancy absences" in a class for the semester will not be eligible for credit in that class.

C. Denial of credit may affect promotion and/or graduation of the individual student.

D. Juvenile Court authorities will be notified of all absences in which students under the age of eighteen (18) exceed the ten (10) day limit.

**II. Classification of absences that will count toward the ten (10) day limit in which credit for the course will be denied:**

A. Regular School Absence – A regular school absence is defined as any time the student is not present in class excluding trancies and the types of absences identified in Section III of this policy. Written documentation of parental consent must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

B. Truancy – A truancy is defined as anytime a student is absent from school without the knowledge of the parent/guardian. This may include anytime a student is not in his/her assigned class during the school day.

C. All absences not described as excused are unexcused.

**III. Classification of Absences that DO NOT count toward the ten (10) day limit.**

The following classification of absences will NOT count toward the ten (10) day limit in which credit for the course will be denied:

A. Campus Activity – School sponsored field trips, assemblies, contest, or any other school activity as determined by the building principal.

B. Medical – Student absences due to the directive of the student's medical doctor or doctor/dental appointments. Documentation of doctor/dental appointments must indicate the day and time the student was seen in the doctor/dental office. Appropriate written documentation from doctor/dental office must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

C. Legal – Student absences due to court or legal appointments. Documentation of court/legal appointments must indicate the day and time of required student presence. Appropriate written documentation must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

D. Death in family - Appropriate documentation such as copy of funeral program must be submitted to the attendance office the day the student returns to school.

E. Suspensions - Absences due to out of school suspensions will not count toward the ten (10) day limit.

F. Other extenuating circumstances as reviewed by the administration.

IV. Notification to Parents of Student Absences

A. The student’s parent/guardian shall be notified as required by law and as necessary. At a minimum this notification shall occur when the student has accumulated five (5) and eight (8) absences per class per semester.

B. Notice shall be made by telephone contact or by mail.

C. On the 8th day of absence a letter will notify student and parents that students may attend Saturday school to reverse the number of absences.

D. When a student is absent the eleventh (11th) day in a semester in a specific class, the attendance office will notify student and parent/guardian that the student has violated the attendance policy by accumulating an excessive number of absences. The letter will inform the student and parent of:

1. Credit denial for affected class(es)
2. Appeals process for credit to be reconsidered
3. Student options for credit recovery if applicable
4. Name and contact information of attendance clerk at respective school if additional information is needed

V. Student Responsibilities

A. Students who are denied credit for a class due to excessive absences must remain in the class in which credit was denied and complete assigned work for the remainder of the semester unless student is transferred to another educational facility or program.

B. Students who accumulate more than ten (10) absences in a class for the semester will not be eligible for credit in that class and will receive a “NC” (no credit) in semester grade column of their permanent transcript. Students may participate in an approved credit recovery program to regain credit status.

C. Students who wish to participate in a credit recovery program may apply to do so through the attendance office. The building principal or designee will determine eligibility and guidelines.

VI. Appeal to Reinstate Credit

Students may appeal their denial of credit to the Attendance Committee. The Attendance Committee will operate under the guidelines developed and approved by the principal. The committee shall be made up of at minimum one administrator, one counselor, and one or more faculty members.

The Attendance Committee will take one of the following actions for each appeal:

- A. Uphold the decision to deny credit
- B. Overturn the decision to deny credit and grant an extension
- C. If the decision to deny credit is upheld, the student/parent will be offered a contract that will allow students to attend additional days of school after the semester has ended if:
  - 1. the student has earned a passing grade for the course and
  - 2. the student does not accumulate any addition absences other than those noted in section III above.

7. FINS (Family in Need of Services)

Petitions may be filed on any student who has lost credit due to excessive absences.

The Van Buren Board of Education, in recognition of the importance of a safe and secure school environment and the necessity of providing a school atmosphere that is conducive to learning, expects all students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is in keeping with these interests.

The following activities are considered improper conduct and will subject the student to disciplinary action as indicated. A violation of the rule will occur whether the conduct takes place on the school grounds at any time, off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event, or enroute to or from school on a school bus, or enroute to or from a school event on a school bus or other school vehicle.

- a. No student shall participate in, recruit for, or display the colors of a gang. No student shall wear, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, graffiti, or other items that are evidence of gang affiliation. No student shall commit any act to further the interest of any gang activity, including intimidation, possessing a weapon, fighting, assaulting, or threatening to assault others.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and filing of appropriate legal charges.

- b. No student shall disrupt or interfere with the normal operation of the school, refuse to identify himself/herself on request of any school employee; or encourage other students to violate any rule or school board policy.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and legal action in the courts for any damages.

- c. A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or steal or attempt to steal school property. Parents of minor students under the age of eighteen (18) living with the parents may be liable for damages caused by said minor.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school plus legal action in the courts for damages.

- d. A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to or steal or attempt to steal private property.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school plus legal action to recover damages.

- e. A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a school employee, fellow student, or any other individual.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Suspension (The principal will determine the most appropriate minimum for each individual case).

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and legal action to recover any damages.

- f. A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled, or purported controlled substance as defined in Act 590 of 1971 of the State of Arkansas, as amended, or beverage containing alcohol or intoxicant of any kind.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Suspension from school, notification of parents, notification of police, and recommendation concerning expulsion to the School Board.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Suspension from school, notification of parents, notification of police, expulsion from school, and the filing of any applicable legal charges. Any habitual offender of this rule (2 or more offenses) will be required to go through some rehabilitation program including but not limited to professional counseling in order to return to school.

- g. A student shall not possess any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument, or any contraband materials.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Confiscation of materials and verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and filing of appropriate legal charges.

- h. A student shall not fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, principals, district administrators, school bus drivers or other school personnel.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Ten day suspension.

- i. The school district reserves the right to discipline behavior which is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specified in the preceding rules.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and filing of legal charges to recover damages.

- j. A student shall neither willfully attempt nor threaten to inflict injury upon another student or any school employee. Striking, fighting, or threatening directed at others is forbidden on school premises, on any school trip, or to-and-from school. Rude or abusive language directed toward others is considered abuse and is strictly forbidden. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action and may also constitute a criminal offense. All acts of violence committed on a school campus will be reported to law enforcement personnel.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Expulsion from school and filing of legal complaint.

- k. Individual schools within the district may add specific rules that apply to that school only, provided said rules are not in conflict with any of the above.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

MAXIMUM PENALTY: Ten day suspension from school.

**HABITUAL OFFENDERS** of any of the school rules may receive the maximum penalty of expulsion upon the recommendation of the principal. Detention, in-school suspension, and other penalties that can be administered on the individual school campus are examples of penalties considered to be alternatives between minimum of verbal reprimand and a maximum of three (3) days suspension.

Any of the penalties above when applied to a **STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES** will be imposed after consideration of the student's handicapping condition to determine if the improper action was a result of the handicap. When suspension of a handicapped student is necessary, the student's **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) COMMITTEE** will be convened as soon as possible to determine a suitable education alternative.

A copy of the above discipline policies will be sent home with the students in each school within the Van Buren District during the first week the student is enrolled in that school building. A form to be signed by the parents and the student acknowledging receipt of the rules will be sent along with the rules and should be returned to the school immediately.

If the form acknowledging receipt of the discipline policies has not been signed and returned to the school within one week, a second form will be sent to the parents.

After two weeks, an attempt will be made by the teacher and/or the principal to contact the parents through the mail or by telephone requesting the return of the completed form.

When the completed form is returned, it shall be placed in the student's file. Once the form is in the student's file, additional copies of discipline policies will not need to be sent to the parents unless there are changes or additions to the policies. In case of additions or changes, only the additions or changes must be sent to the parents along with the form to acknowledge receipt. Documentation of the efforts of the teacher and/or the principal to contact the parents and obtain the acknowledgment or receipt of the discipline policies will be placed in the file of the student if the receipt is not obtained.

Ref: A.C.A. 6-18-(501-507)

Approved by the Board of Education 11/12/91

Amended by the Board of Education 09/13/94

Amended by the Board of Education 10/08/02

Amended by the Board of Education 05/19/09

Amended by the Board of Education 06/11/13

Amended by Board of Education 6/09/14

**Student Discipline**

A student may be suspended, expelled or otherwise disciplined for immorality, refractory conduct, insubordination, infectious disease, other infractions of the Student Conduct Behavior Code , or other conduct that would tend to impair the discipline of the school or harm the other pupils, regardless of whether the student’s conduct occurs on or off campus and during or between school terms and regardless of whether a specific prohibition of the conduct is contained in the student handbook.

Approved by Board of Education 08/19/97  
Amended by Board of Education 12/07/10  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

Rules and regulations governing the orderly conduct of the students and the efficient operation of the schools in the Van Buren School District will be sent home by the students at the beginning of the school year, and the parents are asked to acknowledge receipt of these rules and regulations. Students who enroll after the beginning of the school year will receive copies of these policies at the time of registration and parents will, at that time be asked to acknowledge receipt of the policies. The Board of Education and Administration realize that it is necessary to change rules and regulations from time to time as progress continues and new services are added. The policy of the Board is to continually revise and evaluate written policy, keeping foremost in mind greater opportunities for the youth of Van Buren. The following sub-titles are part of the rules and regulations adopted by the Van Buren Board of Education.

- A. **CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEE** – An individual employed by the school district who holds a certificate to teach issued by the Arkansas Department of Education which term includes, but is not limited to, teachers, counselors, coaches and administrators.
- B. **DISMISS** – Removal of a student from a specific classroom by a certificated employee for that class period only.
- C. **EXPULSION**- Prohibition of a student from entering the school or school grounds (except for a prearranged conference with an administrator) either until the end of the semester, the end of the current school year or permanently, depending upon the severity of the offense, with loss of academic credit which action must be taken by the board of education only.
- D. **PARENT** – The term parent shall include every parent, guardian, or person in parental relation having control or charge of any student in attendance in the schools of this district.
- E. **SUSPENSION** – Prohibition of a student from entering the school or school grounds (except for a prearranged conference with an administrator) for a period of time set by the principal or assistant principal of the school or the Superintendent. Suspensions will normally not be longer than 10 school days including the day on which the offense occurred.

Approved by Board of Education 8/14/84

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Van Buren School District recognizes that drug abuse is a significant health problem for students, detrimentally affecting overall health, behavior, learning ability, reflexes, and the total development of each individual. The Van Buren Board of Education is determined to help students by providing another option for them to say “ No”. Drug abuse includes, but is not limited to, the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and the misuse of legal drugs and medications.

**DEFINITIONS****Drug**

Any substance considered illegal by Arkansas Statutes or which is controlled by the Food & Drug Administration unless prescribed by a licensed physician.

**Activity Programs**

Any Activity that meets the guidelines of the Arkansas Activities Association, activities sponsored by the school district, and driving a vehicle to school.

**Parent Request**

Students included upon parental request.

**School Year**

From the first day of classes in the fall, unless the activity begins prior to the first day of classes, in which event, from the first day of practice through the last day of classes in the spring.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Van Buren School District (“ the district”) is conducting a mandatory drug-testing program for students. Its purpose is threefold: (1) to provide for the health and safety of students in all Activity Programs grades 9-12; (2) to undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for students to refuse to use illegal or prescription drugs; and (3) to encourage students who use drugs to participate in drug treatment programs.

**PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS**

**Consent:** Each student wishing to participate in any activity program and the student’s custodial parent or guardian shall consent in writing to drug testing pursuant to the District’s drug testing program. Written consent shall be in the form attached to this policy as FORM A. No student shall be allowed to participate in any activity program absent such consent. Students not involved in activities may be allowed to voluntarily participate in the testing pool with a consent form signed by the parent.

**Student Selection:** At the option of the district, all students in activity programs may be drug tested at the beginning of the school year. In addition, random testing will be conducted during the school year. Selection for random testing will be by lottery drawing from a “pool” of all students participating in activity programs in the district at the time of the drawing. A single test can be required by a principal from a student for reasonable suspicion. The superintendent shall take all reasonable steps to assure the integrity, confidentiality and random nature of the selection process including, but not necessarily limited to, assuring that the names of all participating students are in the pool, assuring that the person drawing names has no way of knowingly choosing or failing to choose particular students for the testing, assuring that the identity of students drawn for testing is not known to those involved in the selection process and assuring direct observation of the process by the least intrusive means possible while assuring brevity and privacy.

### **SAMPLE COLLECTION**

Samples will be collected at a mutually convenient time on the same day the student is selected for testing or if the student is absent on that day, on the day of the student’s return to school. If a student is unable to produce a sample at any particular time, the student will be allowed to return later that same day to provide the sample. All students providing samples will be given the option of doing so alone in an individual stall with the door closed. A student who refuses to provide a sample will not be allowed to participate in any activity program until a sample is provided.

### **TESTING AGENCY**

The district will choose a qualified agency for the purpose of processing sample results and maintaining privacy with respect to test results and related matters.

### **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

Students who are taking prescription medication may provide a copy of the prescription or a doctor’s verification, which will be considered in determining whether a “ positive” test has been satisfactorily explained. That documentation will be forwarded to the testing lab with instructions for the lab to consider the student’s use of such medication to assure the accuracy of the result. Students who refuse to provide verification and test positive will be subject to the actions specified below for “ positive tests”.

### **SCOPE OF TESTS**

The drug screen tests for one or more illegal or prescription drugs. The superintendent or his designee shall decide from week to week which illegal or prescription drugs shall be screened,

but in no event shall that determination be made after selection of students for testing. Student samples will not be screened for the presence of any substances other than an illegal or prescription drug or for the existence of any physical condition other than drug intoxication. As a quality control measure, the school reserves the right to send any urine sample that appears unusual in color and/or consistency to a laboratory for testing and confirmation or non-confirmation.

**LIMITED ACCESS TO RESULTS**

The results will be reported only to the superintendent or to such person as the superintendent may designate in the event the superintendent is absent.

**PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A POSITIVE RESULT**

Whenever a student's test result indicates a positive result, the following will occur: If the sample tests positive, a custodial parent or legal guardian will be notified and a meeting will be scheduled with the Superintendent or his designee, the student, the custodial parent or legal guardian, and the student's principal and head coach or sponsor.

**FIRST POSITIVE RESULT**

For a positive result, the student will be placed on probation and not be allowed to participate in competitions, presentations and activity programs of Van Buren Schools for a period of twenty-one days. The student may be recommended for counseling, if any charge is incurred, it will be the responsibility of the parents. On day twenty-two the student will again be eligible for competitions, presentations and activity programs relating to Van Buren Schools and will again be eligible to be tested if they are randomly selected.

**SECOND POSITIVE RESULT**

For the second positive result in the same year or any two consecutive calendar years, the student will be suspended from participating in activity programs for the remainder of the school year. If this positive test is in the spring semester, the student will not be able to participate during the following fall semester.

**THIRD POSITIVE RESULT**

For the third positive result, the student will be suspended from participating in activity programs for the remainder of his enrollment with the school (may be appealed to the board).

**FAILURE OF COMPLIANCE**

Disregarding any part of first, second, or third positive result may result with the following:

- Driving privileges revoked for determined period of time
- Vehicle being towed from school property
- Suspension from school

**NON-PUNITIVE NATURE OF POLICY**

No student shall be penalized academically for testing positive for illegal or prescription drugs. The results of chemical screenings pursuant to this policy will not be documented in any student's academic records. Information regarding the results of chemical screenings will not be disclosed to criminal or juvenile authorities absent legal compulsion by valid and binding subpoena or other legal process, which the district shall not solicit. In the event of service of any such subpoena or legal process, the student and the student's custodial parent or legal guardian will be notified as soon as possible by the district.

**OTHER DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

The District by accepting this policy is not precluded from utilizing other disciplinary measures set forth in the Student Discipline Policy and this policy does not preclude the District from taking disciplinary procedure and resulting action when founded upon reasonable belief and suspicion that a student has participated in drug related activities.

Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

Amended by Board of Education 02/10/15

**CHEMICAL SCREEN CONSENT FORM**

**4.3.3F1**

VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT CHEMICAL SCREENING CONSENT FORM  
SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16

Dear Parents and Students,

Below, please find the consent form for Chemical Screening required for all students that participate in Sports, Clubs, Organizations, all extracurricular activities, and/or drive a vehicle to school. Every student, 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, is required to turn in this completed form. Please be aware: parents are NOT notified prior to random chemical screening. You may access the complete Van Buren School District Chemical Screen Policy at [www.vbsd.us/districtinfo.html](http://www.vbsd.us/districtinfo.html) and click on the *Student Drug Testing Link*.

**CHEMICAL SCREEN POLICY, GENERAL AUTHORIZATION FORM A**

I understand that my performance as a participant and the reputation of my school are dependent, in part, on my conduct as an individual. I have read and understand the contents of the Van Buren School District Chemical Screen Policy. I hereby agree to accept and abide by the policies, standards, rules and regulations set forth by the Van Buren School District Board and the sponsors for the activity in which I participate.

I also authorize Van Buren School District to conduct a breath scan or a urinalysis to test for drugs and/or alcohol use. I also authorize Van Buren School District to conduct random tests during the current school year. I authorize the release of information concerning the results of such test(s) to the Van Buren School District and to the parents and/or guardians of the student.

This shall be deemed a consent pursuant to the Family Education Right to Privacy Act for the release of above information to the parties named above.

_____	_____	_____
<b>Student Name (Printed)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>School</b>
_____	_____	_____
<b>Student Signature</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Home Phone #</b>
_____	_____	_____
<b>Parent/Guardian Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cell #</b>

**CHECK ALL AREAS OF PARTICIPATION**

<p><b>Students who drive to school</b> are subject to Random Chemical Screening per Van Buren School District Policy. I drive a vehicle to school and have registered my car in the school office. VBHS decal registration number: _____.</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Art Club <input type="checkbox"/> Band <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball <input type="checkbox"/> BETA Club <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerleading <input type="checkbox"/> Chess Club <input type="checkbox"/> Choir <input type="checkbox"/> CIA (Cultures in Action) <input type="checkbox"/> Class Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country <input type="checkbox"/> Dance Team <input type="checkbox"/> Drama Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Drill Team (ROTC) <input type="checkbox"/> East Lab <input type="checkbox"/> FBLA <input type="checkbox"/> FCCLA <input type="checkbox"/> Flag Football <input type="checkbox"/> Football <input type="checkbox"/> FTA <input type="checkbox"/> Geocaching <input type="checkbox"/> Golf <input type="checkbox"/> History Club <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism <input type="checkbox"/> Mu Alpha Theta <input type="checkbox"/> National Honor Society <input type="checkbox"/> Optimist Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Partners Club <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz Bowl <input type="checkbox"/> SHH <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer <input type="checkbox"/> Softball <input type="checkbox"/> Student Senate <input type="checkbox"/> T412 <input type="checkbox"/> TARS <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis <input type="checkbox"/> Track <input type="checkbox"/> Ultimate Frisbee <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NONE</b>



**VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS  
Notification of Second Positive Results of  
Chemical Screen**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, custodial parent/legal guardian of  
\_\_\_\_\_, a student in the Van Buren School System, was notified  
on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) of the first positive chemical screen test results of the  
so named student by \_\_\_\_\_ (School Official). At that time, I

understood that the student would be on probation and not be allowed to participate in competitions,  
presentations and activity programs of Van Buren Schools for a period of twenty one days. I, custodial  
parent/legal guardian of the so named student, was notified of the second positive test results on the date  
of \_\_\_\_\_ (date) by \_\_\_\_\_ (School official).

I understand that under the Van Buren School District's Chemical Screen Policy, which I, the custodial  
parent/guardian consented to when I signed the consent form, the so named student will be suspended  
from competitions, presentations and activity programs for the remainder of the school year. If this  
positive test is in the spring semester, the student will not be able to participate during the fall semester. I  
also understand that I should seek professional counseling and rehabilitation for the named student.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Custodial parent/legal guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Custodial parent/legal guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved by Board of Education 02/10/15

The school board recognizes that among those rights retained by the people under our constitutional form of government is the freedom to govern one's personal appearance. When, however, dress and grooming disrupt the learning process for the individual student, other students, or the learning climate of the school, it becomes a matter subject to disciplinary action.

Student dress, grooming, and appearance are subject to the following guidelines:

- A. Dress and grooming should be clean in keeping with health and sanitary practices.
- B. Students may not wear clothing or hairstyles that can be hazardous to them in their education activities such as shop, lab work, physical education, art or on-the-job training.
- C. Dress and grooming should not disrupt the educational process. Students, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day or at school-sponsored activities and events, may not wear clothing that exposes underwear, buttocks, (sagging), or the breast of a female. Exceptions may apply to a costume or uniform in a school-sponsored activity or event.
- D. A student shall not wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols which cause disruption or interferences with the operation of the school. Individual schools may be more specific in listing those dress and grooming practices that would disrupt the educational process or interfere with the operation of the school.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Verbal reprimand and correction of violation by the student.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Ten day suspension, conference with parents to determine agreement on solution. Continued violation could result in recommendation of expulsion.

Approved by Board of Education 8/14/84  
Amended by Board of Education 6/14/11

**Purpose**

Sexual harassment is sex discrimination under Title IX. It is the policy of the Van Buren School District to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sex discrimination including sexual harassment.

**Authority**

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students or members of the district staff through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below.

**Definitions**

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Verbal harassment or abuse
2. Pressure for sexual activity
3. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
4. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
5. Inappropriate patting or pinching
6. Intentional brushing against a student's or an employee's body
7. Any sexual motivated unwelcome touching

**Procedures**

Any person who alleges sex discrimination or sexual harassment by any staff member or student may use the District's equity complaint procedure (detailed below) or may complain directly to the building principal, guidance counselor, or to Equity Coordinator, Kerry Schneider, the

individual designated to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment or sex discrimination will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades, or work assignments. Use of the provided reporting forms is optional.

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the building principal or guidance counselor or other staff member shall immediately notify the Equity Coordinator without screening or investigating the report. If the report is given verbally, the principal, counselor, or staff member will reduce it to a written form within 24 hours and forward it to the Equity Coordinator. Failure to report any sexual harassment report or complaint as provided will result in disciplinary action taken against that employee. If the complaint involves the building principal or counselor, the complaint may be filed directly with the Superintendent or Equity Coordinator. If the complaint involves the Equity Coordinator, the complaint may be filed with the Superintendent. If the complaint involves the Superintendent, the complaint may be filed with the Equity Coordinator.

The Equity Coordinator shall immediately authorize an investigation, which may be conducted by school officials. A written report on the investigation will be provided to the Equity Coordinator within 10 days of the complaint or report of sexual harassment.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person filing a complaint, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident or circumstances surrounding the complaint.

In addition, the District may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the person filing the complaint, students and employees pending the completion of the investigation.

The Equity Coordinator shall make a report to the Superintendent within two school days of the completion of the investigation.

### **School District Action**

Upon receipt of a recommendation that the complaint is valid, the District will take such action as appropriate based on the results of the investigation. If the harasser is a student, disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion. If the harasser is an employee, disciplinary action may include termination or non-renewal.

The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported in writing to the person filing the complaint by the District. If the harasser is a student, the report will document the action taken as a result of the complaint to the extent permitted by FERPA. If the harasser is an employee of the District, the report will document the action taken as a result of the complaint to the extent permitted by law.

**Reprisal**

The District will discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged sexual harassment or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation proceeding related to a sexual harassment complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

Approved by Board of Education 08/19/97

Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

The Van Buren Board of Education, in recognition of the importance of a safe and secure school environment and the student's right to receive his/her education in an environment that is reasonably free from substantial intimidation, harassment, or harm or threat of harm by another student, expects all students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is keeping with these interest and A.C. 6-18-514. To that end, bullying and hazing are prohibited while in school, on school property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school sponsored activities, or at school sanctioned events.

Bullying is defined as the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, defamation, ridicule, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated and that causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable: physical harm to a public school employee or student or damage to their property; substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education; a hostile educational environment for one (1) or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act; or substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment.

A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a pupil has been a victim of bullying as defined by the district shall be required to report the incident to the principal. The person or persons who file a complaint of bullying will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. A school principal or his/her designee who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall promptly investigate the complaint or report and make a record of the investigation and any action taken as a result of the investigation.

Notice of what constitutes bullying, that bullying is prohibited, and the consequences of engaging in bullying shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, restroom, gymnasium, auditorium, and school bus in the district. Copies of the notice shall be provided to parents, students, school volunteers, and employees. A full copy of this law shall be made available upon request. Bullying is prohibited on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, or disability.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Verbal reprimand by a school employee. **MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Expulsion from school and filing of appropriate legal charges.

Ref Act 1437 A.C. 6-18-514

Approved by Board of Education 5/20/08

Amended by Board of Education 7/18/11

Amended by Board of Education 5/8/2012

Teachers, principals, administrators and service personnel, such as bus drivers, have the authority to take customary and reasonable measures to maintain proper control and discipline among students placed under their care and supervision. Such measures may include the use of reasonable force in the exercise of lawful authority to restrain or correct students and maintain order.

The use of reasonable force by any employee of the Van Buren School District is authorized in the exercise of his/her lawful authority to restrain a refractory student, to protect a student from harm or to maintain order in any school building, on any school property or at any school sponsored event. A report shall be filed as soon as practicable following any incident in which force is used as authorized in this policy by the employee using such force. The report shall include a statement of reasons for the employees' actions, the names of student(s) involved and the names of witnesses and the signature of the employee.

Bus Drivers will be advised of their responsibility for discipline on the bus and their limitations in maintaining control and discipline at the workshop at the beginning of each year, and in written form.

Approved by Board of Education 12/08/92  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

## **PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENTAL CONCERNS AND/OR OTHER COMPLAINTS 4.3.9**

### **Complaints Related to Personnel, Curriculum, Student Discipline, or Other Management or Operational Issues**

It is the intent of the Board of Directors of the Van Buren School District to be responsive to the community it serves and to continuously improve the quality of the educational program offered in its schools. The Board and the District welcome constructive criticism when it is offered with the intent of improving the quality of the system's educational program or the delivery of District services.

The Board formulates, sets goals, and adopts policies to achieve the District's vision and elects a Superintendent and other staff to implement policy. All administrative functions of the District are delegated to the Superintendent who is responsible for the effective administration and supervision of the District. The Superintendent delegates many of these responsibilities to staff employed by the district.

### **Resolution of Parental/Patron Concerns**

Individuals with complaints concerning personnel, curriculum, and student discipline (including specific discipline policies), or other day-to-day operational or management issues should address those complaints according to the following sequence:

- Level One: Teacher or other staff member against whom the complaint is directed
- Level Two: Principal (or appropriate supervisor)
- Level Three: Superintendent (or designee)

School staff shall work with concerned parents and patrons to define the problem, develop possible solutions, and implement the solution to the extent possible.

Except where statutorily allowed or required, student discipline and personnel matters may not be discussed in Board meetings. Individuals with complaints regarding such matters are required to follow the sequence outlined above.

Unless authorized by the Board as a whole for a specific purpose, no individual Board member has any authority when acting alone. District constituents are reminded that the Board serves as a finder of fact, not unlike a jury, in matters such as student expulsions and personnel discipline. For this reason, the Board may not be involved or informed prior to a Board hearing on particular disciplinary matters.

### **Complaints Related to Use of Federal Funds**

Complaints related to district use or administration of federal funds generated through specific programs identified by the Arkansas Department of Education and authorized in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act may be taken directly from a patron or by referral from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). If taken directly from a patron, the complaint may be submitted by either a signed statement or by a certified, recorded deposition or statement in which the complainant is identified.

**PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENTAL CONCERNS AND/OR OTHER COMPLAINTS 4.3.9**

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Complaints related to use of federal funds shall be addressed in the following manner:

1. The complaint shall be referred to the Director of Federal Programs, who shall assemble a team of not less than two people to investigate the complaint.
2. Throughout the investigation, sufficient notes and records will be taken and maintained to substantiate the findings of the investigation.
3. The team will interview the complainant and others as necessary to enable the team to make a determination of the validity of the complaint. The team may consult with individuals with knowledge or expertise in the matter which is the subject of the complaint to include legal counsel.
4. The investigation of complaints referred by the ADE shall be completed within 30 work days of receipt of the complaint unless a longer time period has been approved by the ADE.
5. The investigation of complaints made directly to the district shall be completed within 40 work days unless there are extenuating circumstances; in such case, a preliminary report shall be made within 40 work days of receipt of the complaint, which shall include an explanation of the unusual circumstances requiring additional time to complete the investigation.
6. The report of the conclusions of the investigation shall be given to the complainant. It shall contain a summary of the allegations of the complaint, a summary of the investigative actions taken by the team, a summary of the findings concerning each alleged violation or implied violation, a statement of corrective actions needed to resolve the issues involved in each allegation and finding of complaint.

Legal Reference:

Approved by Board of Education 4/14/09

It shall be the right of any administrator, teacher, or designated employee in the Van Buren School District to search the person, possessions, locker, vehicles, or any property within the school, on school grounds, on school property, or during school activities and seize any illegal or contraband materials.

The search of a student's person, property, possessions, or vehicle shall be limited to a situation in which the administration has reason to believe that evidence of an illegal act, evidence of contraband, or evidence of any violation of school rule is being concealed.

Lockers are property of the Van Buren School District, are subject to periodic administrative searches, and can be searched without consent of the student.

Approved by Board of Education 03/10/09

A teacher may dismiss for disciplinary reasons any student from class. The teacher shall, when feasible, accompany the student to the office of the principal or designee and shall, as soon as practical, but no later than the end of the school day in which the student is dismissed, file with the principal a written statement of the reason or reasons for the student's dismissal from class. The principal or designee shall determine whether to reinstate the student in class, reassign him/her, or take other disciplinary action.

Each principal is authorized to suspend students from school for a period of up to five days for disciplinary reasons. Suspension of students by the principal for periods up to ten days is authorized if approved by the Superintendent of Schools or designee. Unless administrators imposing suspensions have personally witnessed the infractions, they will conduct such investigation into the matter as they deem necessary, including an interview with the subject student.

Before imposing suspensions administrators will advise students orally or in writing of the nature of their misconduct and, if they deny the misconduct, an explanation of the evidence the school authorities have, at which time students shall have the opportunity to present their version of what happened as a means of defense or mitigation.

The administrator suspending a student shall notify the custodial parent by telephone if possible and if not, by certified mail, of the suspension, which shall include the reasons for the suspension, its duration, and the manner in which the student may be readmitted to school, and if a review may be provided. The notification, if by telephone, will be made the day the suspension is imposed or, if by certified mail, the letter will be mailed on the day the suspension is imposed to the parent at the address reflected on the records of the school district.

The administrator conducting the informal hearing or advising students of their misconduct and providing students the opportunity to present their version of what happened shall write a brief summary of the procedure to be kept in the school files.

Any conduct that tends to be disruptive of the education program will be grounds for suspension. Disruptive conduct that could result in penalties ranging from a verbal reprimand to ten days suspension includes but is not limited to:

- cutting classes,
- leaving school grounds at any time without permission,
- truancy,
- fighting,
- destruction of school property (students will also pay for damage),
- violation of driving or parking regulations,

- defiant or hostile acts,
- insubordination,
- act involving moral turpitude, and
- disrespect for authority.

All students returning to school after expiration of a suspension must be accompanied by a parent or a guardian, unless contact has been made with the principal giving satisfactory reasons why the parent or guardian cannot or need not appear.

Approved by Board of Education 08/14/84  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

## **EMERGENCY SUSPENSION**

**4.5.1**

Notwithstanding the policy concerning suspension and expulsion procedure, students may be suspended indefinitely without notice, hearing, and the other rights provided herein being first given where the school is undergoing a violent upheaval or where orderly educational processes have otherwise been disrupted. In all such cases, notice, hearings and other rights shall be provided in accordance with normal provisions at the earliest practical date that the restoration of order permits.

Approved by Board of Education 8/14/84

**Assault, Threatened Assault and Abuse**

Definitions:

“**Assault**” is the willful attempt or threat to inflict injury upon the person of another, coupled with the apparent present ability to do so. Any display of force that would give the victim reason to fear bodily harm is assault, even if touching or striking does not occur.

“**Battery**” is similar to assault, but requires unexcused physical touching or injury.

“**Abuse**” means to wrong in speech, reproach coarsely, disparage, revile, or malign. Use of profanity or vulgar expressions directed at another person is considered abuse.

**Statement of Policy:**

Students are to keep their hands to themselves, and treat teachers and fellow students with respect and courtesy. Horseplay and physical teasing, as well as shoving, striking, fighting or threatening others with physical injury, etc., constitute battery and/or assault, and are strictly forbidden. Profanity and rude and abusive language directed at others is considered abuse, and that is also strictly forbidden. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, and may also constitute a criminal offense. By law, local law enforcement must be notified whenever a felony or an act of violence may have been committed on campus.

Approved by Board of Education 8/19/97

Gangs, secret societies, or other similar groups, whether organized in the community or in other settings, are prohibited on the school grounds and campus and at any school-sponsored activity. Gang-related activity — whether genuine or a pretense — that is identified by school officials will result in a minimum (5) day out-of-school suspension up to a maximum of expulsion for the remainder of the semester. A second offense of gang-related activity will result in a recommendation for expulsion for the remainder of the semester, the remainder of the school year, for one calendar year, or permanently.

Students who are arrested for gang-related offenses, regardless of where the offense may have occurred, may be expelled for the remainder of the semester, for the remainder of the school year, for one calendar year, or permanently, depending on the circumstances of the arrest. Gang related activities include but are not limited to such activities as wearing apparel associated with gangs, displaying gang insignia, “throwing signs” or other gestures or language (however expressed) associated with gangs, intimidation, and threats.

At Van Buren, students may have the opportunity to use a variety of technologies, including computers and the Internet. Students are to use this technology as directed by the staff in conformity with school curriculum. Internet chatlines and/or chatrooms have no instructional value, therefore both are prohibited. Students using technology in an inappropriate manner and/or as not directed by the school are in violation of school policy and subject to discipline, up to and including loss of technology privileges (which may involve loss of credit).

Students who use technology to violate other policies will be subject to discipline for both the misuse of technology as well as the policy violation. Example: A student sending a threatening e-mail message to another student would be disciplined for misusing technology and threatening another student.

**Penalties:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Warning and explanation of the appropriate usage of technology.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Loss of technology privileges for a minimum of one week or a maximum of two weeks.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Loss of technology privileges for a minimum of one month or a maximum of one grading period.

Additional offenses will be subject to further disciplinary action as determined by the principal.

Approved by Board of Education 8/19/97

**TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES —Act 779 of 1997,  
Act 1099 of 2013**

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**4.9**

Students of the Van Buren School District are not permitted to use tobacco products on campus or at school activities.

Act 1099 of 2013 prohibits the use of e-cigarettes on any school campus or during school sponsored activities.

Students of the Van Buren School District are not permitted to possess tobacco or e-cigarette products on the campus or at school activities.

Approved by Board of Education 08/19/97  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13  
Amended by Board of Education 05/12/15

The Board of Education may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District's written discipline policies. The Superintendent may make a recommendation of expulsion to the Board of Education for student conduct deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate, or where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly learning environment or would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardians (mailed to the address reflected on the District's records) that he/she will recommend to the Board of Education that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the Board of Education will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of the Board and student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The President of the Board, Hearing Officer, or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the Board unless the parent, or student if age 18 or older, requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the Board shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Superintendent or his/her designee will present evidence that gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student or his/her representative may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be permitted; however, any member of the Board, the Superintendent or his/her designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement. The student may be questioned. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited on school campus by law. The Superintendent shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for such student on a case-by-case basis.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-507  
Approved by Board of Education 4/14/09

**POSSESSION OF PAGING DEVICE OR SIMILAR  
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE**

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**4.11**

Arkansas Code Ann. 6-18-502 (b)(2)(D)(Repl. 1993) prohibits the possession by students of pagers or beepers on school campuses, except when they are required for health or medical reasons.

Exceptions may be made for students to possess cellular phones on campus for after school activities. Cell phones and other electronic communication devices can, in controlled situations, offer a means to enhance student learning through their ability to access expanded sources of information. Teachers have the authority to permit student use of their cell phones for specific classroom lesson plans or projects. Students must abide by the guidelines the teacher gives for any such authorization. Students who fail to do so will be subject to the provisions of this policy governing misuse of cell phones.

Violations of the above policy may result in probation, as a minimum, or expulsion, as a maximum, and referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Approved by Board of Education 8/15/00  
Amended by Board of Education 4/13/04  
Amended by Board of Education 7/18/11

VBSD is pleased to offer students access to district computers, communications systems (email, web sites, smart phones, blogging, podcasting and/or other emerging technologies), the Internet and an array of technology resources to promote educational excellence and innovation.

Students may bring personal technology, including computers, smart phones, network access devices, or other electronic signaling devices to school provided that such technology is used for instructional purposes.

Whether or not student-owned devices are permitted to be used in the classroom during instructional time will be determined by the individual teacher. Students shall abide by the instructions provided by teachers and other school staff in the use of such personal technologies.

Access to the Internet or other District communication systems from personal technology is limited to wireless access points on the school campuses or other access devices away from school. VBSD assumes no responsibility or liability for personal technology devices that are stolen, lost, or damaged. VBSD will not provide technical support for personal devices.

It is unacceptable to send, access, submit, publish, display or print over the Internet or VBSD network, or using VBSD technology resources, any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive or illegal material. Cyber bullying is specifically prohibited. It shall be the student's responsibility to report the inappropriate use, web site, or communication to the student's teacher or other staff member.

The use of VBSD technology resources is not private; students should not expect that files stored on or transmitted via the District's resources will be confidential. All digital transmissions are subject to inspection and/or monitoring by District employees and other officials. Digital storage is VBSD property, and as such, network administrators will review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using technology responsibly.

Copyright ©, Trademark <sup>TM</sup> and/or Registered <sup>®</sup> laws must be adhered to at all times. All materials from the Internet and other digital resources, including graphics, which are used in student projects or reports, must be properly cited. Copyrighted, Trademarked or Registered materials may not be placed on the Internet without the permission of the author.

Violations of the above policy may result in probation or loss of access as a minimum, or expulsion, as a maximum, and referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Approved by Board of Education 6/12/2012

Any child who becomes ill or injured at school shall be cared for by the nurse, or other school personnel. The parents, or a person designated on the student's Emergency Call Card, will be notified to pick up the student if they are found to have an above normal temperature, and/or signs of illness.

In order to minimize the spread of illnesses, students are expected to be free of fever without the use of fever reducing medications for twenty-four hours before returning to school. In the event of severe illness or injury requiring immediate medical attention, every attempt will be made to contact a parent before transporting to a medical facility.

Medications will be administered at school as prescribed by the student's Health Care Provider and in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the School Health Services Program of the Arkansas Department of Education. This includes self-carry medications allowable by state law that may be needed for emergency self-administration.

References: CDC Control and Prevention  
Standard 7.3.3.2 Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety  
Performance Standards

Legal References: Statutes: 6-18-707 (2005)  
National Association of State Boards of Education

Approved by Board of Education 02/09/88  
Amended by Board of Education 11/14/06  
Amended by Board of Education 05/12/15

Students with communicable diseases or with human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment shall demonstrate respect for other students by not attending school while they are capable of transmitting their condition to others. Students whom the school nurse determines are unwell or unfit for school attendance or who are believed to have a communicable disease or condition will be required to be picked up by their parent or guardian. Specific examples include, but are not limited to: chicken pox, measles, scabies, conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), impetigo/MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), streptococcal and staphylococcal infections, ringworm, mononucleosis, Hepatitis A, B, or C, mumps, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever (100.4 F when taken orally). A student who has been sent home by the school nurse will be subsequently readmitted, at the discretion of the school nurse, when the student is no longer a transmission risk. In some instances, a letter from a health care provider may be required prior to the student being readmitted to the school.

To help control the possible spread of communicable diseases, school personnel shall follow the District's exposure control plan when dealing with any bloodborne, foodborne, and airborne pathogens exposures. Standard precautions shall be followed relating to the handling, disposal, and cleanup of blood and other potentially infectious materials such as all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat).

A student enrolled in the District who has an immunization exemption may be removed from school at the discretion of the Arkansas Department of Health during an outbreak of the disease for which the student is not vaccinated. The student may not return to the school until the outbreak has been resolved and the student's return to school is approved by the Arkansas Department of Health.

The parents or legal guardians of students found to have live human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment will be asked to pick their child up at the end of the school day. The parents or legal guardians will be given information concerning the eradication and control of human host parasites. A student may be readmitted after the school nurse or designee has determined the student no longer has live human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment.

Each school may conduct screenings of students for human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment as needed. The screenings shall be conducted in a manner that respects the privacy and confidentiality of each student.

Legal References:     A.C.A §6-18-702  
                           Arkansas State Board of Health Rules and Regulations Pertaining to  
                           Immunization Requirements

Approved by Board of Education 08/15/89  
Amended by Board of Education 05/12/15

The school may, without the consent of either students or parents, release student records to school officials who have a proper educational purpose in examining the information.

No other person should have access to student records except when proper written consent to the release of such records has been obtained. The consent must be given by the students' parents or guardian except when students reach the age of 18 years, their consent and not that of their parents must be obtained to release the information. Students who meet these requirements must consent to parental access to their records.

Student records may be released under compulsion of law and data for outside research purposes may be released in such form that no individual student is identifiable.

Parents shall have the right to contest or correct the material viewed by them as incorrect, misleading or harmful.

Reports made and/or received by counselors or other personnel of the Van Buren School District under the provisions of A.C.A. 12-12-500 through A.C.A 12-12-515 are confidential and must be treated with great care.

State law allows Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police to interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. The principal or the principal’s designee shall not attempt to contact the student’s parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student by court order, or person acting in loco parentis on student enrollment forms if presented documentation by the investigator that notification is prohibited because a parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing in loco parentis is named as an alleged offender of the suspected child maltreatment.

In the Van Buren School District, counselors making or receiving such reports shall be responsible for seeing that their confidentiality is protected by keeping them in a special file in the counselor’s office.

The permanent record of the student(s) who are subjects in these reports may be marked to indicate that special information about them exists in a special file, but under no circumstance shall this information be made a part of their permanent file.

Ref: A.C.A. 12-12-500-515

Act 450 of 1991

Approved by Board of Education 11/12/91

Amended by Board of Education 7/18/11

Parental authorization for surveys or questionnaires administered to students.

- I. Questionnaires or surveys administered in public schools.
  - A. A public school or public school district shall not administer or permit to be administered a questionnaire or survey that requests or requires a student to supply any personal identifying information unless written permission is obtained from the student's parent or legal guardian prior to the administration of the questionnaire or survey.
  - B. To obtain written permission to administer a questionnaire or survey that requests or requires a student to supply any personal identifying information, the public school or public school district must give the student's parent or legal guardian an opportunity to review the questionnaire or survey and must give the parent or guardian written notice specifying:
    1. How the questionnaire or survey will be administered to the student;
    2. How the results of the questionnaire or survey or questionnaire will be utilized;
    3. The persons or entities that will have access to the results of the completed questionnaire or survey.
  - C. A student's parent or legal guardian may refuse to allow the student, to participate in any specified questionnaire or survey.
- II. Questionnaire or Survey
  - A. "Questionnaire or survey" means a list or group of questions, responses to which are provided to a person or entity other than a public school, a public school district, the Department of Education, or any branch of the federal government.
  - B. "Questionnaire or survey" does not include:
    - Tests mandated by state or federal law or regulation; or
    - Standardized scholastic achievement tests.

Literature soliciting donations for charitable organizations may not be sent home by the children.

Approved by Board of Education 8/14/84

**SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS-CLASS  
OF 2018 AND THEREAFTER 4.45.1**

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All students are required to participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless their parents or guardians, or the students if they are 18 years of age or older, sign a *Smart Core Waiver Form* to not participate. While Smart Core is the default option, both a *Smart Core Informed Consent Form* and a *Smart Core Waiver Form* will be sent home with students prior to their enrolling in seventh grade, or when a 7-12 grade student enrolls in the district for the first time and there is not a signed form in the student's permanent record. Parents must sign one of the forms and return it to the school so it can be placed in the students' permanent records. This policy is to be included in student handbooks for grades 6-12 and both students and parents must sign an acknowledgement they have received the policy. Those students not participating in the Smart Core curriculum will be required to fulfill the Core curriculum or the requirements of their IEP (when applicable) to be eligible for graduation. Counseling by trained personnel shall be available to students and their parents or legal guardians prior to the time they are required to sign the consent forms.

While there are similarities between the two curriculums, following the Core curriculum may not qualify students for some scholarships and admission to certain colleges could be jeopardized. Students initially choosing the Core curriculum may subsequently change to the Smart Core curriculum **providing** they would be able to complete the required course of study by the end of their senior year. Students wishing to change their choice of curriculums must consult with their counselor to determine the feasibility of changing.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and parents at least every other year to determine if changes need to be made to better serve the needs of the district's students. The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall select the composition of the review panel.

Sufficient information relating to Smart Core and the district's graduation requirements shall be communicated to parents and students to ensure their informed understanding of each. This may be accomplished through any or all of the following means.

- Inclusion in the student handbook of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements;
- Discussion of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements at the school's annual public meeting, PTA meetings, or a meeting held specifically for the purpose of informing the public on this matter;
- Discussions held by the school's counselors with students and their parents; and/or
- Distribution of a newsletter(s) to parents or guardians of the district's students.

Administrators, or their designees, shall train newly hired employees, required to be licensed as a condition of their employment, regarding this policy. The district's annual professional development shall include the training required by this paragraph.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The number of units students must earn to be eligible for high school graduation is to be earned from the categories listed below. A minimum of 22 units is required for graduation for a student participating in either the Smart Core or Core curriculum. In addition to the 22 units required for graduation by the Arkansas

Department of Education, the district requires an additional 2 units to graduate for a total of 24 units. The additional required units may be taken from any electives offered by the district. There are some distinctions made between Smart Core units and Graduation units. Not all units earned toward graduation necessarily apply to Smart Core requirements.

### **Digital Learning Courses**

The District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format. In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

### **SMART CORE: Sixteen (16) units**

English: four (4) units – 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units (all students under Smart Core must take a mathematics course in grade 11 or 12 and complete Algebra II.)

- Algebra I or Algebra A & B\* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9
- Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A & B\* which may be taken in grades 8-9 or 9-10

\*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four-unit requirement for the purpose of meeting the **graduation** requirement, but only serve as one unit each toward fulfilling the **Smart Core** requirement.

- Algebra II
- Beyond Algebra II: this can include Pre-Calculus, Calculus, AP Statistics, Algebra III, Advanced Topic and Modeling in Mathematics, Mathematical Applications and Algorithms, Linear Systems and Statistics, or any of several IB or Advanced Placement math courses (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)

**SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS-CLASS  
OF 2018 AND THEREAFTER** **4.45.1**

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Page Three

Natural Science: a total of three (3) units with lab experience chosen from  
One unit of Biology; and

Two units chosen from the following three categories (there are acceptable options listed by the  
ADE for each)

- Physical Science
- Chemistry
- Physics or Principles of Technology I & II or PIC Physics

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics one-half (1/2) unit
- World History - one unit
- American History - one unit

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit

**Note:** While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be  
applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (1/2) unit

Economics – one half (1/2) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course,  
this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career  
Focus elective credits.<sup>8</sup>

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit

**CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units**

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on  
the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the  
curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course  
sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

**CORE: Sixteen (16) units**

English: four (4) units – 9, 10, 11, and 12

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit

**SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS-CLASS  
OF 2018 AND THEREAFTER** **4.45.1**

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Page Four

Mathematics: four (4) units

- Algebra or its equivalent\* - 1 unit
- Geometry or its equivalent\* - 1 unit
- All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
- (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)

\*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science: three (3) units

- at least one (1) unit of biology or its equivalent
- one (1) unit of a physical science

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics one-half (1/2) unit
- World history, one (1) unit
- American History, one (1) unit

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit

**Note:** While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (1/2) unit

Economics – one half (½) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit

**CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units**

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

Legal References: Standards of Accreditation 9.03 – 9.03.1.9, 14.02  
ADE Guidelines for the Development of Smart Core Curriculum Policy  
ADE Rules Governing the Digital Learning Act of 2013  
Smart Core Informed Consent Form 2014  
Smart Core Waiver Form 2014  
A.C.A. § 6-16-1406

Approved by Board of Education 12/09/14

**SMART CORE INFORMED CONSENT FORM (CLASS OF 2018 and After)**

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of District:** Van Buren School District  
**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

Smart Core is Arkansas’s college- and career-ready curriculum for high school students.

College- and career-readiness in Arkansas means that students are prepared for success in entry-level, credit-bearing courses at two-year and four-year colleges and universities, in technical postsecondary training, and in well-paid jobs that support families and have pathways to advancement. To be college- and career ready, students need to be adept problem solvers and critical thinkers who can contribute and apply their knowledge in novel contexts and unforeseen situations. Smart Core *is the foundation* for college- and career-readiness. All students should supplement with additional rigorous coursework within their career focus.

Successful completion of the Smart Core curriculum is one of the eligibility requirements for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship. Failure to complete the Smart Core curriculum for graduation *may* result in negative consequences such as conditional admission to college and ineligibility for scholarship programs.

Parents or guardians may waive the right for a student to participate in Smart Core and to instead participate in the Core curriculum. The parent must sign the separate Smart Core Waiver Form to do so.

**SMART CORE CURRICULUM**

**English – 4 units**

- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

**Mathematics – 4 units**

- Algebra I or Algebra A & B (Grades 7-8 or 8-9)
- Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A & B (Grades 8-9 or 9-10)
- Algebra II
- Fourth Math Choice of: Transitions to College Math, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Trigonometry, Statistics, Computer Math, Algebra III or an Advanced Placement mathematics (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable.)

**Natural Science – 3 units with lab experience chosen from:**

- Physical Science
- Biology or Applied Biology/Chemistry
- Chemistry
- Physics or Principles of Technology I & II or PIC Physics

**Social Studies – 3 units**

- Civics – ½ unit
- World History – 1 unit
- U.S. History – 1 unit

**Oral Communications – ½ unit**

**Physical Education – ½ unit**

**Health and Safety – ½ unit**

**Economics – ½ unit** (may be counted toward Social Studies or Career Focus)

**Fine Arts – ½ unit**

**Career Focus – 6 units**

**Beginning with the entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 2014-2015 school year, each high school student shall be required to take at least one digital learning course for credit to graduate.** (Act 1280 of 2013)  
(Comparable concurrent credit may be substituted where applicable.)

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have been informed of the requirements and implementation of the Smart Core curriculum and am choosing the Smart Core curriculum for my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Official Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

In order to ensure that every student has access to a rigorous curriculum, beginning with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class of 2004-2005 academic year, the Smart Core Curriculum and the Common Core curriculum will be standard components of the required course of study to graduate from Arkansas public schools.

All students will participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless the parent or guardian waives a student's right to participate. In case of a waiver, the student will complete requirements for a Core diploma.

Parents and Students will be notified of Smart Core curriculum beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Parents may be informed of their curricular choices through counselor meetings, parent teacher conferences, CAPS meetings, PTA, newsletters, student handbooks, etc.

During the spring semester of the sixth grade year, parents will be required to sign the Informed Consent Forms. Informed Consent Forms become a part of the student's permanent record and are attached to the transcript.

Students transferring to other schools and/or districts will have transferred, as a part of their permanent record, the signed Informed Consent Form.

Parents will be provided the option of changing the Informed Consent Form by contacting the building principal in writing. Requests will be honored only if the student can complete the newly selected course of study by the end of their senior year.

Appropriate school personnel including teachers, counselors, and administrators will be informed and trained about the provisions of this policy.

Standards of Accreditation 9.03.1.1-1.4  
Approved by Board of Education 06/07/04  
Amended by Board of Education 01/07/09  
Amended by Board of Education 06/09/09  
Amended by Board of Education 02/11/14

ACT 675 of 2003 requires students in grades 9-12 to attend school a full school day. Seniors are expected to maximize their senior year by attending a full day of classes. Early release from school for employment reasons will NOT be approved unless there is an extenuating family circumstance that places an extreme financial hardship on the family.

Parents or guardians who have proof of financial hardship due to their senior attending a full day of classes and wanting their child released early from school must complete the “Request for Early Release” form and schedule an appointment with the high school administration. ACT 675 does not affect students attending vocational education training, college courses and school work-release programs.

**I. Philosophy and Intent**

Grades assigned to students for performance shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Grades that are aligned with other educational objectives such as the student learning expectations contained in the curriculum frameworks may also be given.

The basis for evaluating student progress is intended to address the need for information concerning the academic progress of students. The purposes of the grading system are:

- To give information for pupil guidance and counseling.
- To show the achievement of pupils.
- To assist in promotion, retention, transfer, and grade placement.
- To inform parents of the progress of their children.
- To help administrators evaluate the effectiveness of the school program.

**II. Report Cards and Grade Reporting**

In the Van Buren School District, a report card shall be provided at the end of each grading period, but no less than four (4) times each school year. The report card shall be (a) mailed to the last known address of the student, (b) given to a parent at a parent/teacher conference, or (c) sent home with the student. Parents shall not be required to provide postage or self-addressed envelopes to receive a report card.

**III. Grading Scale for Secondary Schools**

The grading scale for students in grades 6-12 shall be:

90 -- 100 A  
80 -- 89 B  
70 -- 79 C  
60 -- 69 D  
00 -- 59 F

**IV. Determining Grade Point Averages**

For the purpose of determining Official Grade Point Averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be as follows:

A = 4 points  
B = 3 points  
C = 2 points  
D = 1 point  
F = 0 points

The grade point values for Advanced Placement courses shall be one point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall be worth zero points. To receive credit on the 5.0 scale students must take the entire AP course and complete the applicable test offered by the College Board. The 5.0 scale applies to AP or Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Approved Honors Courses.

For class rank purposes the Grade Point Average policy 5.21 will be followed.

## V. Elementary Schools

Student learning in grades K-5 will be reported through the use of a Standards-Based reporting system.

The primary purpose of the K-5 grading system is to communicate to both students and parents each student's level of learning relative to Arkansas Standards. A Standards-Based reporting system helps achieve consistent, accurate, meaningful grades and grades that support learning as defined by Arkansas Standards.

The following ratings indicate a student's progress in relation to the year-end standards.

**Level 4 -- Exceeding Standards:** Students who exceed the standards demonstrate superior performance (more depth/extension with grade-level work) well beyond proficient grade-level performance. They can apply established reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills to solve complex problems and complete demanding tasks on their own. They can make insightful connections between abstract and concrete ideas and provide well-supported explanations and arguments.

**Level 3 -- Meeting Standards:** Students who are meeting standards demonstrate solid academic performance for the grade level. They can use established reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills and knowledge to solve problems and complete tasks on their own. Students can tie ideas together and explain the ways their ideas are connected.

**Level 2 -- Approaching Standards:** Students who are approaching the standards show substantial skills in reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education skills; however, they only partially demonstrate the abilities to apply these skills.

**Level 1 -- Below Standards:** Students who are below standards fail to show sufficient mastering of skills in reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, art, music or physical education to attain the basic level.

Ref: AC 6-15-903

Approved by Board of Education: 8/14/84

Amended by Board of Education: 12/8/98

Amended by Board of Education: 6/7/04

Amended by Board of Education: 5/8/07

Amended by Board of Education: 6/12/2007

Amended by Board of Education: 6/9/09

Amended by Board of Education: 4/19/11

Amended by Board of Education 6/9/14

In the Van Buren School District, each child is viewed as a special individual with unique potential, needs, and interests. The district believes it is appropriate to require students to complete reasonable academic work outside the regular instructional day. Such homework shall derive from the philosophy of the district and shall be an extension of classroom instruction.

The purpose of homework shall be to reinforce learning through independent practice. Homework shall not be utilized as initial instruction to new student learning. The following Guiding Principles are hereby established to support teachers and students regarding homework.

### **Guiding Principles**

- Homework must be relevant to instruction in the classroom; its use shall reinforce learning through independent practice.
- Homework should be tailored to the needs of the individual student.
- Prior to being assigned as homework, skills should be taught in the classroom.
- Homework assignments should be reasonable in length considering the age, grade level, and individual needs of the student. Students should not be overwhelmed with homework assignments which are unreasonable in length.
- Students should not be burdened with formal classroom assessments in three or more subjects per day,
- Homework should be purposeful – not busywork.
- Homework assignments should be planned and communicated to students and parents at the beginning of each grading period.
- Homework shall not be assigned for punitive reasons.
- Systems shall be established in each school to monitor the quality, use, and effectiveness of homework.

### **Homework Monitoring Systems**

Under the leadership of the principal, each school shall adopt homework guidelines and procedures as noted below. It is the responsibility of both principal and teacher to ensure that the following homework systems are fully implemented. Monitoring systems will be implemented to ensure balance in homework assigned to students, to ensure assessment practices which do not require students to take multiple tests in any single student day, and to ensure full implementation of the district homework policy.

#### **A. Grades K-4**

- a. K-2 students should be assigned no more than 20 minutes of combined homework\* per day.

- b. Grade 3-4 students should be assigned no more than 40 minutes of combined homework per day.
  - c. Students should not be overwhelmed with multiple classroom assessments on the same day; therefore, grade-level teachers will work with principals and curriculum coaches to ensure that student learning is not formally assessed in more than one content area per day (excluding standardized tests).
  - d. Homework will be worth no more than 20% of a student's grade.
  - e. Grade-level teachers will work together to ensure that homework assignments and classroom assessments are implemented within the established limits of this policy.
- B. Grades 5-6
- a. Grade 5-6 students should not be assigned more than 60 minutes of combined homework per day.
  - b. Grade-level teachers will work together to ensure that homework is scheduled and communicated to parents in writing at the beginning of each grading period.
  - c. Grade-level teachers will work together to ensure that student learning is not formally assessed in more than one content area per day (excluding standardized tests). Students should not be overwhelmed with multiple classroom assessments on the same day.
  - d. Homework will be worth no more than 20% of a student's grade.
  - e. Grade-level teachers will work together to ensure that homework assignments and formal classroom assessments are implemented within the established limits of this policy.
- C. Grades 7-8
- a. Grade 7-8 students should not be assigned more than 80 minutes of combined homework per day.
  - b. Grade-level and subject area teachers will work together to ensure that student learning is not formally assessed in more than two content areas per day (excluding standardized tests and nine-weeks or semester exams). Students should not be overwhelmed with multiple classroom assessments on the same day.
  - c. Grade 7-8 teachers will develop a syllabus for each subject taught. The syllabus will include a course description, grading scale, and schedule for homework and formal classroom assessments for each grading period. It is understood that scheduling may be affected by outside events, so some variation in schedules for homework and tests is expected; however, the intent of this system is for teachers to work together to ensure that students are not overwhelmed with homework and/or formal classroom assessments on any single day.

- d. In the development of the course syllabus with its homework and assessment schedules, teachers, curriculum coaches, and principals should ensure that homework assignments in subject areas do not go beyond the 80-minute limit for combined homework.
- e. Homework will be worth no more than 20% of a student's grade.
- f. Grade-level and/or content-area teachers will work together to ensure that homework assignments and formal classroom assessments are implemented within the established limits of this policy.
- g. Long-term student projects will not be considered daily homework; however, teachers will ensure that special projects are given ample time to complete.

**D. Grades 9-12**

- a. Grade 9-12 students should not be assigned more than 100 minutes of combined homework per day.
- b. Grade-level teachers will work together to ensure that student learning is not formally assessed in more than two content areas per day (excluding standardized tests and semester exams). Students should not be overwhelmed with multiple classroom assessments on the same day.
- c. Grade 9-12 teachers will develop a syllabus for each subject taught. The syllabus will include a course description, grading scale, and schedule for homework and tests for each grading period. It is understood that scheduling may be affected by outside events, so some variation in schedules for homework and tests is expected; however, the intent of this system is for teachers to work together to ensure that students are not overwhelmed with homework and classroom assessments on any given day.
- d. In the development of the course syllabus with its homework and assessment schedules, teachers, curriculum coaches, and principals should ensure that homework assignments in subject areas do not go beyond the 100-minute limit for combined homework.
- e. Homework will be worth no more than 20% of a student's grade.
- f. Grade-level and/or content-area teachers will work together to ensure that homework assignments and formal classroom assessments are implemented within the established limits of this policy.
- g. Long-term student projects will not be considered daily homework; however, teachers will ensure that special projects are given ample time to complete.

**Parent Support**

The district recognizes that academic achievement is a joint responsibility among the teacher, principal, student, and parent. In all levels of schooling, parents are encouraged to be supportive

of student learning and become a partner in independent practice activities designed to help develop student learning. Parents can establish a supportive learning environment in the home by helping establish good study conditions, monitoring the child's study habits, demonstrating a positive attitude toward student work, and providing other support to the child as needed.

Parents may be asked to sign a document verifying reading logs, agendas, or other student expectations; however, whether the parent signs the document will have no impact on the student receiving credit for the homework or other assignment.

\*For the purposes of this policy, combined homework is defined as the total amount of homework assigned to a student in all subject areas in one day.

Approved by Board of Education 8/14/84  
Amended by Board of Education 6/07/04  
Amended by Board of Education 2/12/2008  
Amended by Board of Education 6/12/2012

The promotion of pupils in the elementary school will be determined by the teacher when the teacher feels the pupil will be able to do advanced work. This would generally mean that a student who is regular in attendance for the year and makes passing grades will be promoted. Promotion policies will take into consideration the individual pupil's abilities, the school's objectives, and the curriculum and social conditions of the next grade.

Approved by Board of Education 08/21/12

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS 2014 through 2017

5.14F1

## Graduating Class of 2014 - 2017

Beginning with the graduating class of 2014 and thereafter Smart Core requirements decrease Civics from 1 unit to .5 units. Smart Core and Core diplomas requires .5 unit Economics.

Department	Core General Diploma**	Smart Core General Diploma	College Prep Diploma	College Prep Honors	College Prep High Honors
<b>Math</b>	(4) Algebra ** Geometry 2 additional units VBSD offers: Algebraic Conn. Algebra 2	(4) Algebra ** Geometry Algebra 2 Fourth Year Math beyond Alg 2 *All students must take a math course in grade 11 or 12	(4) Algebra ** Geometry Algebra 2 Algebra 3 or Trig/PreCal *All students must take a math course in grade 11 or 12	(4) Algebra ** Geometry Algebra 2 Trig/PreCal *All students must take a math course in grade 11 or grade 12	(4) Algebra ** Geometry Algebra 2 Trig/PreCal *All students must take a math course in grade 11 or 12
<b>Science</b>	(3) Physical Science Biology Science elective	(3) Physical Science Biology Chemistry or Physics	(3) Physical Science Biology Chemistry or Physics	(3) Physical Science Biology Chemistry or Physics	(3) Physical Science Biology Chemistry or Physics
<b>English</b>	(4) English 9,10,11,12	(4) English 9,10,11,12	(4) English 9,10,11,12	(4) English 9,10,11,12	(4) English 9,10,11,12
<b>Social Studies**</b>	3 Arkansas History World History US History (.5) Civics	3 Arkansas History World History US History (.5) Civics	3 Arkansas History World History US History (.5) Civics	3 Arkansas History World History US History (.5) Civics	3- Arkansas History World History US History (.5) Civics
<b>Phys Ed</b>	(.5) PE or Athletics or ROTC	(.5) PE or Athletics or ROTC	(.5) PE or Athletics or ROTC	(.5) PE or Athletics or ROTC	(.5) PE or Athletics or ROTC
<b>Health</b>	(.5)Health	(.5) Health	(.5) Health	(.5) Health	(.5) Health
<b>Oral Comm</b>	(.5) Speech	(.5) Speech	(.5) Speech	(.5) Speech	(.5) Speech
<b>Technology*</b>	(1) CBA recommended	(1) CBA recommended	(1) CBA recommended	(1) CBA recommended	(1)CBA recommended
<b>Fine Arts</b>	(.5) Choir, Band, or Art	(.5) Choir, Band, or Art	(.5) Choir, Band, or Art	(.5) Choir, Band, or Art	(.5) Choir, Band, or Art
<b>Foreign Language</b>	0	0	2 same language	2 same language	2 same language
<b>Economics</b>	.5 Economics	.5 Economics	.5 Economics	.5 Economics	.5 Economics
<b>Electives</b>	6.5	6.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
<b>Total</b>	24	24	24	24	24
<b>GPA</b>			3.0 GPA at the conclusion of eight semesters	3.50 at the conclusion of eight semesters	3.90 GPA at the conclusion of eight semesters
<b>Pre-AP/AP</b>	Not required	Not required	4 units must be Pre-AP or AP from any subject area	8 units must be Pre-AP or AP from any core subject with at least 2 of these being AP classes.	12 units must be Pre-AP or AP classes from any core subject combined with at least 3 of these being AP classes.

\*Computerized Business Applications is the recommended course to meet the technology requirement, but courses of similar scope are accepted, such as EAST, WATC technical courses, etc.

\*\* Act 1307 requires students taking algebra in the school year 2009-2010 and thereafter to pass the EOC Algebra high stakes test in order to earn credit towards graduation. Students must remediate and test according to law and ADE requirements in order to successfully complete diploma requirements.

\*\*\*VBSD may require graduations above the ADE requirements. Other applicable credits may be substituted where approved as appropriate

Approved by Board of Education 05/20/08  
Amended by Board of Education 03/10/09  
Amended by Board of Education 02/16/10  
Amended by Board of Education 12/09/14

Western Arkansas Technical Education Center (WATC)

The Van Buren School District will incur the standard enrollment cost of juniors and seniors enrolling in the Western Arkansas Technical Education Center (WATC). Students successfully completing a course or courses at the Center will be entitled to receive appropriate academic credit at both the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith and Van Buren High School. Credit shall be applicable to graduation requirements.

Students participating in the funded program at Western Arkansas Technical Education Center will do so at the recommendation and/or approval of the high school counselors. Students with a record of poor attendance or discipline problems will not be recommended or accepted for this program. Students participating in this program must have written parental consent. Participants will follow enrollment procedures and policies at both Western Arkansas Technical Education Center and Van Buren High School.

ACT 1097 OF 1991

Van Buren students who have successfully completed the eighth grade shall be eligible to enroll, at their expense, in a publicly supported community college or four-year college or university. A student who enrolls in and successfully completes a course or courses offered by an institution of higher education shall be entitled to receive appropriate academic credit at both Van Buren High School and the institution of higher education. Credit shall be applicable to graduation requirements.

Approved by Board of Education: 12/8/1998

**PRAYER**

**5.17**

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It is the policy of the Van Buren School District that there shall be no school sponsored prayer at any class or function at which attendance is compulsory.

Approved by Board of Education 08/21/12

Beginning with the graduating class of 2013-2014, all courses counted toward the required credits of the diploma will be included in the Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation.

Van Buren School District utilizes two ranking methods for GPA as defined below:

- Rank One is the calculation of GPA mandated by the Arkansas Department of Education and college reporting. This method uses a 4.0 credit for all courses except those Advanced Placement (AP) courses weighted on the 5.0 scale. Local credits are not included in the Rank One GPA.
- Rank Two is the calculation of GPA for local purposes only. This method uses a weighted rank of 5 for AP, Concurrent Credit and Engineering\* courses and 4.5 for Pre-AP courses to determine class rank. Local credits are included in the Rank Two GPA.

Courses not counting for credit will not be counted in the GPA.

### **Credit Recovery**

Credit Recovery is the repeating of a credit that was failed or for which a student received NC (no credit). Students must get principal approval for credit recovery. Credit recovery is pass/fail and is not included in the GPA.

\*Students must complete the entire Engineering course of study to receive weighted credit.

Approved by Board of Education 02/16/10  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

The Van Buren School District shall have an alternative learning environment (ALE) which shall be part of an intervention program designed to provide guidance, counseling, and academic support to students who are experiencing emotional, social, or academic problems and are determined to need an alternative learning environment.

The superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint an Alternative Education Placement Team which shall have the responsibility of determining student placement in the ALE. The team should consist of at least a school counselor, the ALE director or principal, a parent or legal guardian, and a regular classroom teacher.

Students who are placed in the ALE shall exhibit at least two of the following characteristics:

- Disruptive behavior
- Drop out from school
- Personal or family problems or situations
- Recurring absenteeism
- Transition to or from residential programs

For the purposes of the ALE, personal or family situations are conditions that negatively affect the student's academic and social progress. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in core academic courses
  - Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
  - Frequent relocation of residency
  - Homelessness
  - Inadequate emotional support
  - Mental/physical health issues
  - Pregnancy
  - Single parenting

The teachers and administrator of the ALE shall determine exit criteria for students assigned to the district's ALE on which to base the student's return to the regular school program of instruction.

The district's ALE program shall follow class size, staffing, curriculum, and expenditure requirements identified in the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding and the Determination of Allowable Expenditure of These Funds.

Students will meet the minimum state diploma requirements.

Legal References:       A.C.A. § 6-18-508, 509  
                              A.C.A. § 6-20-2305(b)(2)  
                              ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding and  
                              the Determination of Allowable Expenditure of These Funds – 3.01, 3.05, 4.00,  
                              and 8.0

Approved by Board of Education: 10/12/10

The Alternative Learning Environment program shall be evaluated at least annually to determine its overall effectiveness. The evaluation shall specifically address how the use of ALE funds is in alignment with the district's Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plan in addressing identified achievement gaps and student performance deficiencies.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-15-426(f)

Approved by Board of Education: 10/12/10

Parent/Teacher conferences shall be held at all schools on a regular basis to insure the understanding and cooperation between the parents (or guardians) and the respective school officials necessary for students to profit fully from all school experiences.

Teachers shall communicate personally with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student during the school year to discuss the student's academic progress. Teachers in elementary schools shall meet with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student at least once a semester through a parent/teacher conference, a telephone conference or a home visit. Teachers will communicate more frequently with parents of students not performing at the level expected for their grade.

Teachers in secondary schools shall meet with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student at least once a year through a parent/teacher conference, a telephone conference or a home visit.

If a student is to be retained at any grade level or if a student is going to receive a failing grade in any subject at the secondary level, notice of retention or failure and the reasons for retention or failure shall be communicated promptly in a personal conference.

The school shall document parent or guardian participation or non-participation in required conferences and shall keep such documentation in the student's file for a minimum of three years.

Approved by Board of Education 10/14/86

**Van Buren School District Parent Involvement Policy  
2015-2016****Dr. Harold Jeffcoat- Superintendent****Mr. Kerry Schneider- Deputy Superintendent****Mr. Brian Summerhill, Ed.S- Assistant Superintendent****Overall School Improvement Status: Needs Improvement**

**Challenging and Preparing Our Students-** We believe a partnership must exist between our parents and our schools. We promote positive communication between our schools and our students' homes. The district ensures our schools provide a variety of opportunities for parents to be involved in activities supporting our schools. We believe teachers have a responsibility to provide the needed framework for parents to nurture their child's formal instruction at home; therefore, we will provide materials that can successfully be used at home to reinforce students' academic success. It is our goal to provide an atmosphere where parents are able to express their views and to assist in problem solving. We want parents to understand that we view them as joint policy and decision makers and plan to emphasize their roles as advocates.

**Van Buren School District Parent Involvement Committee:**Karen Allen, Director of Federal/State Programs ([kallen@vbsd.us](mailto:kallen@vbsd.us), Phone: 479-474-7942)

Nancy Robbins, Curriculum Director

Brian Summerhill, Assistant Superintendent

Kerry Schneider, Deputy Superintendent

Krista Brown, Parkview Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Angie Blake, Rena Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Emily Hatfield, Central Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Debbie Griffin, King Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Kathy Smith, Tate Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Julia Cottrell, City Heights Elementary Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Stephanie Richesin &amp; Anita Reagan, Northridge Middle School Parent Involvement Facilitators (Title I)

Tracy Cline, Butterfield Trail Middle School Parent Involvement Facilitator (Title I)

Tammy Poole, VBHS Freshman Academy Parent Involvement Facilitator

Courtney Cochran, VBHS Parent Involvement Facilitator

Lonnie Mitchell, Principal, Northridge Middle School

Lisa Miller, Principal, Van Buren High School Freshman Academy

Kriss Morrison, Principal, The Learning Center (ALE)

Mary McCutchen, Principal, City Heights Elementary

Stacey Chambers, Parent

Summer Mulloy, Parent

Joy Holman, Parent

Jennifer Brammer, Parent

Sandie Six, Counselor, Parkview Elementary

**Goal 1: How will the district foster effective parental involvement strategies and support partnerships among school parents, and the community to improve student achievement?**

**The Van Buren School District will:**

- Develop and disseminate district parental involvement policy ([www.vbsd.us](http://www.vbsd.us)). A written copy will be provided to parents through school sites (Fall 2014, Karen Allen, Facilitator and building principals)
- Conduct an annual meeting in the spring to update policy for next year's Title I, Part A program, (May 2016, Karen Allen, Facilitator)
- Reserve a minimum of 1% of the Title I, Part A allocation for parental involvement, with 95% going to Title I, Part A schools (\$20,000.00)
- Coordinate parental involvement activities with the ABC preschool programs at King Elementary and James R. Tate Elementary (Karen Allen, Facilitator and Robert Childers/Renee Risley, Principals)
- Establish a parental involvement contact person at each of the Title I, Part A schools (see school Parent Facilitators list above)
- Conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of the parental involvement policy during the spring VBSD Parent Involvement Committee Meeting (May 2016, Karen Allen, Facilitator)
- Develop a district parental involvement committee to create a parental involvement policy and implement parental involvement activities as well as disseminate information to the community to promote parental involvement in the Title I, Part A schools (September 29, 2015, Karen Allen, Facilitator)
- Involve parent in the process of school review and improvement under Section 1116 of No Child Left Behind

**Goal 2: How will the district provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement? The Van Buren School District will:**

- Conduct ongoing site visits to observe parental involvement practices (Karen Allen, Facilitator along with other district administrators)
- Provide effective training and professional development to enhance the awareness and skills of teachers, pupil service personnel, principals, and staff in reaching out to, communicating with, and working with parents as equal partners
- Ensure, to the extent possible, information is sent home in a language and form parents can understand by utilizing the district's parent information system, translators and interpreters

- Monitor each Title I, Part A school to ensure that each school performs the following tasks (Karen Allen, Facilitator, will collect quarterly parent involvement committee meeting documentation from each school);
  - Develop a parental involvement policy and disseminate with parents and community
  - Offer flexible meeting times
  - Provide information to parents about the school’s program, include parent information packet
  - Develop and use the School-Parent Compact
  - Provide materials and training to help parent work with their children to improve academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement

**Goal 3: How will the district build the school’s capacity for strong parental involvement?**

**The Van Buren School District will:**

- Provide information to participating parents in such areas as national, state, and local educational goals, including parents’ rights as defined in Title I, Part A (Information regarding parents’ rights as defined by Title I, Part A will be disseminated at district/school level annual Title I meetings. Information regarding national, state and local educational goals will be disseminated at district/school level annual Report to the Public)
- Assist school parent facilitators in the development of parent involvement groups at each school
- Involve parents through an annual survey to improve school effectiveness (Principals and school Parent Facilitators will distribute and collect surveys)
- Provide any reasonable support such as materials, training, etc. for parental involvement at the request of participating Title I, Part A schools

**Goal 4: How will the district conduct, with the involvement of parents, ongoing evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy as it relates to strategies for increasing parental participation and identifying barriers to greater participation? The Van Buren School District will:**

**The Van Buren School District will:**

- Survey parents annually, including questions to identify barriers to parental involvement (Karen Allen, Facilitator, will ensure the distribution and collection of the survey. Results will be tabulated and disseminated to district parent involvement committee members.)
- Provide an opportunity for the parents to assist in the development of the evaluation procedures, including the analysis of data collected (Karen Allen, Facilitator)

- Use the findings from the evaluation process to :
  - Make recommendations to each participating school for parental involvement policy revision
  - Provide suggestions for designing school improvement policies as they relate to parental involvement (Karen Allen, Facilitator)
- Develop and disseminate an annual parent activity evaluation report to share with parents, staff and the community (Karen Allen, Facilitator)

**Goal 5: How will the district involve parents in the joint development of the district Title I Application under section 1112 (ACSIP)? The Van Buren School District will:**

- Recruit parents to serve on district ACSIP committee to develop the Title I application. (Annual VBSD ACSIP committee meeting. Building principals will be responsible for inviting parents to serve on the ACSIP Committee.)

