

# VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT



## STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK 2018-2019

### **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.

**STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK**  
**2018-2019**  
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VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT



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 at [www.vbsd.us](http://www.vbsd.us). 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 section below 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 [sross@vbsd.us](mailto:sross@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 reviewed the Attendance, Discipline, Grading and Technology Policies of the Van Buren School District that can be found at [www.vbsd.us](http://www.vbsd.us).

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

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

## 4.29F-STUDENT ELECTRONIC DEVICE and INTERNET USE AGREEMENT-4.29F

Student's Name (Please Print)\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level\_\_\_\_\_

School\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

The Van Buren School District agrees to allow the student identified above ("Student") to use the district's technology to access the Internet under the following terms and conditions which apply whether the access is through a District or student owned electronic device (as used in this Agreement, "electronic device" means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data):

1. Conditional Privilege: The Student's use of the district's access to the Internet is a privilege conditioned on the Student's abiding to this agreement. No student may use the district's access to the Internet whether through a District or student owned electronic device unless the Student and his/her parent or guardian have read and signed this agreement.
2. Acceptable Use: The Student agrees that he/she will use the District's Internet access for educational purposes only. In using the Internet, the Student agrees to obey all federal and state laws and regulations. The Student also agrees to abide by any Internet use rules instituted at the Student's school or class, whether those rules are written or oral.
3. Penalties for Improper Use: If the Student violates this agreement and misuses the Internet, the Student shall be subject to disciplinary action as described in Policy 4.29.
4. "Misuse of the District's access to the Internet" includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - a. using the Internet for other than educational purposes;
  - b. gaining intentional access or maintaining access to materials which are "harmful to minors" as defined by Arkansas law;
  - c. using the Internet for any illegal activity, including computer hacking and copyright or intellectual property law violations;
  - d. making unauthorized copies of computer software;
  - e. accessing "chat lines" unless authorized by the instructor for a class activity directly supervised by a staff member;
  - f. using abusive or profane language in private messages on the system; or using the system to harass, insult, or verbally attack others;
  - g. posting anonymous messages on the system;
  - h. using encryption software;
  - i. wasteful use of limited resources provided by the school including paper;
  - j. causing congestion of the network through lengthy downloads of files;
  - k. vandalizing data of another user;
  - l. obtaining or sending information which could be used to make destructive devices such as guns, weapons, bombs, explosives, or fireworks;
  - m. gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to resources or files;
  - n. identifying oneself with another person's name or password or using an account or password of another user without proper authorization;
  - o. invading the privacy of individuals;

- p. divulging personally identifying information about himself/herself or anyone else either on the Internet or in an email unless it is a necessary and integral part of the student's academic endeavor. Personally identifying information includes full names, address, and phone number.
- q. using the network for financial or commercial gain without district permission;
- r. theft or vandalism of data, equipment, or intellectual property;
- s. attempting to gain access or gaining access to student records, grades, or files;
- t. introducing a virus to, or otherwise improperly tampering with the system;
- u. degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance;
- v. creating a web page or associating a web page with the school or school district without proper authorization;
- w. providing access to the District's Internet Access to unauthorized individuals;
- x. failing to obey school or classroom Internet use rules; or
- y. taking part in any activity related to Internet use which creates a clear and present danger of the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the district or any of its schools.
- z. Installing or downloading software on district computers without prior approval of the technology director or his/her designee.

5. Liability for debts: Students and their cosigners shall be liable for any and all costs (debts) incurred through the student's use of the computers or access to the Internet including penalties for copyright violations.

6. No Expectation of Privacy: The Student and parent/guardian signing below agree that if the Student uses the Internet through the District's access, that the Student waives any right to privacy the Student may have for such use. The Student and the parent/guardian agree that the district may monitor the Student's use of the District's Internet Access and may also examine all system activities the Student participates in, including but not limited to e-mail, voice, and video transmissions, to ensure proper use of the system. The District may share such transmissions with the Student's parents/guardians.

7. No Guarantees: The District will make good faith efforts to protect children from improper or harmful matter which may be on the Internet. At the same time, in signing this agreement, the parent and Student recognize that the District makes no guarantees about preventing improper access to such materials on the part of the Student.

8. Signatures: We, the persons who have signed below, have read this agreement and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

## 1.3-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONES

1.3

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 a shift in population affecting school enrollment or other reasons identified by the Board.
- 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

Approved by Board of Education: 07/12/12

## **1.6 – TRANSPORTATION**

**1.6**

All school buses are owned and operated by the Van Buren School District.  
Pupils are under the supervision of the bus drivers and are responsible to the driver for their conduct.

Ref: A.C.A. 6-19-(101-116)  
Approved by Board of Education 11/12/91  
Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12



## 1.11 -- DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

1.11

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;
12. 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;
13. Restrict access to vended foods, competitive foods, and foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as required by law and Rule;
14. 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.
15. Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;

16. 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

## 1.31 – ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONES

1.31

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. Final approval must be granted by the Superintendent or his Designee. Applications will be accepted within the following timelines:
  - 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. Temporary approval may not be granted after April 15.
  - 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 the waiting period if the situation is warranted.
    - If a student has been approved for an Area Exception 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. The Superintendent or designee may approve if deemed necessary.
    - If a student is approved to attend another school, they must attend that school for the remainder of the school year.
2. 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. Once an elementary grade level reaches 90% capacity no more area exceptions will be accepted for that grade level. Once a middle school grade level reaches 95% capacity no more area exceptions will be accepted for that grade level.
3. Once an area exception has been approved, the student becomes an official student of that school building; As long as the district does not exceed the regulation and standards regarding classroom capacity. It is not necessary to complete an area exception on an annual basis.
4. The student will remain enrolled in that school unless they return to their zoned school and as long as classroom size standards are met.

5. Once a student leaves the school that the area exception was granted, they will have to reapply to attend the school again.
6. A present or future sibling of a student who continues enrollment as an area exception in a building may apply as an area exception if the school has the capacity to accept without adding teachers, staff or classrooms that exceed the regulations and standards established by law. If denied, they will be given priority to enroll at the building as soon as allowable.
7. The Van Buren School District is not obligated to provide transportation to any student who chooses to change attendance zones.
8. The District will not approve a change in attendance zone if the request would adversely affect the racial or socioeconomic balance within the school.
9. 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.
10. Children of staff members will be allowed to attend the school that is the home base of the staff member.
11. 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

Amended by Board of Education 12/08/15

Amended by Board of Education 06/13/17

## 4.1--ADMISSION OF PUPILS

## 4.1

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. Student's 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 on or before October 1 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 11/08/94

Amended by Board of Education 12/08/98

Amended by Board of Education 01/13/04

Amended by Board of Education 05/08/07

**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 06/12/07

Amended by Board of Education 06/09/09

Ref: §6-18-207

Amended by Board of Education 06/08/10

Amended by Board of Education 11/09/10

Amended by Board of Education 06/14/11

Amended by Board of Education 06/13/17

#### **4.1.1 – ADMISSION OF NONRESIDENT & 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

## 4.1.2 — SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY

## 4.1.2

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

#### **4.1.2.1-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.

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

#### 4.1.4 – STUDENT TRANSFER – STUDENT ASSIGNMENT TO CLASS

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.) 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 if the student does not have a copy of the application available.
  - 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 06/07/04

Amended by Board of Education 11/09/10

#### **4.1.5 – STUDENTS EXPELLED IN A 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

**4.1.6--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 06/14/11

## 4.2 – STUDENT ATTENDANCE

4.2

### 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**

### **Excused**

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. A written statement presented for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation will **not** be accepted. Students may have six (6) parent permission notes. Any excused absence after six (6) without a doctor's note will be unexcused.

### **Unexcused**

Unexcused absences are all failures to attend school other than those specified above. Make-up work for trancies and suspensions will be left up to the discretion of the building 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  
Amended by Board of Education 06/14/16  
Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16



## **4.2.1 – ATTENDANCE**

**4.2.1**

Regular school attendance shall be required for all children between the ages of five (5) and seventeen (17) years, both inclusive, who reside in the Van Buren School District, with the exception of five-year-old children for whom kindergarten has been waived by the parent, guardian, or persons having custody or charge; students who have received a high school diploma or its equivalent; or students who are enrolled in postsecondary vocational technical institution, a community college or a two-year or four-year institution of higher education.

An accurate record of attendance shall be kept for each child enrolled in Van Buren Schools. The basic attendance records shall be kept on file in electronic form. Student drop-out rates shall be calculated according to provisions set forth in ACT 104 of 2003.

Ref: ACT 292 of 1991

ACT 1230 of 1997

ACT 104 of 2003

Amended by Board of Education 06/07/04

**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. Unexcused absences are all failures to attend school other than those specified above. Make-up work for unexcused absences and suspensions will be left up to the discretion of the building principal.

**V. Suspensions and Expulsions**

Students who are suspended from school may 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), eight (8), and eleven (11) 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

Amended by Board of Education 06/14/16

Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16

## 4.2.4--ATTENDANCE – MIDDLE SCHOOL – GRADES 6, 7, and 8

4.2.4

### 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 may 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 may be denied:

A. Excused Absences—An excused 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 within five (5) days of the day the student returns to school.

B. Unexcused Absence—An unexcused absence 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 may 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.

- 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 (11<sup>th</sup>) 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

- Excessive Tardies and/or Early Checkouts – Grades 6, 7, and 8

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.

- 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 may 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.

- 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 recovery 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.

- 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  
Amended by Board of Education 06/14/16  
Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16

## 4.2.5 ATTENDANCE – SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL – GRADES 9, 10, 11, 12 4.2.5

### 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 may 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. Excused Absence – Excused absences are 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 within five (5) days of the day the student returns to school.

B. Unexcused Absences– Unexcused absences are 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 (11<sup>th</sup>) 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.

VII. FINS (Family in Need of Services)

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

Adopted by Board of Education 07/18/11  
Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12  
Amended by Board of Education 12/09/14  
Amended by Board of Education 06/14/16  
Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16

## **4.2.6—VAN BUREN HIGH SCHOOL CLOSED CAMPUS**

**4.2.6**

Van Buren High School is a closed campus. A student is expected to arrive on campus before school begins in the morning and remain on campus until the end of the school day. If it becomes necessary to leave campus during the school day, the student must check out through the office. In order to check out, a parent/guardian must call the office, email, or send a note stating the time and reason the student needs to check out. Students leaving and returning to school without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

Check out at lunch will be limited to a parent coming to school, physically signing their student out at the time the student is leaving, and physically signing in their student upon return. This includes all students who may be over 17 years of age (you may not check yourself out for lunch).

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

## 4.3 -- STUDENT CONDUCT BEHAVIOR CODE

4.3

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 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.

- g. 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.

- h. 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.

- i. 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 made available on the district website. A form to be signed by the parents and the student acknowledging review of the rules will be sent along with the rules and should be returned to the school immediately.

If the form acknowledging review 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. 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 the Board of Education 06/09/14

Amended by the Board of Education 08/09/16

Amended by the Board of Education 05/08/18

### **4.3.1-STUDENT DISCIPLINE-GENERAL STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION-4.3.1**

#### **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

## 4.3.2 -- RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3.2

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 subtitles 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 08/14/84

### 4.3.3 – CHEMICAL SCREEN POLICY

4.3.3

#### 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

**4.3.3F1 – CHEMICAL SCREEN CONSENT FORM**

**4.3.3F1**

**VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT CHEMICAL SCREENING CONSENT FORM**

**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/activities.aspx](http://www.vbsd.us/activities.aspx) and click on the *District Chemical Screening Policy 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**

**Students who drive to school** 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: \_\_\_\_\_.

<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"/> Book 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"/> FCA <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"/> SSA <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>
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Amended by Board of Education 02/10/15

**VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS  
Notification of Violation of  
Chemical Screen Policy**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am the custodial parent/legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ a student in the Van Buren School

District. I have been notified by officials of Van Buren School District that

\_\_\_\_\_ (student’s name) has tested positive during the chemical screening administered under the provisions set by the Van Buren School District.

The student may be recommended for counseling, if any charge is incurred, it will be the responsibility of the parents. The student will also be placed on probation and not be allowed to participate in competitions, presentations, activity programs, which includes driving a vehicle to school, relating to Van Buren Schools for a period of twenty-one days.

On day twenty- two, the so named student will again become eligible for competitions, presentations, activity programs, and driving a vehicle to school, relating to Van Buren Schools and will again be eligible to be tested if they are randomly selected.

After the second positive test result, the so named student will be suspended from competitions, presentations, activity programs, and driving a vehicle to school, relating to Van Buren Schools for the remainder of the school year. If the positive test is in the spring semester, the student will not be able to participate during the following fall semester. In addition to the suspension, the student will be immediately referred for professional counseling and rehabilitation at the expense of the parent.

After the third positive test result, the so named student will be suspended from competitions, presentations, activity programs, and driving a vehicle to school, relating to Van Buren Schools for the remainder of his enrollment with the school (may be appealed to the Board).

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**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, activity programs, which includes driving to school relating to 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, activity programs, as well as driving to school, 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  
Approved by Board of Education 01/12/16

#### 4.3.4 -- APPEARANCE CODE

4.3.4

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

## **4.3.5-STUDENT DISCIPLINE-SEXUAL HARASSMENT-Act 1108 of 1997 4.3.5**

### **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 district administration. 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

Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16



### **4.3.6--STUDENT CONDUCT — BULLYING**

### **4.3.6**

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, expect 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.

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 05/20/08

Amended by Board of Education 07/18/11

#### **4.3.7 -- AUTHORITY FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

**4.3.7**

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 07/16/13

## **4.3.9 – 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, 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.

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 04/14/09

#### **4.4--PERSONAL AND PROPERTY SEARCHES**

**4.4**

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 a 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

## 4.5 – SUSPENSION

4.5

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 10 days for suspension review disciplinary reasons. 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  
Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16

## **4.5.1 -- 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 08/14/84



## **4.6 -- STUDENT DISCIPLINE -- ASSAULT AND ABUSE OF STUDENTS AND STAFF MEMBERS - Act 706 of 1997**

**4.6**

### **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 is also abuse, and this 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 08/19/97

#### **4.7-STUDENT DISCIPLINE-GANGS AND GANG ACTIVITY-Act 1108 of 1997-4.7**

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.

Approved by Board of Education 08/19/97

## **4.9- TOBACCO AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

**4.9**

Smoking or use of tobacco or products containing tobacco in any form (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff) in or on any real property owned or leased by a District school, including school buses owned or leased by the District, is prohibited. Students who violate this policy may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures.

With the exception of recognized tobacco cessation products, this policy's prohibition includes using or being in the possession of any tobacco or nicotine delivery system or product. Specifically, the prohibition includes any product that is manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under any other name or descriptor.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Verbal reprimand by school employee.

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

The delivery device or instrument will be destroyed as provided in ACA. §5-78-102 (2015).

Any delivery device or instrument found in the possession of a student 18 years or older will be confiscated until the end of the school year.

The Van Buren School District is not responsible for broken, stolen or lost confiscated delivery devices or instruments.

Legal Reference: ACA. §5-78-102(2015)

Legal Reference: ACA. §6-21-609

Approved by Board of Education 08/19/97

Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13

Amended by Board of Education 05/12/15

Amended by Board of Education 06/13/17

Amended by Board of Education 12/12/17

Amended by Board of Education 07/24/18

## 4.10 – EXPULSION

4.10

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, or representative will present evidence including witnesses 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 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 04/14/09  
Amended by Board of Education 05/08/18

## 4.11—EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

## 4.11

No student in the Van Buren School District shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by the District. The District has a limited open forum granting equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other youth groups.

Inquiries on disability discrimination may be directed to District's 504 Coordinator, who may be reached at 479-471-3187. Inquiries on sex discrimination may be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator, who may be reached at 479-474-7942.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination or to file a complaint, visit <http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>; for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Legal References:     A.C.A. § 6-18-514  
                              28 C.F.R. § 35.106  
                              34 C.F.R. § 100.6  
                              34 C.F.R. § 104.8  
                              34 C.F.R. § 106.9  
                              34 C.F.R. § 108.9  
                              34 C.F.R. § 110.25

Approved by the Board of Education: 09/13/16

## **4.12—HEALTH SERVICES**

**4.12**

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

## 4.13 – PRIVACY OF STUDENTS’ RECORDS/DIRECTORY INFORMATION 4.13

Except when a court order regarding a student has been presented to the district to the contrary, all students’ education records are available for inspection and copying by the parent of his/her student who is under the age of eighteen (18). At the age of eighteen (18), the right to inspect and copy a student’s records transfers to the student. A student’s parent or the student, if over the age of 18, requesting to review the student’s education records will be allowed to do so within no more than forty-five (45) days of the request. The district forwards education records, including disciplinary records, to schools that have requested them and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

The district shall receive written permission before releasing education records to any agency or individual not authorized by law to receive and/or view the education records without prior parental permission. The District shall maintain a record of requests by such agencies or individuals for access to, and each disclosure of, personally identifiable information (PII) from the education records of each student. Disclosure of education records is authorized by law to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A personal record kept by a school staff member is **not** considered an education record if it meets the following tests.

- it is in the sole possession of the individual who made it;
- it is used only as a personal memory aid; and
- information contained in it has never been revealed or made available to any other person, except the maker’s temporary substitute.

For the purposes of this policy a school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

For the purposes of this policy a school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility, contracted duty, or duty of elected office.

In addition to releasing PII to school officials without permission, the District may disclose PII from the education records of students in foster care placement to the student’s caseworker or to the caseworker’s representative without getting prior consent of the parent (or the student if the student is over eighteen (18)). For the District to release the student’s PII without getting permission:

- The student must be in foster care;
- The individual to whom the PII will be released must have legal access to the student’s case plan; and
- The Arkansas Department of Human Services, or a sub-agency of the Department, must be legally responsible for the care and protection of the student.

The District discloses PII from an education record to appropriate parties, including parents, in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. The superintendent or designee shall determine who will have access to and the responsibility for disclosing information in emergency situations.

When deciding whether to release PII in a health or safety emergency, the District may take into account the totality of the circumstances pertaining to a threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals. If the District determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

For purposes of this policy, the Van Buren School District does not distinguish between a custodial and noncustodial parent, or a non-parent such as a person acting in loco parentis or a foster parent with respect to gaining access to a student's records. Unless a court order restricting such access has been presented to the district to the contrary, the fact of a person's status as parent or guardian, alone, enables that parent or guardian to review and copy his child's records.

If there exists a court order which directs that a parent not have access to a student or his/her records, the parent, guardian, person acting in loco parentis, or an agent of the Department of Human Services must present a file-marked copy of such order to the building principal and the superintendent. The school will make good-faith efforts to act in accordance with such court order, but the failure to do so does not impose legal liability upon the school. The actual responsibility for enforcement of such court orders rests with the parents or guardians, their attorneys and the court which issued the order.

A parent or guardian does not have the right to remove any material from a student's records, but such parent or guardian may challenge the accuracy of a record. The right to challenge the accuracy of a record does not include the right to dispute a grade, disciplinary rulings, disability placements, or other such determinations, which must be done only through the appropriate teacher and/or administrator, the decision of whom is final. A challenge to the accuracy of material contained in a student's file must be initiated with the building principal, with an appeal available to the Superintendent or his/her designee. The challenge shall clearly identify the part of the student's record the parent wants changed and specify why he/she believes it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school determines not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the requesting parent or student of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amending the record. The parent or eligible student will be provided information regarding the hearing procedure when notified of the right to a hearing.

Unless the parent or guardian of a student (or student, if above the age of eighteen (18)) objects, "directory information" about a student may be made available to the public, military recruiters, post-secondary educational institutions, prospective employers of those students, as well as school publications such as annual yearbooks and graduation announcements. "Directory information" includes, but is not limited to, a student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, dates of attendance,<sup>5</sup> his/her placement on the honor roll (or the receipt of other types of honors), as well as his/her participation in school clubs and extracurricular activities, among others. If the student participates in inherently public activities (for example, basketball, football, or other interscholastic activities), the publication of such information will be beyond the control of the District. "Directory information" also includes a student identification (ID) number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used by a student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems and a student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student's ID badge, provided the ID cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a personal identification number (PIN), password or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

A student's name and photograph will only be displayed on the district or school's web page(s) after receiving the written permission from the student's parent or student if over the age of 18.



The form for objecting to making directory information available is located in the back of the student handbook and must be completed and signed by the parent or age-eligible student and filed with the building principal's office no later than ten (10) school days after the beginning of each school year or the date the student is enrolled for school. Failure to file an objection by that time is considered a specific grant of permission. The district is required to continue to honor any signed-opt out form for any student no longer in attendance at the district.

The right to opt out of the disclosure of directory information under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not prevent the District from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, identifier, or institutional email address in a class in which the student is enrolled.

Parents and students over the age of 18 who believe the district has failed to comply with the requirements for the lawful release of student records may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) at

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Legal References: A.C.A. § 9-28-113(b)(6)  
20 U.S.C. § 1232g  
20 U.S.C. § 7908  
34 CFR 99.3, 99.7, 99.21, 99.22, 99.30, 99.31, 99.32, 99.33, 99.34, 99.35, 99.36,  
99.37, 99.63, 99.64

Approved by the Board of Education 05/08/18

**4.13F – OBJECTION TO PUBLICATION OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION 4.13F**  
**(Not to be filed if the parent/student has no objection)**

I, the undersigned, being a parent of a student, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, hereby note my objection to the disclosure or publication by the Van Buren School District of directory information, as defined in Policy No. 4.13 (Privacy of Students' Records), concerning the student named below. The district is required to continue to honor any signed opt-out form for any student no longer in attendance at the district.

I understand that the participation by the below-named student in any interscholastic activity, including athletics and school clubs, may make the publication of some directory information unavoidable, and the publication of such information in other forms, such as telephone directories, church directories, etc., is not within the control of the District.

I understand that this form must be filed with the office of the appropriate building principal within ten (10) school days from the beginning of the current school year or the date the student is enrolled for school in order for the District to be bound by this objection. Failure to file this form within that time is a specific grant of permission to publish such information.

I object and wish to deny the disclosure or publication of directory information as follows:

Deny disclosure to military recruiters \_\_\_\_\_

Deny disclosure to Institutions of postsecondary education \_\_\_\_\_

Deny disclosure to Potential employers \_\_\_\_\_

Deny disclosure to all public and school sources \_\_\_\_\_

Selecting this option will prohibit the release of directory information to the three categories listed above along with all other public sources (such as newspapers), **AND** result in the student's directory information **not** being included in the school's yearbook and other school publications.

Deny disclosure to all public sources \_\_\_\_\_

Selecting this option will prohibit the release of directory information to the first three categories listed above along with all other public sources (such as newspapers), but permit the student's directory information **to be included** in the school's yearbook and other school publications.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of student (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent (or student, if 18 or older)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date form was filed (To be filled in by office personnel)

Approved by the Board of Education 05/08/18

## 4.14 -- COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

4.14

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. 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  
Amended by Board of Education 05/08/18

## **4.15 -- STUDENT RECORDS**

**4.15**

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.

Approved by Board of Education 08/14/84

#### **4.15.1 -- STUDENT RECORDS - “CHILD ABUSE”**

**4.15.1**

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 07/18/11

## 4.16 -- QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

4.16

Parental authorization for surveys or questionnaires administered to students.

### 1. 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.

### 2. 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.

ACT 1100 of 2003

Approved by Board of Education 06/10/03

## **4.17 -- SOLICITATIONS**

**4.17**

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

Approved by Board of Education 08/14/84

## **4.18—STUDENT VISITORS**

**4.18**

The Van Buren School District strongly believes that the purpose of school is for learning. Social visitors, generally, disrupt the classroom and interfere with learning that should be taking place. Therefore, visiting with students at school is strongly discouraged, unless approved by the principal and scheduled in advance. This includes visits made by former students, friends, and/or relatives of teachers or students. Any visitation to the classroom shall be allowed only with the permission of the school principal and all visitors must first register at the office.

Cross References: For adult visits see Policy 4.19—CONTACT WITH STUDENTS WHILE AT SCHOOL and Policy 6.11—VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

Approved by Board of Education 03/08/16



## **4.19—CONTACT WITH STUDENTS WHILE AT SCHOOL**

**4.19**

### **CONTACT BY PARENTS**

Parents wishing to speak to their children during the school day shall register first with the office.

### **CONTACT BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

If there is any question concerning the legal custody of the student, the custodial parent shall present documentation to the principal or his/her designee establishing the parent's custody of the student. It shall be the responsibility of the custodial parent to make any court ordered "no contact" or other restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent known to the principal by presenting a copy of a file-marked court order. Without such a court order on file, the school will release the child to either of his/her parents. Non-custodial parents who file with the principal a date-stamped copy of current court orders granting visitation may eat lunch, volunteer in their child's classroom, or otherwise have contact with their child during school hours and the prior approval of the school's principal. Such contact is subject to the limitations outlined in Policy 4.18, Policy 6.11, and any other policies that may apply.

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the school's principal, Arkansas law provides that the transfer of a child between his/her custodial parent and non-custodial parent, when both parents are present, shall not take place on the school's property on normal school days during normal hours of school operation.

### **CONTACT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT, SOCIAL SERVICES, OR BY COURT ORDER**

State Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. In instances where the interviewers deem it necessary, they may exercise a "72-hour hold" without first obtaining a court order. Other questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant.

If the District makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency due to a court order, the principal or the principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis identified on student enrollment forms. The principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to make such contact 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. This exception applies only to interview requests made by a law enforcement officer, an investigator of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, or an investigator or employee of the Department of Human Services.

In instances other than those related to cases of suspected child abuse, principals must release a student to either a police officer who presents a subpoena for the student, or a warrant for arrest, or to an agent of state social services or an agent of a court with jurisdiction over a child with a court order signed by a judge. Upon release of the student, the principal or designee shall give the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis notice that the student has been taken into custody by law enforcement personnel or a state's social services

agency. If the principal or designee is unable to reach the parent, he or she shall make a reasonable, good faith effort to get a message to the parent to call the principal or designee, and leave both a day and an after-hours telephone number.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-513  
A.C.A. § 9-13-104  
A.C.A. § 12-18-609, 610, 613  
A.C.A. § 12-18-1001, 1005

Approved by Board of Education 03/08/16

## 4.22—WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

4.22

No student shall possess a weapon, display what appears to be a weapon, or threaten to use a weapon while in school, on or about school property, before or after school, in attendance at school or any school sponsored activity, on route to or from school or any school sponsored activity, off the school grounds at any school bus stop, or at any school sponsored activity or event. Military personnel, such as ROTC cadets, acting in the course of their official duties are exempted.

A weapon is defined as any firearm; knife; razor; ice pick; dirk; box cutter; nunchucks; pepper spray, mace, or other noxious spray; explosive; Taser or other instrument that uses electrical current to cause neuromuscular incapacitation; or any other instrument or substance capable of causing bodily harm. For the purposes of this policy, "firearm" means any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or any device readily convertible to that use.

Possession means having a weapon, as defined in this policy, on the student's body or in an area under his/her control. If a student discovers prior to any questioning or search by any school personnel that he/she has accidentally brought a weapon, other than a firearm, to school on his/her person, in a book bag/purse, or in his/her vehicle on school grounds, and the student informs the principal or a staff person immediately, the student will not be considered to be in possession of a weapon unless it is a firearm. The weapon shall be confiscated and held in the office until such time as the student's parent/legal guardian shall pick up the weapon from the school's office. Repeated offenses are unacceptable and shall be grounds for disciplinary action against the student as otherwise provided for in this policy.

Except as permitted in this policy, students found to be in possession on the school campus of a firearm shall be recommended for expulsion for a period of not less than one year. The superintendent shall have the discretion to modify such expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis.

The mandatory expulsion requirement for possession of a firearm does not apply to a firearm brought to school for the purpose of participating in activities approved and authorized by the district that include the use of firearms. Such activities may include ROTC programs, hunting safety or military education, or before or after-school hunting or rifle clubs. Firearms brought to school for such purposes shall be brought to the school employee designated to receive such firearms. The designated employee shall store the firearms in a secure location until they are removed for use in the approved activity.

The district shall report any student who brings a firearm to school to the criminal justice system or juvenile delinquency system by notifying local law enforcement.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Verbal reprimand by school employee.

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

Cross Reference: Policy 4.10 EXPULSION

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-502 (c) (2)(A)(B)  
A.C.A. § 6-18-507 (e) (1)(2)  
A.C.A. § 6-21-608  
A.C.A. § 5-4-201  
A.C.A. § 5-4-401

A.C.A. § 5-27-210  
A.C.A. § 5-73-119(b)(e)(8)(9)(10)  
A.C.A. § 5-73-133  
20 USC § 7151

Approved by the Board of Education 05/08/18  
Amended by the Board of Education 07/24/18

## 4.24—DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

4.24

An orderly and safe school environment that is conducive to promoting student achievement requires a student population free from the deleterious effects of alcohol and drugs. Their use is illegal, disruptive to the educational environment, and diminishes the capacity of students to learn and function properly in our schools.

Therefore, no student in the Van Buren School District shall possess, attempt to possess, consume, use, distribute, sell, buy, attempt to sell, attempt to buy, give to any person, or be under the influence of any substance as defined in this policy, or what the student represents or believes to be any substance as defined in this policy. It is also prohibited to be in possession of drug related paraphernalia. Paraphernalia is defined as any article used in any drug related activity. This policy applies to any student who: is on or about school property; is in attendance at school or any school sponsored activity; has left the school campus for any reason and returns to the campus; or is on route to or from school or any school sponsored activity.

Prohibited substances shall include, but are not limited to, alcohol, or any alcoholic beverage, inhalants or any ingestible matter that alter a student’s ability to act, think, or respond, LSD, or any other hallucinogen, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, or any other narcotic drug, PCP, amphetamines, steroids, “designer drugs,” look-alike drugs, or any controlled substance.

Selling, distributing, or attempting to sell or distribute, or using over-the-counter or prescription drugs not in accordance with the recommended dosage is prohibited.

**Consequences for violation of this Policy: (All drug incidents will be reported to law enforcement.)**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Minimum Penalty</b>	<b>Maximum Penalty</b>
<b>Possession of drug related paraphernalia</b>	<b>Out of school suspension up to 10 days</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>
<b>Possession, attempt to possess, consume, use, distribute, sell, buy, attempt to sell, attempt to buy, give or be under the influence of any substance defined, represents or believes to be any substance as defined.</b>	<b>Out of school suspension up to 10 days</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>
<b>Selling, distributing, or attempting to sell or distribute, or using over-the-counter or prescription drugs not in accordance with the recommended dosage.</b>	<b>Warning</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>
<b>Possession, use or distribution of non-prescription medication</b>	<b>Warning</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>
<b>Possession, use, being under the influence, offering for sale, or transfer of drug</b>	<b>Out of school suspension up to 10 days</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>

<b>look-a-like products or analogs</b>		
<b>Possession, use, being under the influence (inhaling) products such as solvents, aerosols, nitrates, or anesthetics which are not manufactured for the purpose of inhalation</b>	<b>Out of school suspension up to 10 days</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expulsion</b>

- Discipline of secondary students will be progressive based upon a student's discipline history.

Approved by the Board of Education 05/08/18

**Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, "electronic device" means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data.

The District makes electronic device(s) and/or electronic device Internet access available to students, to permit students to perform research and to allow students to learn how to use electronic device technology. Use of district electronic devices is for educational and/or instructional purposes only. Student use of electronic device(s) shall only be as directed or assigned by staff or teachers; students are advised that they enjoy no expectation of privacy in any aspect of their electronic device use, including email, and that monitoring of student electronic device use is continuous.

No student will be granted Internet access until and unless an Internet and electronic device -use agreement, signed by both the student and the parent or legal guardian (if the student is under the age of eighteen [18]) is on file. The current version of the Internet and Electronic Device use agreement is incorporated by reference into board policy and is considered part of the student handbook.

**Technology Protection Measures**

The District is dedicated to protecting students from materials on the Internet or world wide web that are inappropriate, obscene, or otherwise harmful to minors; therefore, it is the policy of the District to protect each electronic device with Internet filtering software that is designed to prevent students from accessing such materials. For purposes of this policy, "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

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

**Internet Use and Safety**

The District is dedicated to ensuring that students are capable of using the Internet in a safe and responsible manner. The District uses technology protection measures to aid in student safety and shall also educate students on appropriate online behavior and Internet use including, but not limited to:

- interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms;
- Cyberbullying awareness; and
- Cyberbullying response.

**Misuse of Internet**

The opportunity to use the District's technology to access the Internet is a privilege and not a right. Students who misuse electronic devices or Internet access in any way will face disciplinary action, as specified in the student handbook and/or Internet safety and electronic device use agreement. Misuse of the Internet includes:

- The disabling or bypassing of security procedures, compromising, attempting to compromise, or defeating the district's technology network security or Internet filtering software;
- The altering of data without authorization;
- Disclosing, using, or disseminating passwords, whether the passwords are the student's own or those of another student/faculty/community member, to other students;
- Divulging personally identifying information about himself/herself or anyone else either on the Internet or in an email unless it is a necessary and integral part of the student's academic endeavor. Personally identifying information includes full names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Using electronic devices for any illegal activity, including electronic device hacking and copyright or intellectual property law violations;
- Using electronic devices to access or create sexually explicit or pornographic text or graphics;
- Using electronic devices to violate any other policy or is contrary to the Internet safety and electronic device use agreement.

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:**

1st offense: Warning and explanation of the appropriate usage of technology.

2nd offense: Loss of technology privileges for a minimum of one week or a maximum of two weeks.

3rd 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.

Addition from Policy 4.11.1VBSD assumes no responsibility or liability for personal technology devices that are stolen, lost, or damaged. VBSD will not provide technical support for personal devices.

Legal References: Children's Internet Protection Act; PL 106-554  
 FCC Final Rules 11-125 August 11, 2011  
 20 USC 6777  
 47 USC 254(h)(1)  
 47 CFR 54.520  
 47 CFR 520(c)(4)  
 A.C.A. § 6-21-107  
 A.C.A. § 6-21-111

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16



## **4.45-SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS-4.45 FOR THE CLASS of 2017**

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 paths.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and parents at least once every four years 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  $\neg\neg$  (1) unit to graduate for total of (23) units for the College Prep Diplomas of Distinctions. 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.

### **Courses**

The following course list includes all courses approved for graduation by the ADE. Not all courses are available at the Van Buren High School. Each year the Van Buren High School course catalogue lists all available courses.

### **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.)

- 1) Algebra I or Algebra A & B\* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9;
- 2) 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.

3) Algebra II; and

4) The fourth unit may be either:

- A math unit 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); or
- one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE.

Natural Science: a total of three (3) units with lab experience chosen from

One unit of Biology; and either:

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; or

One unit from the three categories above and one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE.

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 (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.

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

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

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

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)
- one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE may be substituted for a math credit beyond Algebra I and Geometry

\*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; and

Two units chosen from the following three categories:

- Physical Science;
- Chemistry;
- Physics; or

One unit from the three categories above and one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE.

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 (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.

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.

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

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

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 record. 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 paths.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and parents at least once every four years 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 1 unit to graduate for a total of 23 units for all College Prep Diplomas of Distinction. The additional required unit 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.

## **Digital**

The following course list includes all courses approved for graduation by the ADE. Not all courses are available at the Van Buren High School. Each year the Van Buren High School course catalogue lists all available courses.

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

Course offerings may vary from year to year, not all of the following courses are available at Van Buren High School.

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.)

1. Algebra I or Algebra A & B\* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9

2. 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.

3. Algebra II; and

4. The fourth unit may be either:

- A math unit 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) ; or
- One unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approve by ADE.

Natural Science: a total of three (3) units with lab experience chosen from one unit of Biology; and either: 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; or
- One unit from the three categories above and one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials

of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE.

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.

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

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)
- One unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essential of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE may be substituted for a math credit beyond Algebra I and Geometry.

\*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
- Two units chosen from the following three categories:
  - Physical Science;
  - Chemistry;

- Physics; or

One unit from the three categories above and one unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approve by ADE.

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

Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16



<p align="center"><b>General (Core) Diploma</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Smart Core Diploma</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Diplomas of Distinction</b></p>
<p><b>English—4 Credits</b> English 9 English 10 English 11 English 12</p> <p><b>Mathematics—4 Credits</b> Algebra 1 Geometry Algebra 2 Additional Math</p> <p><b>Science—3 Credits</b> At least one unit of Physical Science At least one unit of Biology Additional Science</p> <p><b>Social Studies—3 Credits</b> Civics .5 credit Economics .5 credit World History American History</p> <p><b>State Required</b> Oral Communications .5 credit Physical Education .5 credit Health and Safety .5 credit Fine Arts .5 credit</p> <p><b>Digital Learning Course (beginning w/Class of 2019)</b></p> <p><b>Career Focus Electives - 6</b></p> <p align="center">*Technology (Local Credit) *Principal Approval</p> <p><b>*22 Credits needed to Graduate</b></p>	<p><b>English—4 Credits</b> English 9 English 10 English 11 English 12</p> <p><b>Mathematics—4 Credits</b> Algebra 1 Geometry Algebra 2 Math above Algebra 2</p> <p><b>Science—3 Credits</b> At least one unit of Physical Science At least one unit of Biology Chemistry or Physics</p> <p><b>Social Studies—3 Credits</b> Civics .5 credit Economics .5 credit World History American History</p> <p><b>State Required</b> Oral Communications .5 credit Physical Education .5 credit Health and Safety .5 credit Fine Arts .5 credit</p> <p><b>Digital Learning Course (beginning w/Class of 2019)</b></p> <p><b>Career Focus Electives - 6</b></p> <p align="center">*Technology (Local Credit) Principal Approval</p> <p><b>*22 Credits needed to Graduate</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>(Local Honor Diplomas) College Prep</b></p> <p>Smart Core curriculum including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>23 Credits</b></li> <li>2 years of same foreign language</li> <li>4 PAP, Concurrent or AP classes</li> <li>3.0 GPA at the end of 8 semesters</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>College Prep Honors</b></p> <p>Smart Core curriculum including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>23 Credits</b></li> <li>2 years of same foreign language</li> <li>8 PAP, Concurrent or AP classes (2 must be AP)</li> <li>3.5 GPA at the end of 8 semesters</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>College Prep High Honors</b></p> <p>Smart Core curriculum including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>23 Credits</b></li> <li>2 years of same foreign language</li> <li>12 PAP, Concurrent, or AP classes (3 must be AP)</li> <li>3.9 GPA at the end of 8 semesters</li> </ul> <p><b>23 Credits needed to Graduate</b></p>

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

## **4.48—VIDEO SURVEILLANCE AND OTHER STUDENT MONITORING 4.48**

The Board of Directors has a responsibility to maintain discipline, protect the safety, security, and welfare of its students, staff, and visitors while at the same time safeguarding district facilities, vehicles, and equipment. As part of fulfilling this responsibility, the board authorizes the use of video/audio surveillance cameras, automatic identification technology, data compilation devices, and technology capable of tracking the physical location of district equipment, students, and/or personnel.

The placement of video/audio surveillance cameras shall be based on the presumption and belief that students, staff and visitors have no reasonable expectation of privacy anywhere on or near school property, facilities, vehicles, or equipment, with the exception of places such as rest rooms or dressing areas where an expectation of bodily privacy is reasonable and customary.

Signs shall be posted on campus buildings and in district vehicles to notify students, staff, and visitors that video cameras may be in use. Parents and students shall also be notified through the student handbook that cameras may be in use in school buildings, on school grounds and in school vehicles. Students will be held responsible for any violations of school discipline rules caught by the cameras and other technologies authorized in this policy.

The district shall retain copies of video recordings until they are erased which may be accomplished by either deletion or copying over with a new recording. Other than video recordings being retained under the provisions of this policy's following paragraph, the district's video recordings may be erased any time after they were created.

Videos, automatic identification, or data compilations containing evidence of a violation of student conduct rules and/or state or federal law shall be retained until the issue of the misconduct is no longer subject to review or appeal as determined by board policy or student handbook; any release or viewing of such records shall be in accordance with current law.

Students who vandalize, damage, disable, or render inoperable (temporarily or permanently) surveillance cameras and equipment, automatic identification, or data compilation devices shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and referral to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Legal References: 20 USC 1232g  
20 U.S.C. 7115  
34 CFR 99.3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 31

Approved by the Board of Education 05/08/18

Approved by the Board of Education 06/12/18

## **4.54--STUDENT ACCELERATION**

**4.54**

The Board believes acceleration is an effective and research-based intervention for the academic growth of students who are ready for an advanced or faster-paced curriculum. It can allow a student to move through the traditional educational setting more rapidly, based on assessed readiness, capability and motivation. At the same time, the Board understands that acceleration is not a replacement for gifted education services or programs.

Generally, acceleration can occur through one of two broad categories: content based and grade based. Grade based acceleration shortens the number of years a student would otherwise spend in K-12 education, while content based acceleration occurs within the normal K-12 time span. Either form of acceleration can be triggered by either a parent/guardian, student, or by the referral of school personnel. In either case, the process of determining the appropriateness of the request shall be under the direction of the District Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator who shall convene the individuals necessary to make an informed decision which shall include the student's parents or guardians.

The optimal time for referrals is in the spring which gives adequate time for working through the determination process and for preparing those concerned for a smooth transition to the acceleration beginning in the following school-year. A written referral should be made to the building principal by May 1 in order for acceleration to be considered for the following school year.

The following format will be used to govern the referral and determination process.

### **Acceleration and Pre-Referral Qualifications**

Prior to an acceleration referral, a student should demonstrate achievement and ability in the following areas.

- High academic performance in core content areas
- High intellectual ability on assessments administered through the gifted program

### **Acceleration Referral**

A student may be referred for acceleration by a parent, administrator, counselor, teacher or student. A written referral stating the reason for the referral should be made to the building principal by May 1 in order for acceleration to be considered for the following school year.

### **Acceleration Placement Committee**

Once a referral for acceleration is made to the building principal, he/she will contact the District Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator and a committee will be formed. The committee will include the following school personnel.

- District GT Program Coordinator
- Building principal
- GT specialist
- Counselor
- Teachers

### **Factors Considered by the Acceleration Committee**

In reaching a decision, the committee members shall consider the following:

- Teacher recommendation
- Academic ability
- Learning aptitude
- Educational achievement
- Interpersonal and emotional maturity

- Development factors
- Parental/guardian support

### **Acceleration Procedures**

1. Upon referral, student data will be collected and reviewed by the District GT Coordinator. The District reserves the right to conduct further testing if warranted. Parent will sign a permission to test form prior to the administration of testing by the gifted and talented program.
2. Parent and teachers may be asked to complete a rating scale for characteristics of giftedness.
3. The GT specialist, counselor, and/or District GT Coordinator may consult with the student and current classroom teacher.
4. Committee members will review records, grades, assessments, and written comments from parents and teachers. They will discuss appropriate placement for the student. Parents of the student may request to address the committee members prior to the acceleration meeting.
5. A decision will be made by the committee after the review of the data collected.
6. The placement decision may be appealed to the District's GT Coordinator (see procedures below).
7. If the decision is made to accelerate a student, an evaluation of the implementation will be conducted each quarter during the first year and will continue subsequent years if warranted.

### **Appeal Process**

The parents/guardians of any student whose request for acceleration has been denied may appeal the decision, in writing, to the District's GT Coordinator. The District's GT Coordinator and the Acceleration Placement Committee will again thoroughly review the case study that was completed on the student. Upon completion of the review, the Committee will either request additional new testing be conducted to help the Committee make its determination or it will uphold the initial decision. The Committee's decision may not be further appealed.

Legal Reference: ADE Gifted and Talented Rules

Approved by Board of Education: 09/13/16

## **5.4 -- SMART CORE CURRICULUM POLICY**

**5.4**

In order to ensure that every student has access to a rigorous curriculum, beginning with the 7th 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

## **5.9 -- STUDENT EARLY RELEASE**

**5.9**

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.

Approved by Board of Education 03/10/09

## 5.10--GRADING POLICY

5.10

### 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.

The grades of a child in foster care shall not be lowered due to an absence from school due to:

1. A change in the child's school enrollment;
2. The child's attendance at a dependency-neglect court proceeding; or
3. The child's attendance at court-ordered counseling or treatment.

### 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.

The final grades of students who transfer in for part of a semester will be determined by blending the grades earned in the district with those earned outside the district. Each final grade will be the sum of the percentage of days in the grading period transferred from outside the district times the transferred grade from outside the district plus the percentage of days in the grading period while in the district times the grade earned in the district.



For example: The grading period had forty (40) days. A student transferred in with a grade of eighty-three percent (83%) earned in ten (10) days at the previous school. The student had a grade of seventy-five percent (75%) in our district's school earned in the remaining thirty (30) days of the grading period. Ten (10) days is twenty-five percent (25%) of forty (40) days while thirty (30) days is seventy-five percent (75%) of forty (40) days. Thus the final grade would be  $(0.25 \times 83) + (0.75 \times 75) = 77\%$ .

Ref: AC 6-15-903

Approved by Board of Education 08/14/84

Amended by Board of Education 12/08/98

Amended by Board of Education 06/07/04

Amended by Board of Education 05/08/07

Amended by Board of Education 06/12/07

Amended by Board of Education 06/09/09

Amended by Board of Education 04/19/11

Amended by Board of Education 06/09/14

Amended by Board of Education 08/08/17

## 5.11 -- HOMEWORK POLICY

5.11

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 08/14/84

Amended by Board of Education 06/07/04

Amended by Board of Education 02/12/08

Amended by Board of Education 06/12/12

## **5.13 -- PROMOTION POLICIES**

**5.13**

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

## 5.14.1—CONCURRENT CREDIT

## 5.14.1

A ninth through twelfth grade student who successfully completes a college course(s) from an institution approved by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) shall be given credit toward high school grades and graduation at the rate of one high school credit for each three (3) semester hours of college credit. Unless approved by the school's principal, **prior to enrolling for the course**, the concurrent credit shall be applied toward the student's graduation requirements as an elective.

A student who takes a three-semester hour remedial/developmental education course, as permitted by the ADE Rules Governing Concurrent College and High School Credit, shall be the equivalent of one-half unit of credit for a high school career focus elective. The remedial/developmental education course cannot be used to meet the core subject area/unit requirements in English and mathematics.

Participation in the concurrent high school and college credit program must be documented by a written agreement between:

- The District's student, and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) if the public school student is under the age of eighteen (18);
- The District; and
- The publicly supported community college, technical college, four-year college or university, or private institution the student attends to take the concurrent credit course.

Students are responsible for having the transcript for the concurrent credit course(s) they've taken sent to their school in order to receive credit for the course(s). Credit for concurrent credit courses will not be given until a transcript is received. Transcripts for students who take concurrent credit courses are to be received by the school within (20) school days of the end of the semester in which the course is taken. Students may not receive credit for the course(s) they took or the credit may be delayed if the transcripts are not received in time, or at all. This may jeopardize students' eligibility for extracurricular activities, or graduation.

Students will retain credit earned through the concurrent credit program which was applied toward a course required for high school graduation from a previously attended, accredited, public school.

Any and all costs of higher education courses taken for concurrent credit are the student's responsibility.

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

### **5.15.1 – SEMESTER TEST EXEMPTION**

**5.15.1**

Students who have an A, B, or C in a class and have only three (3) excused absences (these include medical) or less in that class have the option of being exempt from the semester test in that class. Any unexcused absences or out of school suspensions will make a student ineligible for the exemption. School business will not count as an absence. If a student who is exempt chooses to take the test their grade may not be lowered from the result of that test. Pre-AP, AP, or Concurrent may not be exempt (teacher/class discretion).

Adopted by Board of Education 08/09/16

## **5.17 -- PRAYER**

**5.17**

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



## 5.21 -- GRADE POINT AVERAGE

5.21

Ending with the graduating class of 2019-2020, 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.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2020-2021 GPA will be calculated by methods 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), International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, or honors or concurrent credit college courses weighted on the 5.0 scale. Students in grades 7-12 who take advanced placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, or honors or concurrent credit college courses approved for weighted credit by the Arkansas Department of Education shall be graded according to the following schedule.

A = 100 – 90

B = 89 – 80

C = 79 – 70

D = 69-60

F = 59 and below

For the purpose of determining grade point averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be

A = 5 points

B = 4 points

C = 3 points

D = 2 point

F = 0 points

For a student to be eligible to receive weighted credit for an AP, or IB course, the student's course must have been taught by an Arkansas licensed teacher who has received the appropriate training required by Arkansas statute and ADE Rule or, for an AP teacher, is in the process of completing an Additional Training Plan.

Additionally, for students taking AP or International Baccalaureate courses to receive weighted credit they must take the applicable AP or IB examination after completing the entire course. Credit shall be given for each grading period during the course of the year, but shall be retroactively removed from a student's grade for any course in which the student fails to take the applicable AP exam. Students who do

not take the AP exam shall receive the same numeric value for the grade he/she receives in the course as if it were a non-AP course.

"Honors Courses" are those courses that have been approved by a Department of Education Committee as honors courses. Honors courses must stress higher order learning and be offered in addition to curriculum offerings required by the Standards for Accreditation, Arkansas Public Schools.

Students who transfer into the district will be given weighted credit for the Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, honors courses approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, and concurrent college courses taken for weighted credit at his/her previous school(s) according to the preceding scale.

### **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.

Legal References:     Arkansas Department of Education Rules and Regulations Governing Uniform  
                                  Grading Scales for Public Secondary Schools  
                                  ADE Rules for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Diploma  
                                  Incentive Program  
                                  A.C.A. § 6-15-902(c)

Approved by Board of Education 02/16/10  
Amended by Board of Education 06/11/13  
Amended by Board of Education 08/08/17

## 5.22—ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

5.22

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/exit 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:

- II. Disruptive behavior
- III. Drop out from school
- IV. Personal or family problems or situations
- V. Recurring absenteeism

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
- VII. Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- VIII. Frequent relocation of residency
- IX. Homelessness
- X. Inadequate emotional support
- XI. Mental/physical health issues
- XII. Pregnancy
- XIII. 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

Amended by Board of Education 08/09/16

Amended by Board of Education 04/10/18

## **5.23—ALE PROGRAM EVALUATION**

**5.23**

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

## 5.29 -- DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

5.29

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 Arkansas 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.

### **Wellness Committee**

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health of our students, a District Wellness Committee shall be formed. It shall be structured in a way to ensure age-appropriate recommendations are made that correlate to the District's grade configurations by establishing a wellness committee at each school in addition to the district committee and include representatives from each appropriate grade level group (elementary, middle, junior and senior high) on the membership of the district committee. The District Wellness Committee shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by statute and Rule and are incorporated into this policy by reference. 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 district wellness committee shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 of the Centers for Disease Control' (CDC) School Health Index as a basis for annually 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. Goals and objectives for nutrition and physical activity shall also be included in the ACSIP.

The District Wellness Committee shall be made up of Individuals from the following groups to the extent interested persons from each group desire to be included in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the District's wellness policy:

- Members of the District's Board of Directors;
- School administrators;
- School nutrition personnel;
- Teacher organizations;
- Teachers of physical education;
- Parents;
- Students;
- Professional groups (such as nurses);
- School health professionals (such as school nurses, school counselors, and social workers); and
- Community members.

The District Wellness Committee shall provide written recommendations to the District's Child Nutrition Director concerning menus and other foods sold in the school cafeteria. Such recommendations shall be

based, at least in part, on the information the Committee receives from the District on the requirements and standards of the National School Lunch Program and from menus for the National School Lunch Program and other food sold in the school cafeteria on a quarterly basis.

The District Wellness Committee will meet at least quarterly. Meeting dates for the District Wellness Committee will be placed on the District's calendar.

### **School Health Coordinator**

To assist the District Wellness Committee in ensuring that the District fulfills the requirements of this policy, a District Level School Health Coordinator (Designated District Official) shall be appointed.

### **Goals**

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the district will adhere to the ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols. To promote nutrition, physical activity, and other school based activities that will improve student wellness, the District, working with the Wellness Committee, has established the following goals:

17. Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
18. Enforce existing physical education requirements and engage students in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity;
19. Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
20. Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
21. Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances;
22. Establish class schedules, and bus routes that don't directly or indirectly restrict meal access;
23. Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
24. Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
25. Meet the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria;
26. Restrict access to competitive foods as required by law and Rule;
27. 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 competitive foods.
28. Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
29. 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;

### **Food and Beverages Outside of the District's Food Service Programs**

The District will insure that drinking water is available without charge to all students throughout the school including, but not limited to, in the District's food service areas.

All food and beverages sold to students on school campus during the school day by school administrators or school non-licensed or licensed staff (principals, coaches, teachers, club sponsors, etc.); students or student groups; parents or parent groups; or another person, company, or organization associated with the school shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks requirements and Arkansas Nutrition Standards at a

minimum. These restrictions include, but are not limited to, food and beverages sold in vending venues (machines, ice chests, cabinets) in school stores or as part of school fundraisers.

All food and beverages provided, but not sold, to students on the school campus during the school day by school administrators or school non-licensed or licensed staff (principals, coaches, teachers, club sponsors, etc.); students or student groups; parents or parent groups; or another person, company, or organization associated with the school shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks requirements and Arkansas Nutrition Standards at a minimum. These restrictions include, but are not limited to, food and beverages provided in vending venues (machines, ice chests, cabinets) in school stores or as part of school fundraisers.

Up to a maximum of nine (9) times per school year, school administration may schedule school wide events where food and beverages provided to students are not required to meet the Federal Smart Snacks standards during the scheduled time. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar.

Food and beverages outside of the District's food service programs may not be sold, served, or provided to students in the District's food service areas during meal times.

Elementary students shall not have in-school access to vending machines.

The District does not place nutrition restrictions on food or beverages brought from home that are intended for personal consumption only.

### **Advertising**

In accordance with the USDA regulations, oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product that are made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product shall only be permitted on school campus during the school day if they meet or exceed the Federal Smart Snacks standards. This restriction does not apply to:

- Materials used for educational purposes in the classroom, including, but not limited to:
  - The use of advertisements as a media education tool; or
  - Designing and implementing the health or nutrition curriculum;
- Clothing, apparel, or other personal items used by students and staff;
- The packaging of products brought from home for personal consumption; and
- Currently existing advertisements on school property, including but not limited to, the exterior of vending machines, posters, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, cups used for beverage dispensing, and other food service equipment; however, all future contracts and replacement items shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks standards.

### **Community Engagement**

The District will work with the Wellness Committee to:

- a. Encourage participation in extracurricular programs that support physical activity, such as walk-to-school programs, biking clubs, after-school walking etc.;
- b. Encourage the implementation of developmentally appropriate physical activity in after-school childcare programs for participating children;
- c. Promote the reduction of time youth spend engaged in sedentary activities such as watching television and playing video games; and
- d. Encourage the development of and participation in family-oriented community-based physical activity programs.

The District will annually inform the public:

- Of the web address where the policy is located;
- Of any changes made to this policy since the previous year;
- Of the health and wellness priority goals in the District's ACSIP;
- That a printed copy of the policy may be picked up at the District's central office; and
- The amounts and specific sources of funds received and expenditures made from competitive food and beverage contracts.

### **Assessment of District's Wellness Policy**

At least once every three years, with input from the District Wellness Committee, the District shall assess both the District as a whole and individual schools' status in regards to the implementation and compliance of the goals of this policy, including the health and wellness goals in the District's ACSIP.

The assessment shall be based, at least in part, on:

- The extent to which District schools are in compliance with this policy;
- The extent to which this policy compares to other model local school wellness policies;
- The annual reviews of this policy based on modules 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 of the CDC's School Health Index; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

On the years the assessment occurs, the assessment results shall be reported to the public, including parents, students, and other members of the community as part of the District's annual report to the public.

The District will update the wellness policy based on the results from the three (3) year assessment.

### **District Website**

The District will place on its website:

- The name, District phone number, and District email address for the District Level School Health Coordinator;
- The names, district phone numbers, and district email addresses for the School Level School Health Coordinators;
- The names of the members of the District Wellness Committee;
- Meeting dates for the District Wellness Committee;
- Information on how community members may get involved with the District Wellness Committee;
- A copy of this policy;
- A copy of the annual review of this policy based on modules 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 of the CDC's School Health Index; and
- A copy of the most recent three (3) year assessment of this policy.

Approved by Board of Education 05/09/06

Amended by Board of Education 04/11/17



## **6.5 – PARENT CONFERENCE**

**6.5**

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  
Amended by Board of Education 06/12/07