

Mahoning Valley Community School



**Student/Parent Handbook
Academic Plan 2025-2026**

MAHONING VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
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Mission Statement

The Mahoning Valley Community School will provide a safe, structured, and supportive learning environment for "at-risk" and/or drop out students. Students will have the opportunity to recover academic credit and explore educational interests while developing vocational skills.

The Mahoning Valley Community School Vision

It is our belief that all students will learn through innovative practices, structured discipline, and school, family, and community support. As an outcome, our students will pursue self-determined goals and will experience academic achievement.

The Mahoning Valley Community School as a Community School

MVCS is a community school established under the Ohio Revised Code charter 3314, the school is a public institution and students enrolled in and attending the school are required to take proficiency tests and other examinations prescribed by law. In addition, there may be other requirements for students at the school that are prescribed by law. Students who have been excused from the compulsory attendance law for the purpose of home education as defined by the Administrative Code shall no longer be excused for that purpose upon their enrollment in a community school. For more information about this matter contact the school administration or the Ohio Department of Education.

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Behavioral Expectations

The staff at the Mahoning Valley Community School believes that all students can learn and deserve a safe, supportive environment in which they feel welcome. It is our expectation that our students will:

BE RESPECTFUL
BE RESPONSIBLE
BE MOTIVATED

We have implemented a school-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support system for our students. The PBIS is an approach to discipline that will emphasize preventing disruptive behavior and developing pro-social skills to problem-solve. The school will use a variety of resources, including counseling, a trauma-informed practice, restorative justice practices and mediation to guide students to make appropriate decisions and be supportive members of their learning communities.

What is the student's role?

The students will learn and follow the behavior expectations in every area of the school. Students will practice and display the positive behaviors that will allow them to focus on academics and work toward credit recovery and graduation goals.

What is the staff's role?

The staff will teach, model, supervise and reflect on students' behavior and their progress toward meeting the behavioral expectations. Staff will use classroom and school-wide incentives to reinforce positive behavioral choices. When positive choices and behavioral expectations are not met, staff will re-teach and redirect student behavior.

Staff will complete a Discipline Referral Form if redirection is not successful.

What is the parent's role?

Parents are a vital part of our school's success. School personnel will communicate with parents both when a student is excelling and when a student is struggling with behaviors or academics. We will work with our parents to support our students and ask that our parents assist us when we call upon them. We invite our parents to come to the school at any time to participate in their child's learning. Parents and students are required to follow the recommendations of the Early Warning Systems process to address truancy issues the student might encounter at MVCS.

MAHONING VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
SCHOOL CALENDAR – 2025/2026
(Board Approved: 03/17/2025)

August 22-29, Sept. 2, 2025	Teacher Report/Professional Development
September 3, 2025	First Day of Classes
October 10, 2025	NEOEA - No Classes - Teachers Report
October 30, 2025	First Grading Period Ends
October 31, 2025	Professional Development – No Classes/Teachers Report
November 25, 2025	Parent Teacher Conferences - evening. Regular Classes
November 26, 2025	Parent Teacher Conferences - No Classes
November 27 & 28, 2025	Thanksgiving Break - No Classes
December 1, 2025	Classes Resume
December 19, 2025	Last Day of Classes before Winter Break
January 5, 2026	Classes Resume
January 16, 2026	End of 1st Semester/2nd Grading Period
January 19, 2026	Martin Luther King Day - No Classes
February 12, 2026	Parent Teacher Conferences - evening. Regular Classes
February 13, 2026	Parent Teacher Conferences - No Classes
February 16, 2026	Presidents' Day - No Classes
March 9, 2026	Professional Development - No Classes/Teachers Report
March 20, 2026	Third Grading Period Ends
April 2, 2026	Last Day of Classes - Spring Recess
April 13, 2026	Classes Resume
May 25, 2026	Memorial Day – No Classes
May 29, 2026	Commencement
May 28, 2026	End of Fourth Grading Period/Last Day of Classes

May 29, June 1-5, 2026	Teacher Report Days
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REPORT PERIODS

First.....	September 3, 2025 – October 30, 2025	- 41 days/266.50 Hours
Second	November 3, 2025 – January 16, 2026	- 42 days/273 Hours
Third	January 20, 2026– March 20, 2026	- 41 days/266.50 Hours
Fourth	March 23, 2026 – May 28, 2026	- 42 days/273 Hours

Student Days – 166
 Student Hours – 1079
 Conference Days - 2
 Professional Development Days - 6
 Teacher Report Days - 10
 Total Teacher Days - 184

Daily Bell Schedule

7:15 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.	Arrival/Breakfast/Homeroom/Circle
7:47 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	Block 1
9:17 a.m. - 10:46 a.m.	Block 2
10:48 a.m. - 12:46 p.m.	Block 3

Block 3 will be longer to accommodate the lunch periods:

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	MVCS Collaborative
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Lunch A
12:03 p.m. - 12:33 p.m.	Lunch B
12:48 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.	Block 4

No Students will be permitted outside of their classroom prior to dismissal.

Attendance Policy & Reporting Absences

The School's educational program requires students to be continuously present so the student may receive instruction and actively participate in the educational process. In accordance with Ohio law, the School requires attendance of all students enrolled in the School during the days and hours the School is in session. To be considered in attendance, a student must be either within the School facilities or in place where School is in session by the School's authority.

In developing this policy, the School has consulted with the Judge of the Juvenile Court, parents, guardians, custodians, students, and all appropriate state and local agencies.

Parental Responsibility & Procedure for Reporting Absences

A student's parents or guardians are primarily responsible for a student's attendance at school. Should a student be absent, the student's parent or guardian is required to notify the School on the day the student is absent unless previous notification has been given in accordance with the School procedure regarding excused absence.

In case a student is absent, the procedure for reporting absences should be as follows:

The parent must call the School within the first hour that the School is in session to report the student's absence.

If a parent fails to call the School, school personnel must make a good faith attempt to contact within 120 minutes of the start of the school day, the parent/guardian of a student who is absent

from school without legitimate excuse.

The School must make at least one good faith attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or caretaker.

A good faith attempt shall include, but not be limited to, contacting the parent by:

- (1) An actual or automated telephone call;
- (2) A notification sent through the school's automated student information system;
- (3) A text message;
- (4) An email;

- (5) An actual visit to the student's residence; or
- (6) Any other method adopted by resolution of the School's governing authority.

If the parent/guardian responds to any of those attempts but is unable to participate, the Head Administrator or Designee shall inform the parent of the parent's right to appear by the designee.

If an automated calling system is used, it must include verification that each call is placed, and whether the call was answered by the intended recipient or the system leaves a voicemail containing notice of the student's absence.

The notification requirement does not apply to students participating in College Credit Plus, or other "off-campus activities" as well as students receiving home-based, online, or Internet- or computer-based instruction.

To facilitate policy, parents or guardians must provide the School with their current home, work, and/or cellular telephone numbers; home address; and emergency telephone numbers.

Absences

Excused Absences. The Governing Authority recognizes the following absences as excused:

- the student's physical or mental illness;
- instruction at home from a person qualified to teach the student due to a child's disability;
- illness in the family necessitating the student's presence;
- serious illness or death in the family;
- observing religious holidays and consistent with the student's truly held beliefs;
- medical or dental appointment;
- college visitation;
- quarantine;
- required court appearance;
- inability of the parent to employ help in the parent's family business;
- farm work of the parent or guardian at necessary times; or
- emergency or other circumstances the School determines reasonable.

If the student is absent or will be absent for one of the above reasons, the student must provide a written note upon returning/prior to leaving the School or the absence will be considered unexcused. The statement must be from a parent and explain the cause for absence. At his or her sole discretion, the Head Administrator or his/her designee may investigate each individual absence. A student, whose extended absence is due to a medically-documented physical or mental impairment, will not be disciplined. As provided by law, such students may be entitled to receive an education tailored to their individual needs or abilities.

Limited Excuse Absence. Students absent solely to participate in an out-of-state School-approved activity shall constitute a limited excused absence. Limited excuse absences are to be treated as an excused absence provided: (1) the absences are limited to a maximum of twenty-four hours per school year, (2) the student must complete any missed classroom assignments, (3) and if the activity will cause the student to be absent for four or more consecutive school days, teachers must accompany the student for instructional assistance.

Unexcused Absence. A student's absence is unexcused if it is not an excused or limited excused absence. A student who is repeatedly has unexcused absences will be subject to disciplinary action.

Tardiness. A student is tardy when a student is more than five minutes late for school or is late for the start of class. If student misses more than half a class, the student shall be considered absent for the class. A student who is repeatedly tardy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Truancy

No student of compulsory school age shall be habitually truant.

Habitual Truancy – a student is absent without a legitimate excuse for any of the following:

- thirty (30) or more consecutive school hours, or
- forty-two (42) or more school hours in one (1) month, or
- seventy-two (72) or more school hours in one (1) year.

Notification and Absence Intervention Team

The School's Attendance Officer must notify a child's parent, guardian or custodian if the child has "excessive absences" which shall be defined as *nonmedical* excused absences and unexcused absences with or without legitimate excuse for 38+ hours in one school month or 65+ hours in a school year. This notice shall be made in writing within 7 days after the date of the absence that triggered the notice.

If the student continues to be truant after the notification and surpasses the threshold for habitual truancy, the School must assign the student to an absence intervention team within 10 days after the absences surpass those for habitual truancy. This team must develop an intervention plan for

the student to reduce or eliminate further absences within 14 school days after the student is assigned to the team. Absence intervention plans incorporate academic and non-academic supports to help the student and remove barriers to regular attendance. They shall also include counseling for those students classified as a habitual truant.

The team must make at least three (3) meaningful good faith attempts to secure participation in this process and any recommended truancy prevention mediation programs from the student's parent, guardian or custodian.

A good faith attempt shall include, but not be limited to, contacting the parent by:

- (1) An actual or automated telephone call;
- (2) A notification sent through the school's automated student information system;
- (3) A text message;
- (4) An email;
- (5) An actual visit to the student's residence; or
- (6) Any other method adopted by resolution of the School's governing authority.

The parent is permitted to participate through a designee. If the parent fails to respond or participate, then the School is required to investigate as to whether the failure to respond trigger mandatory reporting to JFS and the team must develop the plan without parent participation.

The School has the discretion to extend the intervention plan or process over the summer months.

Disciplinary Consequences for Truancy

On the 61st day after implementing the absence intervention plan, the Attendance Officer must file a complaint in the juvenile court if all of the following apply:

1. The student is absent without excuse for 30+ consecutive hours, 42+ hours in a school month or 72+ hours in a school year;
2. The School has made meaningful attempts to reengage through the absence intervention plan and any offered alternatives to adjudication;
3. The student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan, as determined by the absence intervention team, or any offered alternative adjudication.

A complaint regarding a habitual truant where the parent, guardian, or custodian fails to get the child to attend school must be file jointly against the student and the parent, guardian, or custodian. If the student is absent without excuse for 30+ consecutive hours or 42+ in a school month but the absence intervention team has determined that the student has made substantial

progress on the absence intervention plan, the Attendance Officer is not required to file a complaint.

The School shall also make notification to the registrar of motor vehicles pursuant to ORC 3321.13, if applicable, and shall also initiate legal action under ORC 2919.222, 3321.20, and/or 3321.38, if applicable to the student's situation.

Pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, the School shall not suspend, expel, or remove a student from school solely on the basis of the student's absences from school without legitimate excuse. A student who is habitually truant will be excused for the absences if it is determined that: (1) the student was enrolled in another school, or (2) the student's absence was excused by law or this policy, or (3) the student has received an age and schooling certificate.

Attendance Officer Responsibilities

The Attendance Officer responsibilities shall be held by the Head Administrator or his/her designee. The School's Attendance Officer shall investigate all nonattendance, shall be vested with police powers, may serve warrants, and may enter workshops; factories; stores; and all other places where children are employed and do whatever is necessary in the way of investigation or otherwise to enforce the laws relating to compulsory education and the employment of minors. The Attendance Officer may also take into custody any youth of compulsory school age not legally employed on an age and schooling certificate who is not attending school and shall conduct such youth to the school he has been attending or should rightfully attend.

Withdrawal

By law, a student will be withdrawn automatically if the student fails to participate in seventy-two (72) consecutive hours of learning opportunities and the absence is not excused pursuant to O.R.C. 3314.03(A)(6)(b). Upon a student's withdrawal pursuant to this provision, the School shall automatically notify the student's school district of residence pursuant to any applicable Ohio laws, rules and regulations.

A student may be voluntarily withdrawn if a parent submits a written Voluntary Withdrawal notice to the Head Administrator.

Reporting Requirements

The School must report to the Ohio Department of Education any of the following occurrences:

1. When student is absent 38+ hours in a school month or 65+ hours in a school year and the School sends notice to the parent, guardian or custodian;
2. When the child has been absent without legitimate excuse the number of hours to classify as a habitual truant;
3. When the child is adjudicated an unruly child for being habitual truant violates the court order regarding that adjudication; and
4. When an absence intervention plan has been implemented for a child.

Report Cards

Every nine weeks report cards are mailed to the parent(s) or guardian of the student from the Mahoning Valley Community School. If the Student does not receive a report card, s/he is to make the Administrative Office aware of the situation and a report card can be printed out for this student.

An student who has an Individual Education Plan will also receive progress reports from his/her teachers at this time.

Graduation

Ohio Revised Code section 3313.618

Students in the classes of 2023 and beyond (those who entered grade 9 on or after July 1, 2019) are now required to meet a new set of graduation requirements. These new graduation requirements consist of **three** key components:

1. Course Completion

Students will satisfy Ohio's curriculum requirements and any additional local requirements.

Students will complete the state minimum 20 units, with specific units required in each content area.

2. Demonstrating Competency

Students will demonstrate competency in the foundational areas of English language arts and mathematics or through alternative demonstrations, which include College Credit Plus, career-focused activities, their ACT or SAT scores, or military enlistment.

3. Demonstrating Readiness (Seals)

Students will demonstrate readiness for their post-high school paths by earning two diploma seals that allow them to demonstrate important foundational and well-rounded academic and technical knowledge, professional skills, and leadership and reasoning skills.

Complete Courses

Take and earn a state minimum of 20 credits in specific subjects.

General Course Requirements	State Minimum
English language arts	4 credits
Health	½ credit
Mathematics	4 credits
Physical education	½ credit
Science	3 credits
Social studies	3 credits
Electives	5 credits

Other Requirements

Students must receive instruction in [economics and financial literacy](#) (in high school) **and** complete at least two semesters of [fine arts](#) (during grades 7-12).

** Beginning with students who enter 9th grade after July 1, 2022, students will need ½ credit of financial literacy.*

***Fine arts may not be required for students in career-tech programs unless it is a component of local course requirements.*

Demonstrating Competency

To graduate, students must earn a "competency" score on the English language arts II and Algebra I (or integrated math I) end-of-course tests or complete other options. Students not earning competency scores on the first attempt must be offered appropriate remediation and supports and retake the relevant test at least once. In lieu of attaining competency scores on the state tests, students can choose between four other ways to demonstrate competency following remediation and second test attempts. See [Ohio Revised Code section 3313.618\(B\)\(1\)](#).

Competency Score

Ohio law directed the Department of Education and Workforce, in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Office of Workforce Transformation, to establish a competency score on the English language arts II and Algebra I end-of-course tests. The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, after gathering feedback from education stakeholders and business communities of Ohio, determined that "competency" would be set at a score of **684** for both the **English language arts II and Algebra I tests**. See [Ohio Revised Code section 3301.0712\(B\)\(10\)](#).

Alternative Demonstrations of Competency

Ohio law establishes multiple pathways to demonstrating competency beyond Ohio's state tests. Prior to being eligible to demonstrate competency in these, students first must receive remedial supports and retake the test. The alternative ways to demonstrate competency are as follows:

- [College Credit Plus](#)
- [ACT or SAT](#)
- [Career Experience and Technical Skill](#)
- [Military Enlistment](#)

Demonstrating Readiness | Graduation Seals

In addition to fulfilling curriculum requirements and meeting the competency requirements listed above, students also must show they are prepared for their next steps after high school. State law created 12 diploma seals for students to demonstrate academic, technical and professional readiness for careers, college, the military or self-sustaining professions. Each seal allows students to demonstrate knowledge and skills essential for future success in their chosen post-high school paths. Students will demonstrate readiness by earning at least two diploma seals, one of which must be state-defined. Seals help students develop an array of critical skills that are valuable to them as they transition to the next steps after high school. Schools should consider encouraging students to pursue seals that meet their individual interests and skills. Graduation planning will be an important step in supporting students in earning their seals.

Graduation Seals



Grading System

The grading system is consistent for all teachers. The Mahoning Valley Community School uses letter grades in its grading system: A, B, C, D, and F. An "A" represents a grade received from a 90 to 100%, a "B" is 80 to 89%, a "C" is 70 to 79%, a "D" is 60 to 69%, and an "F" is anything below 60%. A student may receive an "Incomplete" for a grade and must complete the missed work within the amount of time designated by the teacher, or the "Incomplete" becomes an "F." Students who have received two (2) grades of "F" in a semester course has failed the course.

Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to follow the rules, regulations, and policies of the Mahoning Valley Community School. This handbook provides each student with details of behavioral expectations. The intent of the Student Code of Conduct is to ensure a healthy learning environment by intervening in continual misconduct.

Each student will adhere to a high standard of behavior and will, at all times, display courtesy and civility to one another and to faculty and staff. Any behavior which disrupts the ability of another student to learn, or of a faculty to teach, cannot be tolerated. We expect our students to BE Respectful, Responsible, Honest, Motivated, and Kind.

The administration reserves the right to use its discretion in enforcing the rules. Due to a broad range of behaviors, varying circumstances, and a sincere desire to modify misbehavior, the administration will use prudence in assigning consequences when a student engages in behavior contrary to the Student Code of Conduct. **** These actions are guidelines and each infraction will be reviewed and handled individually according to the number of infractions a student has and the circumstances. Final decisions are at the discretion of the Administration.**

Types of Interventions for Behaviors that Violate School Policies and School Community Expectations:

Verbal Warning/Redirection: The teacher or staff person will warn the student verbally about his/her behavior and redirect his/her actions.

Written Warning: The teacher or staff person will write the student's action on a disciplinary referral, which is then given to the Coordinator who will determine the outcome.

Parent Notification: The parent or guardian will be contacted regarding the child's behavior(s).

Parent Conference: The parent or guardian will attend a conference with an administrator to discuss the student's behavior and consequences.

Referral to Counselor: The student will attend counseling sessions with the School Counselor, the number of sessions to be determined by the School Counselor.

Mediation: A mediator will be assigned as an impartial third party in appropriate situations to assist in problem-solving and help resolve the issues.

Meeting/Discussion with Coordinator/Administration: The student will meet with the Coordinator to discuss the student's behavior.

Lunch Detention: The student will spend his/her lunch period in the ISS room eating his/her lunch and doing the assigned activities.

Restitution: Compensation for loss, damage, or injury caused to another student or staff member.

In-School Suspension (ISS): The student will spend the school day in the ISS room doing school work and other assigned activities rather than attending his/her classes.

Police Notification: Offenses that violate the law may result in notification of law enforcement for possible official charges.

Student and/or Parent/Guardian Liable for Damages: If the offense involves breaking or damaging property then the student and/or parent/guardian will be responsible for paying the repairs or replacement of the property.

Community Service : The student may be assigned community service within the building for incidents involving destruction of school property or vandalism in the school.

Referral to Mahoning County Juvenile Court Services: In lieu of formal charges for offenses committed at school, mandatory parent/guardian and student participation in specialized court programming will be set by the school.

Behaviors that Violate the School Policies and School Community Expectations:

Level 1 Behavior: Conduct that disrupts the order of the classroom or school

Cheating: Using, submitting, or attempting to obtain data or answers dishonestly, by deceit, or by means other than those authorized by the teacher.

Disorderly Conduct: Engaging in minor physical or verbal altercations. Insulting, taunting, or challenging another person under circumstances in which such conduct is likely to provoke a violent or disruptive response.

Dress Code: Dressing or grooming in a manner which disrupts the teaching and learning of others as determined by MVCS Dress Code Policy.

Gambling: Playing any game or chance or skill for money or items of value.

Indecent/Objectionable Language: Using language that is socially unacceptable, offensive, or making improper gestures in the presence of others.

Littering: Throwing of paper, trash, or other materials on the floor inside the school buildings or grounds.

Food/Drink: No outside food or drink is permitted inside the building. During lunch, students must finish their food and drink. NO food or drink is permitted outside of the cafeteria.

Truancy, Class Cutting, and Tardiness: Unexcused absences, cutting class or arriving at school or class after the designated time.

Ohio Law defines truancy as, "missing school without an appropriate excuse from a parent or guardian." The law identifies two types of truancy:

A *habitual truant* is absent from school without a legitimate excuse for five or more consecutive days, seven or more days in one month, or twelve or more days in one school year.

A *chronic truant* is absent from school without a legitimate excuse for seven or more consecutive school days, ten or more school days in one school month, or fifteen or more school days in a school year.

Disciplinary Actions for Level 1 Behavior include but are not limited to: verbal reprimand, special assignments, notification to parent(s), student mediation, written discipline note, conference with student and/or parent(s), temporary separation from peers, schedule changes, lunch detention, in-school suspension, loss of class privileges, restitution, counselor referral, or administrative referral.

Level 2 Behavior: Illegal and/or serious misconduct (not health/life threatening)

Damage/Destruction of Property: Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause damage to school or private property.

Extortion/Coercion: Obtaining or attempting to obtain money or property from an unwilling person or forcing an individual to act by either physical force or intimidation (threat).

Fighting: Engaging in physical conflict with another person, threatening serious harm to another person, or engaging in violent or turbulent behavior. We have a "no tolerance, door-to-door" policy, which means that if students engage in a fight, either in school, while walking to or from school, while being transported on the bus, or at any school function, both students will suffer disciplinary action.

Insubordination: Knowingly refusing to comply with reasonable school rule or with reasonable instructions of authorized school personnel, including repeated Level 1 violations and multiple offenses.

Hazing: Doing any act or coercing anything, including the victim, to do any act of initiation upon any student or other organization that cause or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subject to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Gang-Related Activity: Any gang related issues as any manner of grooming, hairstyle, clothing, jewelry, or other accessories that may indicate membership; use of gang slogans, hand signals, or nicknames that indicate affiliation or association with a gang are prohibited.

Obscenities/Verbal Abuse/Vulgarity/Threats: Directing abusive, obscene, vulgar, or threatening language, written or verbal, toward school personnel, or any member of the school community. This shall include use of obscene gestures and signs.

Disruptive Behavior: Engaging in any conduct for the purpose of disrupting or obstructing any lawful mission, process, or function of the school or a school-related activity.

Sexual Misconduct: Intentionally touching another person inappropriately or intimately, including any conduct involving sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment: Such behavior, which will not be tolerated, can be defined in the following ways:

Verbal- the making of written or verbal sexual comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats to another student or any authorized personnel.

Nonverbal or Gestures- the placement of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons in the school environment, insulting gestures or sounds to another student or any authorized personnel.

Physical Contact- threatening to or causing unwanted touching or contact including patting, pinching, pushing the body, or coerced sexual intercourse with another student or any authorized personnel.

Theft: Stealing or attempting to steal school or private property or participating in the theft or attempted theft of school or private property.

Trespassing: Being in a school building or on school grounds without permission or refusing to comply with a request to leave school premises.

Possession or Use of Alcohol or Drugs: The use or possession of any alcohol, drugs, chemicals, or other illegal substances anywhere on the premises by a student at any time is prohibited. The possession of drug paraphernalia is also prohibited. Students suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will have the parent contacted. The parent/guardian will be instructed to pick up the student, where he/she will be informed of further disciplinary action. Those students who are court sanctioned maybe drug tested at any time if school officials suspect that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. School officials are authorized to allow the use of trained dogs on school property for the purpose of detecting controlled substances. This activity may be carried out on a random or periodic basis and/or when reasonable suspicion exists. Furthermore, random searches of lockers, purses, and persons may take place to provide a safe environment for learning.

Use of Tobacco: Smoking, using, or possessing tobacco in any form. Even students over 18 may not possess tobacco products on school property.

Electronic Devices: Students are prohibited from having in their possession any electronic device or interactive digital devices such as cell phones, iPods, mp3 players, ear buds, headphones, etc. Electronic devices must be stored in lockers once the student enters the

building. Electronic devices are not permitted in the cafeteria. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Level 3 Behavior: Illegal and/or serious misconduct (life/health threatening)

Arson: Setting fire, or attempting to set fire, to a school building or property located on school grounds, or any property belonging to, rented by, or on loan to the school district, or property (including automobiles) of persons employed by the school, or in attendance at the school.

Assault/Intimidation/Harassment/Bullying: Students who engage in any form of hostile or quarrelsome behavior with another student, or with faculty or staff, including actions such as pushing or shoving, will face disciplinary action. Any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibit toward another particular student/group of students more than once, that causes mental or physical harm to said student(s), which is sufficiently severe and persistent, so that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s), is considered bullying. Furthermore, cyber bullying is defined as repetitive, hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies, such as web sites, instant messages, cameras, phones, or iPods. Such behavior will not be tolerated.

Bomb Threats/False Alarms: Making a knowingly false statement regarding the possession or location of explosive or incendiary materials, or activating the fire alarm system on school property, or reporting a fire when a fire does not exist.

Possession or use of weapons or dangerous instruments: Possessing, handling, transmitting, or using any kind of firearm, knife, razor, club, chain, or other look-a-like or replica object, or item which can be considered a weapon, or used as a weapon, or dangerous instruments including laser pointers. This includes bringing such items into the school or to a school-sponsored activity for another person. It includes having such items at one's desk, or placing them in a locker or vehicle, or hiding place on school property.

Sale of alcohol, drugs, or other chemical control substances: Selling drugs, mood-altering chemicals, or substances (including counterfeit or look-a-like substances), distributing any narcotics, drugs, controlled substances of any kind or alcoholic beverages, or other intoxicant on school property or at school functions. This includes selling such items on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

Sexual Offenses: Committing any willful and/or deliberate act with the intention of gaining sexual favors, or further acts lewd or lascivious in nature, including acts of indecent exposure. Sexual offenses also include consensual or non-consensual sexual contact or conduct, and posting any inappropriate cell phone pictures, materials, or other pictures on the internet.

Vandalism/Theft: Substantial destruction, defacing, or theft of school or private property.

Inducing Panic/Verbal Threats of Violence: Disrupting school by use of violence, coercion, or threat. This shall include use of violence, coercion, or threat to incite others towards acts

of disruption (individual or group related).

Endangering Safety of Students/Staff: Any conduct which imposes a threat to another person's life, health, or seriously disrupts or interferes with the educational process, including gang membership activity.

Dress Code

The following dress is mandatory for male, female, and gender non-conformist students:

- Shirts, blouses, and tops should fully cover backs, stomachs, torsos, and cleavage (on males, females, and gender non-conformists), without any indecent exposure including undergarments and associated undergarment straps.
- Pants, trousers, and bottoms should fully cover undergarments, without any indecent exposure including underwear linings and underwear bands. Skirts should fully cover the entire thigh. If leggings/yoga pants are worn, shirts should cover the buttocks.
- If students decide to wear clothing and/or accessories with messaging, messages must be positive and not include hateful, offensive, and/or violent/explicit language, images, or words.
- During the school day students are to store/hang outerwear (*i.e. coats, hats, scarves, jackets, gloves...*) in designated cubbies, lockers, closets, or hooks.
- No wearing of baseball caps, hats, bandanas, and non-religious head coverings that are considered “caps,” “hats,” or “hoods.”
- Students must wear proper footwear at all times. House-slippers, socks, flip-flops, going barefoot, etc. are considered *improper* and *unsafe*.
- While on school grounds/campus, and during the school related events, cover all crew-related, block-related (*i.e. “East-side,” “West-side,” ...*), and gang-affiliated tattoos.
- Sunglasses/shades are to be worn outside; not on students’ faces and heads during the school day.

If the student comes to school out of dress code she/he will be sent to the Coordinator, who will instruct the student to call home for assistance in getting appropriate school apparel. The Coordinator will maintain a record of those who violate the dress code; repeated violations will result in further disciplinary action.

Bus Transportation

Transportation of students is arranged through Community Bus Services. Transportation will contact the student's home to arrange transportation and notify the family of pick-up and drop-off time.

Other local schools may provide transportation through their transportation services but please contact your home school or the Mahoning Valley Community School to learn if such transportation is available.

Parents are responsible for checking on busing if schools are closed for inclement weather. The Mahoning Valley Community School will follow the make announcements on its social media pages, the local news stations and via our parent notification system regarding school closures.

Students must follow all rules established by Community Bus Services Department policies while using their transportation. If students who will be leaving the building by means other than usual, that is, being picked up by parent/guardian or other family member or riding with another student, students must have his or her parent or guardian contact the school prior to the transportation change. The student must also bring written permission on the day the student will be taking alternate transportation.

Computer Use

Any computer, especially internet use, is for educational purposes only. Any student who is found to be using a computer inappropriately will lose his/her computer privileges for a length of time deemed appropriate by the administration. The school must have MVCS Student Network/Internet Agreement signed by the student on file before the student may use any school computer.

Counseling Program

A Licensed Counselor is available for students who seek assistance for themselves or for those who are court mandated for counseling. Also, the Counselor helps students with college preparations, job readiness, and linkages to outside agencies for support.

Disability Program

The Mahoning Valley Community School will make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and classroom instruction for any student who has a documented disability, when considered necessary, for the student to benefit from his/her educational program.

Food Program

All students enrolled in the Mahoning Valley Community School can receive breakfasts and lunches provided by the school. Breakfast will be available from 7:30 a.m. until 7:45 a.m. Students need to be on time to receive breakfast. The school requires the completion of the Application for Free and Reduced Price School meals by all enrolled students.

Lunch

Students will not be dismissed for lunch. Outside food is not permitted to be dropped off by anyone. Students may NOT bring a packed lunch from home, unless documented dietary restrictions require otherwise. NO food (including candy) or drinks may be brought into the building. All food or drinks brought into the building will be disposed of. Students are not permitted to leave the cafeteria during their lunch period. Students are to visit their lockers before or after lunch period. No food or drink is allowed outside of the cafeteria. Special consideration for a student's dietary need will be accommodated. This information must be provided to administration upon enrollment.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of Mahoning Valley Community School. They are loaned to the students for their use. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the locker securely locked and to keep it clean and in good order. The school will not be held responsible for investigating theft from lockers that students have left unsecured. Students can be held fiscally responsible for any damage to their locker. Lockers are subject to inspection at any time.

Book Bags

Students are permitted to bring book bags into the building upon arrival and out of the building at dismissal time. Students are not permitted to carry book bags in the hallways and into classrooms.

Use of Electronic Communications Devices and Cameras

To support school environments in which students can fully engage with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the Governing Authority has determined the use of electronic communications devices (ECDs) (most specifically cellular phones) by students during school hours should be restricted.

“Electronic communications device” (ECD) is defined in Ohio law to mean any device that is powered by batteries or electricity and that is capable of receiving, transmitting, or receiving and transmitting communications between two or more persons or a communication from or to a person. Examples of ECDs include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smart phones and tablets, smart watches, video games, walkie-talkies, pagers, and other similar electronic devices. “Camera devices” may also be ECDs, and include, but are not limited to, digital cameras, cellular phones with cameras, camcorders, and other imaging devices. The objective of this policy is to strengthen the School’s focus on learning, in alignment with our mission to ignite students’ passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools.

Research shows that student use of cell phones in schools has negative effects on student performance and mental health. Cell phones distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in smaller learning gains and lower test scores. Increased cell phone use has led to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in children.

Rule.

Students are prohibited from using ECDs during school hours in accordance with this policy. ECDs may be turned on and used before the school day begins and after the regular school day ends. Students may use cell phones or other ECDs in accordance with their written IEPs or Section 504 plans, or to monitor or address a health concern.

Students may use ECDs in emergency situations that present an imminent physical danger. At no time shall ECDs or camera devices be used in a manner disruptive to the instructional process, disruptive to the School’s academic mission, or inconsistent with Policy No. **4430**, Internet and Technology Use, Policy No. **4103**, Harassment, and Policy No. **4104**, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying.

Students shall keep their ECDs and camera devices in a secure place, such as the student’s locker, a closed backpack, or a storage device provided by the School, at all times when cell phone use is prohibited.

User Liability.

The School and its employees are not responsible for theft, loss, damage, or destruction of ECDs and camera devices brought on to school property. Students are solely responsible for devices they bring on school property.

Discipline.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and the student may lose his/her privilege to bring the ECD onto school property and/or have his/her device confiscated.

If confiscated, the student shall cooperate in surrendering the ECD, and the device will only be returned to the student's parent or guardian. While confiscated, the School may further inspect the MED if it reasonably believes the student has violated other policies in accordance with Policy **4490**, Search and Seizure.

A student disciplined for harassment, intimidation, or bullying while using an ECD (pursuant to the Code of Conduct and/or Policy Nos. **4103**, Harassment, and **4104**, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) will lose his/her privilege to bring the ECD onto School property [] for ___ days [X] for 20 days [] for the remainder of the school year.

Use of Medication

The providing of medical care to a student is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and should not be assumed by the school. Whenever possible, it is preferred that students not take medication during school hours. If it is **absolutely necessary** that medication be given during school hours, the following policy will apply:

- For legal purposes, written permission for dispensing prescription drugs must be provided by the student's parent/guardian and from his/her physician. The administration of any prescription drug without the written order of the physician, along with the written permission of the parent or guardian, is prohibited by law.
- The statement from the student's physician must include the student's name, name of medication, dosage, time it should be given, and the possible side effects, if any, and the length of time the student will be taking the medication. **This information is needed for each new medication or dosage change.** No prescription medication will be given unless this information and permission is provided. **This is State Law.**
- Students may **not** carry or administer their own medication, nor can the student carry medication on a school bus. The parent or guardian must bring the medication to the Administrative Office, with the original container clearly marked with the name of the student, name of the medication, dosage directions, physician's name, and the pharmacist's number. The parent or guardian must supply the school with the exact dosage. The only personnel who may administer medications is the Superintendent, Coordinator, or Designee.
- Asthmatic students may carry their inhalers to self-administer only with the written approval of the parent or guardian and the student's physician. This also applies to an Epi-pen for a student with severe allergies.
- No over-the-counter medications will be administered by personnel, nor will students be permitted to carry or store such items at the MVCS.
- Students believed to be under the influence of any substance and/or appear to be impaired in any way pose a safety risk to themselves and others. Parent/guardians will be immediately

contacted to pick up the student and the student must return with a release/medical note from a licensed medical provider indicating the student is able to be in school. If a parent/guardian is not available and the student requires immediate medical attention, the school may seek emergency medical treatment for the student.

Driving to School

Students are permitted to drive to the Mahoning Valley Community School. If a student drives s/he must provide a copy of his/her driver's license, proof of insurance, and registration **PRIOR** to driving to school. The Mahoning Valley Community School is not responsible for damages or theft to vehicles parked at MVCS. Any student who is considered habitually truant may have his/her driver's license revoked by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code.

Emergency School Closing

If road conditions are hazardous due to inclement weather, it may be necessary to delay or close school. When this is necessary, every effort will be made to have this information on the radio and television as early as possible, but no later than 6:15 a.m. if a decision is made to cancel school the night before, radio stations will be notified by 11:00 p.m. If there are any delays/cancellations, both radio and television stations will say **Mahoning Valley Community School**. In the event that school is delayed in the morning or dismissed early in the afternoon, parents/guardians are advised to make provisions for the care of their children. The school calendar will be adjusted to make up for missed time, if necessary.

Pregnant Students

The Mahoning Valley Community School affirms the right of a pregnant student to continue her participation in the school program. The student will remain in her present school program, with modifications if necessary, until the birth of her baby is imminent or until her physician states that continued participation would be detrimental to her health or the health of her baby.

The Mahoning Valley Community School reserves the right to require, as a prerequisite for attendance in the regular classes of the school, that the pregnant student present to the administrative office her physician's written statement that such activity will not be injurious to her health nor jeopardize her pregnancy. Efforts will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that she receives counseling services if desired, as well as instruction; that she is encouraged to return to high school after delivery; and that she is

given every opportunity to complete high school.

Work Permits

Students under the age of 18 may seek employment but must obtain a work permit either from the employer or the administrative office. Once the student completes his/her part of the permit, has the employer complete the employer section, and the student's physician completes his/her portion of the permit, it is to be returned to the administrative office. The Superintendent will then complete the affidavit section with the appropriate information and the student will be permitted to begin employment.

Students Who Leave the Building Without Permission

When any student leaves the building without permission or prior authorization, a parent/guardian will be contacted. The student will receive a discipline referral and will receive disciplinary consequences for leaving without permission the following school day. While staff may attempt to intervene verbally to request that the student returns to the building, staff will not use any physical force to return a student to the building. If a student is deemed to be a threat to self or others, local law enforcement will be contacted.

Note

It is impossible to cover every topic or policy that may arise involving every student throughout the school year. For this reason, the administrators remain the final arbiters of school year. Please be sure to read this document carefully and return the required signature page. All items in this handbook are subject to change upon administrator's discretion