



Student Handbook

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School

Community. Accountability. Compassion. Resilience. Curiosity



Draft Copy for 24-25

- Language Updates in Red
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II. PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION

ASSEMBLIES

School assemblies take place in the Performing Arts Center (PAC). Students will sit with their class. Smaller presentations may be held in the Library, the Library Conference room or the Cafeteria. In most cases, students should report to their class or Mentor Meeting teacher before heading to the PAC. Students' expectations during assemblies are outlined in the Code of Conduct.

BUSES

Buses run every school day. Late buses run at 3:45 and 5:00 for Fall and Spring seasons and 5:00 p.m. for Winter season. School rules apply for all students riding the bus. For information about bus routes contact the school transportation office at 508.693.1033 X 253.

CAMERA SURVEILLANCE POLICY

The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Committee recognizes the need to strike a balance between the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy and the school's duty to promote a safe environment for the community. The policy about camera surveillance can be found at mvrhs.org.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

On days when there is no school because of weather conditions or some other emergency, notice is sent via text message and email. Notice is also posted on the MVRHS website and local and state media outlets. When no announcement is made, and if weather conditions are questionable, guardians are encouraged to use their personal judgment to keep their children home.

CELL PHONES AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

PHONE COLLECTION: "Away for the day"

MVRHS will be using the Yondr pouches for storage of students personal electronic devices during the school day, pouches will be given to students on the first day of school. All devices (including but not limited to: mobile phones, earbuds, headphones, smartwatches) need to be off or on "silent" and will be locked in the pouch until the student's dismissal. Pouches will remain in the students' possession. We believe that this policy will bring several benefits to our educational community:

- **Improved Academic Performance:** Research indicates that phone usage during school hours negatively impacts academic performance. By limiting phone access, students may be more focused and engaged in their studies.
- **Reduced Distractions:** Research and observation indicates that phones can be a significant distraction in the classroom, not only for the phone user but also for those around them.
- **Enhanced Social Interaction:** Research indicates that reducing phone usage addresses the current trend of social deprivation among adolescents by encouraging students to interact more with their peers in the hallways, in the

cafeteria, and during down time, resulting in stronger social skills and a deeper sense of community.

- **Mental Health Benefits:** Research shows that limiting social media and smartphone use can help reduce anxiety and cyberbullying, promoting healthier social and emotional development.

Implementing a policy that restricts students from using their phones during the school day will be a significant shift from previous years, but the policy is designed to improve the learning environment and reduce distractions.

- ~~Students will be required to turn in their phones upon arrival to their classroom. Phones will be placed in a secure location, **by the student**, within the classroom. If a student does not follow the procedure consequences as outlined in the Code of Conduct will be applied.~~
- ~~Students may use their cell phones only during passing time and during their assigned lunch period. **Phones will be confiscated by Administration for the remainder of a day if it is being used by a student in community spaces (hallways, bathrooms, etc.) during instructional time.**~~
- ~~Students may not use cell phones and earbuds during instructional blocks. Teachers and staff will use their discretion to allow students to use phones during class time under supervision for academic usage.~~
- ~~To protect individual rights, mobile technology may not be used to take a picture, video or audio recording of another individual without specific permission for the agreed upon and intended use.~~

DELAYED OPENING

In the event of a delayed opening, all bus routes and schools will begin one (1) to two (2) hours later than normal. If conditions do not improve by 8:00 a.m., school may then be canceled. Notice will be sent via text message and email. Radio Stations and the Communications Network will announce the cancellation of schools by 8:00 a.m. Delays and School Cancellations will also be posted on mvrhs.org.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

If it becomes necessary to dismiss school early because of deteriorating weather conditions or some other emergency, the early dismissal announcement will be sent out via text message and email and will be announced over Radio Stations WMVY (88.7 FM) and WQRC (99.9 FM) and over the Island Communications Center Network Broadcast. The school will also send out a text and email blast to guardians and students, and post it on the MVRHS website. On stormy days, guardians are urged to listen for these announcements, which will be made at or before 12 Noon.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

MVRHS will run fire drills and lockdown drills several times a year. We request that students take these drills seriously. For fire drills, students should remain with their class and assigned teacher as they exit the building. For lockdown drills, students should practice the “Run, Hide, Fight” protocol with their teachers and their classmates.

determined to have engaged in behavior that rises to a Class C level, their consequence may begin with an out of school suspension.

Additionally, Class C and D infractions will accumulate over the course of the four years a student is in high school, along with any harassment, bullying or hazing incidents. For example, if a student engages in a fight/physical altercation in the 9th grade and then again in the 11th grade, the one in 11th grade will count as a second offense and will follow the SUBSEQUENT INFRACTION structure. Class A and B infractions do not accrue in the same way year after year, students start fresh each year.

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- **Reduced Distractions:** Research and observation indicates that phones can be a significant distraction in the classroom, not only for the phone user but also for those around them.
- **Enhanced Social Interaction:** Research indicates that reducing phone usage addresses the current trend of social deprivation among adolescents by encouraging students to interact more with their peers in the hallways, in the cafeteria, and during down time, resulting in stronger social skills and a deeper sense of community.
- **Mental Health Benefits:** Research shows that limiting social media and smartphone use can help reduce anxiety and cyberbullying, promoting healthier social and emotional development.

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Phone Infractions	Tiered Consequences
First Offense:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confiscation Until End of Day: The phone is confiscated and can be picked up by the student from the office at the end of the school day. ● Parent Notification: Parents or guardians are notified about the infraction and the potential for more serious consequences if the behavior continues.

Second Offense:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confiscation and Parent Retrieval: The phone is confiscated and can only be retrieved by a parent or guardian from the school office. ● Detention: The student serves a detention during lunch or after school. ● Behavioral Contract: The student signs a contract agreeing to comply with the phone policy, understanding the consequences of further violations.
Third and Subsequent Infractions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confiscation and Parent Retrieval: The phone is confiscated and can only be retrieved by a parent or guardian from the school office. ● In-School Suspension: The student may face in-school suspension for continued non-compliance. ● Loss of Privileges: Additional privileges, such as participating in extracurricular activities or attending school events, may be revoked. ● Guardian Conference: A meeting is held with the student, Guardian(s), teachers, and an administrator to develop a plan for compliance.

Burner Phones:

Burner phones will be confiscated and not returned to the students. Please do not place burner phones into the pouches.

Other Considerations:

If a student loses or forgets their pouch, they will be required to turn their phones into the SAO/front office. A replacement pouch costs approximately \$30.00. A purposely destroyed pouch will cost \$30.00. The first replacement pouch will cost \$15.00; subsequent lost pouches will cost \$30.00. Students arriving late to school will be required to turn their phone into the SAO/ front office for the day.

By establishing a structured and tiered consequence system, schools can effectively enforce a phone-free space while maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment.

Class A: Classroom level infractions (see attendance policies around academic consequences for lates/tardies/cutting class):

- **FIRST INFRACTION:** Phone call home by teacher, confiscation of electronics by a teacher or administration, phone plan, referral to the Restorative Coordinator (mediation, conversation, apology), in school consequence, and/or after school consequence with a teacher.

until the Superintendent decides on appeal to reverse the Principal's determination.

SEARCHES: When there is suspicion that a student may have stolen property, illegal substances or items considered to be unsafe contained in their desk, locker, bags, clothing, person, or vehicle on school grounds, the school Principal or their designee may conduct a search of these items.

RE-ENTRY MEETINGS: Re-entry returns the student to their regular school program following Out of School Suspension. The re-entry meeting will include the student, the Principal or designee, guardian, and any other relevant school personnel. At this meeting a plan may be developed to assist the student's transition, address specific needs and/or monitor the student's progress.

MANIFESTATION HEARING: Students with an IEP/504 who are suspended from school for periods totaling longer than 10 days will have a manifestation determination meeting with the Special Education Director/Director of Guidance, guardians and other relevant personnel. This meeting will determine if the behavior was a direct result of the disability.

For more information, see [Discipline and Students with Disabilities Section in the MVPS Student Conduct and Discipline Policy](#)

[Martha's Vineyard Public School Physical Restraint Policy](#)

See back of book for Massachusetts General Laws Section 37H of Chapter 71 on Policies relative to conduct of teachers or students; student handbooks.

IV. ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

~~MVRHS Attendance Philosophy~~

~~Evidence shows that consistent attendance in class and punctuality are foundations to success for high school students. The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) community values these educational characteristics and believes in the importance of classroom interaction on student learning. Learning is an ongoing process in which the dynamics of a classroom and the learning experiences created by the teacher are as important as the individual work a student does in a class. We believe that absences from classes are detrimental to the learning process and affects not only the student who is absent, but also the classroom learning dynamic.~~

~~Chronic absenteeism will impact credit accumulation, and in some cases, grades. Teachers will work to ensure students have access to work during absences, but they are not able to recreate the experience of being in the class and engaging in classwork, some of which may be counted towards class participation and project work.~~

~~In cases where students have long term or ongoing medical issues/challenges that prevent them from attending class for a significant amount of time, the school may work with the family to develop a plan to or create a 504. Our ultimate goal in creating any plan or 504 is to help students re-engage as fully as possible with the curriculum while supporting their physical and emotional well being. In such cases, it is likely that the student will be given the opportunity to make up time and work after school in the ACCESS program or in summer school.~~

Loss of Credit Due to Absences

All research supports the notion that school attendance is an essential indicator of student success and positive school outcomes. At MVRHS, we will work with students and families to ensure students are in regular attendance. In the case of a major illness or a major life event, it is understandable that a student may be absent for an extended time, but in such a situation, the family and the school will work together to create a supportive plan to make up any time/work if a student misses a more than 15% of class time.

A student cannot exceed 10 absences per year in a year long course, and 5 absences in a semester long course.

Students may not earn full credit in a course upon exceeding the number of maximum absences in that course. A student will have the opportunity to re-enroll in the course at a later time, or to engage in credit recovery options. Once a student has reached the 10 day absence threshold, the student and guardian will be scheduled for a meeting with administration to discuss a plan moving forward.

1. A student will stay enrolled in a course, even if the credits earned are reduced due to unexcused absences. The grade will show on a student's transcript and will count for eligibility and, where applicable, GPA.
2. In the case where a student has 10 or more excused absences in a course in one year, MVRHS will award full credit as long as the student:
 - Has worked with guidance or administration to make a plan to address missed work AND
 - Has not accumulated absence/late/tardy/dismissals or cuts in the course.
 - Students who miss more than 15% of class time may lose credit for the course. They can work a plan out with their Guidance Counselor to either attend after school tutoring through our ACCESS program or may enroll in summer school.

We have long wrestled with the difference between an A (absence) and AE (excused absence). Unless a student is cutting class or school, they all have a valid reason to be absent. We do not want to be the arbiters of what is excused and what is not. What we are most concerned about is ensuring that students are in school for at least 85% of the time (a MA. general law threshold). As we have shared prior, attendance is a very important indicator of academic success, positive mental health and prosocial engagement.

If a student is not present in school for the minimum amount of time, we will work with families to create a time when students can re-engage, get academic help and make up school time. Currently, we have options such as ACCESS during and after school.

If a student is absent from school, they always have the opportunity to make up the work (please see guidelines for make up work). However, we cannot completely recreate the classroom experience, and there is an inherent detriment to being absent. A teacher cannot be expected to create alternative assignments or experiences that fully address the missed class.

What this means for you:

~~All absences will be an “A”. All school day absences are considered excused in that students have opportunities to make up their work. You can provide documentation of an extended absence or pattern of absence.~~

~~Please let us know if your student will be absent, and please notify the guidance counselor, school adjustment counselor, or nurse if a major life event will lead to extended absences. In this case, we can work proactively to make a plan to address the loss of school time.~~

~~You will receive notification every two weeks to let you know the number of daily absences your child has. We hope this system helps you celebrate great attendance and monitor any concerning numbers.~~

~~Students who miss more than 15% of the school year, per course may not earn full credit in that course. Credit may be reinstated in courses through a credit appeal. If your child is absent from school more than 15% of the time, or on track to miss more than 15% of the school year, we will reach out to set up a meeting to set up a plan to support you and your student.~~

Definitions of Attendance Codes

~~**Absence (A):** Any block where a student is not “present” in the classroom. All absences can have documentation which is to be provided to the school within 10 days of their return.; documentation submitted after 10 days must be approved by the principal. Documentation for any of the below will be recorded in the student’s attendance records and will be reviewed during any attendance meetings a student may have. An accumulation of absences may result in a loss of credit. Students that are absent from school may not participate in extracurricular activities that day.~~

- ~~● Medical (with date specific medical documentation to the school nurse)~~
- ~~● Bereavement (a note with dates from a guardian)~~
- ~~● Observance of major religious holidays~~
- ~~● Legal (with documentation from court, lawyer or probation officer)~~
- ~~● College Visits — Seniors and Juniors may take up to three (3) days which are for college visits, interviews, or student acceptance days. The student must turn in verification from the college (an email from the admissions office or a note on official letterhead with a school official signature that includes the date(s) the student visited) in order for it to be recorded in their records.~~
- ~~● Dismissal by the school nurse or administration (sent home for illness, suspension, etc)~~
- ~~● Other — Situational, with the principal’s (or their designee) approval.~~

Philosophy:

We have long wrestled with the difference between an A (absence) and AE (excused absence). Unless a student is cutting class or school, most have a valid reason to be absent. We do not want to be the arbiters of what is excused and what is not. What we are most concerned about is ensuring that students are in school for at least 85% of the time (a MA.

general law threshold). As we have shared prior, attendance is a very important indicator of academic success, positive mental health and prosocial engagement. If a student is not present in school for that minimum amount of time, we can work with families to create a time when students can re-engage, get academic help and make up school time. Currently, we have options such as ACCESS during and after school and summer school.

If a student is absent from school, they always have the opportunity to make up the work they missed (please see guidelines for make up work). However, we cannot completely recreate the classroom experience and there is an inherent detriment to being absent. A teacher cannot be expected to create alternative assignments or experiences that fully address the missed class.

We also do not mandate that our teachers remain after school with students who miss class. We have flex during the school day if a student needs to meet with their teacher, and we have academic support for students on IEPs or study halls for students who need quiet time to complete their work during the day.

What this means for you:

- All absences will be an “A”. All school day absences are considered excused in that students have opportunities to make up their work. You can provide documentation of an extended absence or pattern of absence, and we will consider that should an appeal be necessary. An AN may be recorded if you call the office to notify our attendance secretary. This will simply exclude you from receiving a call to notify you that your child is absent. It still will be an “A”.
- Please let us know if your student will be absent, and please notify the guidance counselor, school adjustment counselor, or nurse if a major life event will lead to extended absences. In this case, we can work proactively to make a plan to address the loss of school time.
- You will receive notification every two weeks to let you know the number of daily absences your child has. We hope this system helps you celebrate great attendance and monitor any concerning numbers.
- Students who miss more than 15% of the school year, or 15% of a specific course (sometimes students miss classes even if they are present for much of the school day), may not earn full credit in that course. Credit may be reinstated in courses through a credit appeal—see below for ways in which students can document the reason for their absence so that it can be considered during appeals.
- If your child is absent from a class more than 15% of the time, or on track to miss more than 15% of the school year, we will send a letter to set up a meeting to set up a plan to support you and your student.
- Five documented ‘tardies’ to a class will equal one absence.

Documentation of Absences

Absence (A)/(AN): Any block where a student is not “present” in the classroom.

Documentation for any of the below will be recorded in the student’s attendance records and will be reviewed and considered during an attendance appeal, should one be necessary. An accumulation of absences and/or tardies may result in a loss of credit. Students that are absent from school may not participate in extracurricular activities that day, unless they receive prior approval from school leadership because their absence is connected with one of the issues listed below.

- Medical (with date specific medical documentation to the school nurse)
- Bereavement (a note with dates from a guardian)
- Observance of major religious holidays
- Legal (with documentation from court, lawyer or probation officer)
- College Visits - Seniors and Juniors may take up to three (3) days which are for college visits, interviews, or student acceptance days. The student must turn in verification from the college (an email from the admissions office or a note on official letterhead with a school official signature that includes the date(s) the student visited) in order for it to be recorded in their records.
- Dismissal by the school nurse or administration (sent home for illness, suspension, etc)
- Other - Situational, with the principal’s (or their designee) approval.

Class Cut (C): If a student misses any portion of a class without verified purpose and permission from a teacher or staff member, it is a cut. If a student is gone for more than 10 minutes without verified purpose, it is a cut. A student will receive an afterschool consequence for the cut, and will not have the opportunity to make up any work missed, or hand in work that was due on that day. Athletes may not participate in sports on days they have cut class, and they may be excluded from practices or games on days they are assigned a consequence as the result of a cut.

Dismissed (D): A guardian may choose to dismiss their child before the end of the day. A dismissal is considered an absence and, if frequent, could lead to loss of credit in the class(es) missed. When a guardian comes to pick up their student from school for early dismissal they must come into the front of the building to check in.

School Sponsored Travel (SST): Field trips, overnight trips sponsored by the school, and sporting trips are not considered absences. However, students are still responsible for making up work and adhering to deadlines as outlined below.

Late to School (L): If a student arrives late to school, they will sign in with the attendance person in the front office. The student will receive a late admit slip to present to their teacher. If a student misses the majority of the class, it may be counted as an absence and, if frequent, could result in a loss of credit in the course and a consequence. Students may not have the opportunity to make up missed class work as a result of being late. Athletes who arrive after 8:00 am cannot participate in athletics for the day. Five lates to school will result in a consequence.

Tardy to Class (T): If the student does not have a pass excusing their lateness, they will be marked Tardy (T). Five tardies to class will result in a consequence.

Non-Statutory Offenses

Offense	Potential Response	Notification	Additional Requirements	Appeal Process
Possession of paraphernalia	Behavioral Supports and/or up to a 5 day suspension	guardian notification and hearing with Assistant Principal	Educational Service Plan if suspension is employed - Principal may require additional testing/counseling	No appeal of short term suspension
Possession of tobacco	Behavioral Supports and/or up to a 10 day suspension	guardian notification and hearing with Assistant Principal	Educational Service Plan if suspension is employed - Principal may require additional testing/counseling	No appeal of short term suspension
Possession of alcohol	Behavioral Supports and/or up to a 10 day suspension	guardian notification and hearing with Assistant Principal	Educational Service Plan if suspension is employed - Principal may require additional testing/counseling	No appeal of short term suspension
Under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance	Behavioral Supports and/or up to a 10 day suspension	guardian notification and hearing with Assistant Principal	Educational Service Plan if suspension is employed - Principal may require additional testing/counseling	No appeal of short term suspension

NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Definition of Networks and Systems Covered Under This Policy

There are three basic levels of networks that are covered under this policy. The Local Area Network (LAN) consists of all networked **computers devices** at the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS). The Wide Area Network (WAN) consists of the network connecting all Island schools, and in the future other Island institutions. The third level is our connection to the Internet. Within each of these networks, all hardware, software, and related peripherals used in connecting to, or as a part of, the network are included in this policy. In addition, all **computers devices** owned or leased by the MVPS shall be included under this policy, as well as any privately owned devices that are connected to MVPS networks.

Guidelines

Access to the MVRHS networks is for educational purposes only. This access includes connections made at any Island public school; through **a dial-up or other** provided **network** access, or through the Internet. Below are categories of acceptable and unacceptable activities for these networks.

A. General

1. All users of these networks are representatives of the MVPS and should present themselves accordingly.
2. Access is for educational use only.
3. Only school-issued devices are allowed during school hours, unless approved by the IT Director and MVRHS administration.
4. Use of personal hotspots is prohibited without approval from the IT director or MVRHS administration.
5. Use of VPNs on the MVRHS network is prohibited without approval from the IT director or MVRHS administration.
6. All users are expected to exercise responsible and ethical behavior when using these networks.
7. Student use of the Internet should be for approved educational purposes only.
8. Activity on all network levels is subject to MVPS regulations, as well as all applicable local, state, federal, and international law.
9. Even though security measures are in place, students need to be aware that information on networks can be accessed. Students should not put private information online that others shouldn't access (e.g. credit card, bank account numbers, etc.).
10. Students may not use unauthorized copyrighted materials.
11. Students should not subscribe to any mail or lists services, or any service that will download large numbers of e-mail messages to their mailbox without prior permission from a system administrator or Technology staff person.
12. Access to chat groups, video teleconferences, and the like is only to be done with the permission of a teacher or staff member and under the direct supervision.
13. Students will use their school email account for educational purposes only.
14. The MVRHS reserves the right to examine, modify or remove any or all data stored in computers on devices that are part of these networks – including student email accounts – to ensure that all users are in compliance with these regulations.

B. Security

1. Students will use only the account(s) assigned to them.
2. All users with an account will be given a password. Passwords should not be shared. Students are responsible for all activities taking place on their account.
3. Students should notify the system administrator or technology staff *immediately* if their account has been accessed by someone else.
4. Students should notify a system administrator, technology staff, or MVPS administrator *immediately* if they identify a security problem. Do not show or identify a security problem to other users

C. Vandalism/Destruction/Unauthorized access of data for files & harassment

1. Students will not upload, download, or use any computer programs or hardware that will record or otherwise give access to passwords or other information to allow unauthorized access to a computer device or account.
2. Students will not upload or download any malicious program or other program designed to destroy or in any way compromise the operation of any computer device, server, network system, or data.