

Mt. Vernon Middle School Student/Parent Handbook



2021-2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WCPSS Mission	2
Mt. Vernon Vision Statement	2
Who We Are	2
Who We Serve	2
Parent Engagement	3
Home Base/PowerSchool	3
Grading Policy	3
Homework	4
Intervention	5
Attendance	5
Transportation	5
Bell Schedule	6
Dress Code	7
Mt. Vernon PBIS Program	8
PBIS Expectations	8
PBIS Matrix	8
WCPSS Student Code of Conduct	9
Electronic Devices	9
Mt. Vernon Progressive Discipline System	10
Levels of Behavior Code	11
Rules of Conduct	12

This document is a supplement to the WCPSS Student & Parent Handbook that can be found online or in our Main Office.

Mt. Vernon Middle School

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WCPSS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Wake County Public Schools is to provide a relevant and engaging education and to graduate students who are collaborative, creative, effective communicators and critical thinkers.

MT. VERNON MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Through positive relationships, relevant instruction, and an intentional learning environment, we will engage students and families in impactful academic and social experiences that build empowered learners.

WHO WE ARE

Mt. Vernon Middle School focuses on the whole child. Our approach to education allows the Mt. Vernon staff to build the social, emotional, and academic well-being of our students. Mt. Vernon follows the WCPSS Standard Course of Study for all academic classes offered. In addition, Mt. Vernon has an award winning PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions Support) program that enables our students to achieve success behaviorally by celebrating their positive decisions and teaching expectations when students need to be redirected. Students use a daily point sheet to reflect upon their performance, behaviorally, in a class and to provide feedback to parents. Based on a student's performance, different daily, weekly and/or monthly rewards/privileges are available.

WHO WE SERVE

Mt. Vernon serves at-risk students who are not experiencing adequate success at their base schools. Students referred to Mt. Vernon Middle School often struggle academically and benefit from a smaller student-teacher ratio. Students may also demonstrate Tier II behaviors at their base schools. These Tier II behaviors are typically playful in nature and occur most often during unstructured times and areas. Students who have been successful at Mt. Vernon have demonstrated a history of building positive relationships with adults and have a desire to improve their academics. Once accepted, students attend Mt. Vernon for the remainder of the current school year. Students will return to their base middle/high school for the following school year. If a student would like to return to Mt. Vernon, an application to remain may be submitted to administration.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

At Mt. Vernon Middle School, we strive for a community where all stakeholders (i.e. students, parents, teachers, administrators) are seen as partners in improving educational outcomes for our students. It is Mt. Vernon's goal to create a school where:

- All family engagement initiatives are connected to student learning
- Family knowledge is honored and respected
- Parent networks are valued and cultivated
- Families are actively involved in decisions
- Family engagement happens in the community, not just at school

Throughout the school year, parents will have opportunities to engage in dialogue, information sessions and cultural activities to enhance the learning of their students and the instruction provided by the teachers here at Mt. Vernon. Traditional parent engagement activities will continue to occur. (i.e. parent/teacher conferences, phone calls, point sheet review, etc.) We will work with our families to be strategic to help provide additional learning opportunities throughout the school year to our families.

HOME BASE/POWERSCHOOL

It is critical for families to know what is going on in their student's classroom. Home base is a student information system that gives parents and students access to real-time information including attendance, grades and assignments. All students and parents have access to Home Base. Please contact Mt. Vernon for more information and to register.

GRADING POLICY

Mt. Vernon Middle School is committed to maintaining rigorous academic achievement standards for all students and to providing a fair and consistent process for evaluating and reporting student progress that is relevant for instructional purposes.

School-wide expectations for grade categories and weights

Homework	10%
Formative (classwork, quizzes, projects, labs, etc.)	40%
Summative (tests, projects, essays, etc.)	50%

Transfer Grades

Students that transfer in from a base school with current grades will have their grades entered in as followed. All transfer grades from base schools will be entered as a Summative grade for the corresponding course. Transfer *letter* grades will be entered in the following manner:

A = 99	B = 89	C = 79	D = 69	F = 59
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Make-up work due to absences

Mt. Vernon will follow the WCPSS policy for all missing work due to absences. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student or parent is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

Late Work

Unexcused late work, except summative projects, may be submitted within the current quarter with the following penalties:

- A grade decrease of 10% per day.
- After four instructional days, the highest possible score that can be earned is a 60%.
- All summative projects will be assigned with a rubric outlining late penalties, which may be different than the ones listed above.

Zero Policy

Students may receive zeros for missing work. Teachers will ensure that students and parents are aware of any missing assignments and provide multiple opportunities to complete those assignments. It is recommended that teachers refer students and parents to PowerSchool to empower and encourage them to take ownership and responsibility.

HOMEWORK

New skills require practice to be mastered. The time provided in the school day is insufficient to allow students to master all of the new skills they need to learn. To support the learning of students, homework may be assigned daily to support progress towards mastery of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

It is the responsibility of the student to accurately copy all homework assignments that need to be completed. Each teacher will review their individual homework expectations with their class.

Missing or incomplete work as well as work that does not indicate mastery may be reassigned at the discretion of the teacher. With limited time in the instructional day, Seminar, a designated time within the school schedule, may be used for students to complete assignments.

INTERVENTION

Mt. Vernon's staff recognizes that our students may have skills that need to be reinforced above and beyond the lessons within the standard course of study. During the school day, MAV Time will be utilized to help students build skills in Math. Students demonstrating a need for additional support in Math and Reading are assigned to Math Acceleration Support (MAS) or Reading Acceleration Support (RAS) class, Reading and Social Skills. Using data, these groups and activities may vary throughout the school year.

ATTENDANCE

Coming to school every day ready to learn is important for your child's success, and it is required by state law for children between the ages of 7 and 16. Excused absences include: illness or injury, a death in the family, health care appointments, court appearances and religious observances. If you know in advance that your child will be absent from school, please contact the teacher to obtain any work in advance. If an unexpected absence occurs, contact the teacher upon return to school to obtain any missing work. With all absences, please bring in a doctor's note or a note from home and have your child bring it to the main office.

TRANSPORTATION

Students are assigned buses/cabs by the Wake County Public School System transportation office. All discipline/conduct rules for Wake County Transportation apply to students riding to/from Mt. Vernon.

BELL SCHEDULE

	6th/Boosters	7th Grade	8th Grade
8:00-8:30 Advisory/Breakfast	ADVISORY		
8:33-9:25 Period 1	Elective	Core 1	Core 1
9:27-10:17 Period 2	Elective	Core 2	Core 2
10:19-11:09 Period 3	Core 1	Elective	Core 3
11:11-11:56 Lunch/Seminar	11:11-11:36 (Seminar) 11:38-11:56 (Lunch)		11:11-11:29 (Lunch) 11:31-11:56 (Seminar)
11:58-12:28 MAV Time	MAV TIME		
12:30-1:20 Period 4	Core 2	HL/Electives	Core 4
1:22-2:12 Period 5	Core 3	Core 3	Elective
2:14-3:05 Period 6	Core 4	Core 4	Elective

* Please note, Mt. Vernon administration may adjust the daily schedule at any time to ensure the needs of our students are met.

MT. VERNON MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE

At Mt. Vernon Middle School, all students are required to follow the school dress code. On days where students are permitted to be out of dress code, the WCPSS dress code still applies.

Pants/Shorts

Must be **tan/khaki**

- Boys
 - Allowed: Pants and shorts worn at the waist
 - Not allowed: Sagging pants, sweat pants, ripped pants
- Girls
 - Allowed: Pants, capris, and bermuda shorts worn at the waist
 - Not allowed: Sagging pants, sweat pants, ripped pants, short-shorts, leggings, or revealing fabrics

Shirts/Blouses/T-Shirts

May be **black, white, gray or a combination of all three colors**

- Allowed: Solids, stripes, patterns, long sleeve, short sleeve, dress, polo, with or without collar, small shirt logo (any color) (i.e. Nike, UA, Polo, etc)
- Not allowed: Large print, pictures, or graphics, sleeveless/spaghetti strap tops, exposed cleavage, exposed stomach, and exposed undergarments

Sweaters/Sweatshirts/Hoodies

May be **black, white, or gray or a combination of all three colors.**

- Allowed: Solids, stripes and patterns on the outside. Small logo may be present on the sweatshirt.
- Not allowed: Hoods worn in the building, large print, or large pictures
- We recommend that every student has hoodie/sweatshirt to wear.
- If a student already has a winter coat of another color, they may wear it TO school, BUT NOT IN SCHOOL

Shoes and Socks

May be **any color**

- Allowed: Athletic shoes, dress shoes, boots, flats, sandals with back strap
- Not allowed: House shoes or slides

Other

- **No Head Coverings (Hoods, hats, bandanas/head scarves, doo rags or skullcaps) are permitted at any time.**
- No blankets
- Any item that is considered to be distracting or inappropriate will not be allowed
- Additional guidelines may be added by administration at any time

MT. VERNON'S PBIS PROGRAM

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions Support) program enables our students to achieve success behaviorally by celebrating their positive decisions and teaching expectations when students need to be redirected. Students can earn PBIS points for positive academic and behavioral choices during each class. Based on a student's PBIS points performance, he/she can earn daily, weekly and/or monthly rewards/privileges.

PBIS EXPECTATIONS

Within each area of Mt. Vernon, students are expected to respond to the behavioral expectations established. Students will be taught these expectations daily and feedback will be provided if the expectations are not met. Clear and consistent expectations result in a positive response by students. On the following page, you will find the PBIS Behavior Matrix for the main areas on campus and for the time spent on transportation to and from school. Please contact your teacher or administration if you have any questions.

PBIS MAVS MATRIX

Expectations	Classrooms	Cafeteria	Hallway	Restroom	Gym	Bus/Cab	ALC/ISS
<i>Model</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take turns - Use group process - Model positive characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Say please and thank you to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist others - Walk away from problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strive to visit during designated times or have a hall pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show good sportsmanship at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interact positively with driver and peers - Observe cab safety rules at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resolve conflicts constructively
<i>Achievement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be ready to learn - Stay on task - Do assigned work - Be in school and class on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leave tables clean - Be aware of nutritional choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move directly to destination - Be on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stay on task - Flush 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resolve conflicts constructively or ask for adult help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show respect for driver, peers, and community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remain on task - Complete assignments in time allotted - Ignore all distractions.
<i>Values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use appropriate language - Display a positive attitude - Speak when called on - Respect property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk quietly to people at my table - Follow directions the first time - Leave cafeteria quietly when dismissed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use positive words - Follow adult directions - Use inside volume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect school property - Enter and exit fully clothed - <i>Make only positive comments to peers</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shirttails in before leaving the gym - Refrain from excessive noise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow dress code expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make only positive comments to peers and staff - Respect school property
<i>Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep hands to self - Honor personal space and property - Keep personal items in book bag - Speak kind words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep hands to self - Food and drink stay in cafeteria - Place chair under the table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk on the right side of the hall - Keep hands and feet to self - Be in assigned area or use hall pass. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wash hands when finished - Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use equipment as intended - Return equipment when signal is given - Exit when directed - Follow all adult directions immediately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear seat belt - Remain in cab/bus until released by driver - Get off at your stop - Keep hands and feet to self - Keep hands and materials inside the bus/cab - Follow all adult directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow all adult directions - Remain quiet and seated unless given permission by a staff member to speak and/or leave your seat

WCPSS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy and Goals

A safe, orderly, and welcoming school environment is essential for student learning. To that end, this Code of Student Conduct is intended to:

- (1) create clear standards and expectations for student behavior;
- (2) promote integrity and self-discipline among students;
- (3) encourage the use of behavioral supports and non-disciplinary interventions as alternatives to exclusionary discipline; and
- (4) provide clear guidance to teachers and administrators as to how, when, and to what extent students may be disciplined for violating conduct rules.

Consistent with these goals, the Board fully endorses and adopts the following “Guiding Principles” from the 2014 U.S Department of Education publication

Principle 1: Climate and Prevention Schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students.

Principle 2: Expectations and Consequences Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement.

Principle 3: Equity and Continuous Improvement Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school’s discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity and promote achievement for all students.

Please refer to the Wake County Student/Parent Handbook for additional information regarding rules and violations. **Please note, based on unique circumstances, principal may utilize a different level of infraction than indicated on the chart.**

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mt. Vernon embraces technology and the benefits technology brings to instruction. We are fortunate at Mt. Vernon to be able to provide a variety of technology to our students. We do recognize that students will come to us with their own technology. This may be for instructional purposes, cab/bus rides or to communicate with family upon leaving school. It is the expectation that students will use their technology appropriately. At the beginning of each day, students will be asked to turn off their technology. If a teacher permits a student to use their technology, the student may turn it on and use appropriately. Once the teacher directs the students to turn it off, the student needs to comply. If a student is in violation of this policy, the following progression will apply (per semester):

- **1st Offense** – Device is collected and stored in the front office. Student will receive the device back at the end of the school day.
- **2nd Offense** – Device is collected and stored in the front office. Student receives device after 1 week OR parent can retrieve device.
- **3rd Offense** – Device is collected and stored in the front office. Student receives device in 1 month OR parent can retrieve device. Student receives office referral.
- **4th Offense** – Device is collected and stored in the front office. Student receives device end of semester OR parent can retrieve device. Student receives office referral.

MT. VERNON PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

We recognize that sometimes the PBIS point system may not always be effective to ensure students make positive choices. When the PBIS point system is not effective for a student, additional support may be required. If a student does not respond to the redirection of a teacher during instruction, a “**strike**” may be earned. A strike is an instant removal of a student from the educational environment to the ALC (Alternative Learning Center) classroom and will result in a referral to administration. To earn a strike in the classroom, a student would have received multiple warnings from a teacher. While in the ALC classroom, students will continue their assigned work. If a student earns more than one strike during a week, additional consequences may be assigned. Please see the strike progression plan below.

STRIKE I

- Student reports to ALC (Alternative Learning Center) for the remainder of the period
- Counselor is contacted to meet with student and form a plan for the rest of the day.
- Teacher completes a behavior referral in SIRS (ECATS), please close referral once completed.
- Parent is contacted by the teacher to discuss the incident leading up to the strike (prior to the end of the school day)

STRIKE II

- Student reports to ALC for the remainder of the period.
- Teacher completes a behavior referral in SIRS (ECATS), & then assign referral to grade level admin. Additional consequences may apply.
- Administration is notified and a conference is held with the student. Additional time in the ALC classroom may be assigned by the administration.
- Parent is contacted by the teacher to discuss the incident leading up to the strike

STRIKE III

- Student reports to ALC for the remainder of the day.
- Teacher completes a behavior referral in SIRS (ECATS), & then assign referral to grade level admin. Additional consequences may apply.
- Administration contacts parents to discuss incident and additional consequences.

Levels of Behavior Code

The Code of Student Conduct rules are leveled according to the seriousness of the behaviors and range of potential disciplinary consequences.

Level I: Level I rule violations can generally be addressed with non-disciplinary interventions or non-exclusionary discipline consequences. Except in the very limited circumstances described in Rule II-20, Level I rule violations may not result in out-of-school suspension.

Level II: Level II rule violations involve more serious misconduct that may warrant short-term suspension of up to five (5) school days when, in the judgment of the principal or designee, non-disciplinary interventions and non-exclusionary discipline consequences are insufficient to address the behavior and prevent its recurrence. Principals may impose a short-term suspension of six (6) to ten (10) days or recommend a long-term suspension of eleven (11) days or more based on one or more aggravating factor(s) regarding the severity of the violation and/or safety concerns, provided such aggravating factor(s) are listed in the written suspension notice.

Level III: Level III rule violations are more severe in nature and may support long-term suspension. The principal may impose a short-term suspension of ten (10) days or less or decline to impose any suspension based on mitigating factors.

Level IV: The only rule in Level IV is one that reflects a statutory prohibition on the possession of a “firearm” or “destructive device” (as defined in the rule) on school property or at a school-sponsored event. State law requires principals to recommend a 365-day suspension for all violations of this rule. Only the Superintendent or Board of Education may modify this outcome. A level IV violation is always extremely serious and is treated as such.

Level V: Level V allows for permanent expulsion of a student from the Wake County Public School System for violation of one or more Level II, III, or IV rules in this Code if the following criteria are met: (1) the student is fourteen (14) years old or older; (2) both the principal and the superintendent/designee recommend expulsion; (3) the superintendent and Board determine, consistent with the Board’s “Due Process” policy, that there is a significant or important reason not to offer the student alternative educational services; and (4) the Board determines, by clear and convincing evidence, that the student’s continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff. Additionally, any student who is registered as a sex offender under [Article 27A of Chapter 14 of the North Carolina General Statutes](#) may be expelled in accordance with these procedures. If such a student is offered alternative education services on school property, the student must be under the supervision of school personnel at all times.

Rules of Conduct

LEVEL I

I-1 Compliance with Directives: Students shall comply with all lawful and reasonable directives of school employees, including but not limited to directives to identify oneself, to remove oneself from a dangerous or disruptive situation, or to report to a designated person or location.

I-2 Mutual Respect: Mutual respect is expected between students and staff. Students will refrain from words (written or oral) and/or gestures that demean, degrade, antagonize, or humiliate a school employee, volunteer, visitor, or other student(s). Examples may include ridiculing, cursing at, or aggressively or angrily shouting at an employee, volunteer, visitor, or other student(s).

I-3 School/Class Attendance: Students will attend school each school day except in the case of excused absences. Students will be on time to school and on time to class, will refrain from entering unauthorized areas, and will remain at school and in the designated locations for the duration of each school day unless excused.

I-4 Appropriate Language: Cursing or use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language, oral or written, is prohibited. If such language is directed at a school employee, volunteer, visitor, or other student(s), such conduct should be treated under Rule I-2.

I-5 Student Dress Code: Student dress will adhere to the standards set out in the [Student Dress Code](#) policy.

I-6 Electronic Devices: Personal technology devices (including, but not limited to smart phones, tablets, and laptops) may be used by students for instructional purposes with the permission and under the supervision of the teachers in compliance with the Technology Responsible Use policy. The use of personal technology devices to engage in misconduct (e.g., bullying, harassment, or threats) may result in consequences under rules in this Code. Malicious or intentionally destructive use of technology devices or resources (e.g., hacking, password theft, or introduction of viruses) may result in consequences under Rule II-3. The school system assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school.

I-7 Trespassing: Students shall not be on the campus of any school except the one to which the student is assigned without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school. Students who remain at school after the close of the school day or come onto school grounds when school is not in session without permission will be considered trespassers. If the student does not leave when instructed to do so, he/she may be prosecuted. A student under suspension from school is trespassing if he/she appears on the property of any school or at any school sponsored activity during the suspension period without the express permission of the principal. Students who trespass on school property to engage in other forms of misconduct (e.g., fighting/physical aggression or theft) may be subject to

consequences under other applicable rules in this Code, and the act of trespassing may be considered an aggravating factor.

I-8 Tobacco, Vaporizers, and Nicotine Products: Student health and well-being is of the highest priority. For this reason, no student shall violate the Board's "Use of Tobacco and Nicotine Products" policy. Students are specifically advised that this policy prohibits vaporizers and liquids used in vaporizers even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine.

I-9 Gambling: Students shall not participate in any unauthorized games of chance in which money or items of value may be won or lost.

I-10 Integrity: Students are expected to be honest and forthright with school staff and volunteers. Lying, intentionally misleading, and actively concealing the truth from staff and volunteers are prohibited. Dishonest acts or statements that violate other rules in this Code may result in consequences under those other rules. Integrity may also be considered as an aggravating factor in connection with other forms of misconduct.

I-11 Honor Code: All students are expected to adhere to the academic [Honor Code](#) policy. Disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy will typically be consistent with Level I violations. However, serious violations of the [Honor Code](#) may be addressed under Rule II-1 Falsification or Deceit.

LEVEL II

II-1 Falsification or Deceit: Intentional acts of falsification or serious deceitful misconduct that threaten the health, safety, or welfare of others, or that cause a substantial detrimental impact on school operations or other individuals, are prohibited.

II-2 Inappropriate, Illustrations Images, or Other Materials: The possession of illustrations, audio or video recordings, written materials, graphics, or other print or digital documents, media, or files which significantly disrupt the educational process or which are profane, pornographic, or obscene is prohibited.

II-3 Hacking and Unauthorized Computer Access: Students will comply with all state and federal laws and regulations governing access to computers, computer networks, stored data, passwords, and other technology systems and resources and will refrain from all forms of computer or network "hacking," whether criminal or not. Any willful or knowing effort to obtain unauthorized access; to steal; to maliciously alter, modify, or destroy; to introduce viruses; or otherwise to cause harm to any such computer, computer network, stored data, or other technology resource is a violation of this rule.

II-4 Substantially Disruptive or Dangerous Behavior: Students will not make oral or written statements or intentionally engage in conduct that, despite efforts by staff to intervene or redirect the behavior, (1) substantially disrupts the educational environment or (2) threatens the health, safety, or welfare of staff or students.

Statements or conduct that “substantially disrupt” the educational environment may include, for example, intentionally blocking entrances or exits or obstructing the flow of traffic within or outside of the school building, intentionally interfering with or interrupting school activities such that teaching and learning are compromised, or engaging in loud or boisterous conduct that significantly distracts others from peaceable and orderly school activities.

Words or conduct that would otherwise be a Level I violation (e.g., failure to comply with directives or unacceptable language) may also constitute a violation of this Level II rule if they (1) persist directly following attempts by staff to intervene or redirect the behavior and substantially disrupt teaching, learning, or the orderly conduct of school activities or (2) inherently threaten the health, safety, or welfare of staff or students. Examples include, but are not limited to, continuing to shout or use profanity directly after intervention or redirection, continuing to engage in disruptive rough-housing or horseplay directly after intervention or redirection or in a manner that is reasonably likely to cause injury, or throwing objects directly after intervention or redirection or in a manner that is reasonably likely to cause injury.

II-5 School Transportation Disturbance: Disturbances on school buses or other transportation vehicles or near streets at school bus stops can put many students at risk. Any physical or verbal disturbance which occurs on school transportation vehicle or at a bus stop and which interrupts or interferes with the safe and orderly operation of the vehicle or otherwise puts others at risk of harm is prohibited.

II-6 False Fire Alarm or Reported Emergency: Smoke and fire alarms and other emergency systems are vital for the safe operation of schools and must not be tampered with. No student shall set off, attempt to set off, or aid and abet anyone in giving a false fire alarm. No student shall interfere with or damage any part of a fire alarm, fire detection, smoke detection, fire extinguishing system, or emergency escape system.

II-7 Fire Setting/Incendiary Material: Fires and fire-setting materials pose a risk of harm to everyone in the school environment. The possession of any incendiary material (including but not limited to matches, lighters, or lighter fluid) or the use of any material reasonably likely to result in a fire on school property is prohibited.

II-8 Property Damage: Students shall not intentionally damage or deface or attempt to damage or deface any school property or the personal property of another.

II-9 Theft: Students shall not steal, attempt to steal, or knowingly be in possession of stolen property.

II-10 Extortion: Students shall not obtain or attempt to obtain money, property, or other items of value or compel another person to take action or refrain from action against that person’s will by means of force, intimidation, or threat.

II-11 Indecent Exposure/Sexual Behavior: Students shall not engage in behavior, whether consensual or non-consensual, which is lewd, indecent, or of a sexual nature.

II-12 Harassment/Bullying: Students shall not engage in conduct prohibited by the Board's "Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying" policy.

II-13 Sexual Harassment: Students shall not engage in conduct prohibited by the Board's "Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying" policy.

II-14 Threat/False Threat: Students shall not make any threat through written or verbal language, sign, or act which conveys a serious expression of intent to cause harm or violence. Furthermore, no student shall make a false threat of harm or violence, even jokingly, which causes or is reasonably likely to cause fear or a disruption to school activities.

II-15 Physical Aggression/Fighting: Physical aggression toward and fighting with students, staff, or visitors are prohibited. A student who is attacked may use reasonable force in self-defense, but only to the extent necessary to get free from the attack and notify proper school authorities. A student who exceeds reasonable force may be disciplined even though someone else provoked or initiated the fight.

The prohibition on fighting and physical aggression includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Choking, hitting, slapping, shoving, scratching, spitting, biting, blocking the passage of, or throwing objects at another person in an aggressive, confrontational or dangerous manner.
- b. Taking any action or making comments or writing messages that might reasonably be expected to result in a fight or physical aggression.

II-16 Report Firearm or Destructive Device: Any student who has reason to believe that another student possesses or intends to bring a "firearm" or "destructive device," as defined in Rule IV-1, onto any school campus or to any school activity shall report this information to school or law enforcement authorities immediately.

II-17 Hazing: No group or individual shall require a student to wear abnormal dress; play abusive or ridiculous tricks on him or her; or frighten, scold, beat, harass, or otherwise subject him or her to personal indignity as a condition of inclusion in group or as a ritual associated with group membership. Hazing is prohibited even if the person hazed consents to the conduct.

II-18 Search and Seizure: Students may not refuse to allow and may not seek to impede any search or seizure of their person or belongings that is authorized under the Board's "Student Searches" policy.

II-19 Aiding and Abetting: Students shall not assist or facilitate others in violating any Level II, III, or IV rule in this Code.

II-20 Repeated / Willful Violations of Level I Rules: A student may be subject to out-of-school suspension of up to two (2) days under this Rule for repeated, willful violations of any Level I rules, but only if (1) the school has documented at least

three prior violations of the same Level I rule prior within the same academic semester; (2) appropriate MTSS non-disciplinary interventions have been attempted and documented with each of those last three violations; and (3) school administrators have contacted the student and parent to warn them of the possibility of out-of-school suspension before the final incident that leads to the suspension.

LEVEL III

III-1 Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, Controlled Substances, Chemicals, and Drug Paraphernalia: Drugs and alcohol present serious risks of harm to all persons, especially adolescents, and drug and alcohol overdoses and abuse result in well over 100,000 deaths each year in the United States alone. Addiction can start slowly and take hold before a person realizes he or she is addicted. It can destroy relationships, shatter dreams and ambitions, and lead to imprisonment, brain damage, disfiguring injury, and death. Students who are struggling with addiction or who are tempted or feeling pressured to use intoxicating drugs or alcohol are urged to seek help immediately from a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, or other trusted adult. No student will face disciplinary consequences for coming forward, proactively, to seek help while not in possession of or under the influence of contraband.

That said, the Board has a solemn duty to adopt policies that are reasonably designed to keep its school and students safe. To that end, the Board strictly prohibits all narcotics, alcoholic beverages, unauthorized prescription drugs, and similar substances at schools and school-sponsored activities. Specifically, no student shall possess, use, distribute, sell, possess with intent to distribute or sell, conspire or attempt to distribute or sell, purchase, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, opioid, hallucinogen, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or cannabis product, anabolic steroid, controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit substance, unauthorized prescription drug, or any other chemical or product with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration, euphoria, or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior. The proper use of a drug authorized by valid medical prescription from a legally authorized health care provider shall not be considered a violation of this rule when the drug is taken by the person for whom the drug was prescribed.

The following definitions apply to this rule:

- a. Possession: Having the prohibited substance on the student's person or in another place where the student, either alone or jointly with others, has control over it. This may include, but is not limited to, possession of a prohibited substance in an automobile, locker, book bag, or desk.
- b. Use: The consumption, injection, inhalation, ingestion, or absorption of a prohibited substance into a student's body by any means.
- c. Under the influence: Having used a prohibited substance such that it continues to influence a student's mood, behavior, or learning to any degree.

- d. Counterfeit Substance: Any substance that is described or presented with the intention of deceiving another into believing that it is a substance prohibited under this rule.
- e. Unauthorized Prescription Drug: Any prescription drug or medication that is used or possessed by someone other than the person for whom the prescription was written.
- f. Drug Paraphernalia: Objects that are used or intended to be used for ingesting, injecting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a substance prohibited by this rule into the body, including but not limited to pipes, vaporizers, rolling papers, and syringes. Relevant evidence may be considered in determining whether an object is drug paraphernalia.
- g. Conspiracy: An agreement by two or more persons to commit an unlawful act in violation of this rule.
- h. Sell: To exchange a substance prohibited by this rule for money, property, or any other benefit or item of value.
- i. Possess with Intent to Distribute/Sell: Intent to distribute or sell may be determined from relevant evidence such as the amount of the prohibited substance found; the manner in which it was packaged; the presence of packaging materials such as scales, baggies or other containers; and the statements or actions of students.
- j. Distribute: To transmit a prohibited substance to one or more other students, with or without compensation. For purposes of this definition, a student has not "distributed" a prohibited substance (but may be guilty of "possession" or "use") if the student's sole involvement is to share or pass a prohibited substance with other students in the course of using it, so long as the student was not the one who brought the prohibited substance onto school property or otherwise made it available to other students.

When a first infraction of this rule involves solely possession, use, conspiracy to possess or use, and/or being under the influence of a substance prohibited by this rule, and a long-term suspension recommendation for violation of this rule is not supported by any other rule violations that independently support long-term suspension, an alternative to long-term suspension shall be offered.

The alternative shall consist of a short-term suspension of five (5) days on condition that the student participates in and completes an approved Alternative Counseling and Education (ACE) program. The program shall be designed by the superintendent and agreed to in writing by the parent, guardian, student, and school principal. Parents, guardians, and students shall be provided information by school authorities concerning approved ACE programs. Declining this opportunity or failing to meet any requirements of the ACE program reactivates the underlying long-term suspension or alternative education assignment.

III-2 Gang and Gang Related Activity: The Board believes that gangs and gang-related activities pose a serious safety threat to students and staff members of the Wake County Public School System and can significantly disrupt the educational environment. Even actions that are not innately dangerous, such as displaying hand signs, wearing items of particular colors, and speaking with special jargon can substantially increase the risks of criminal activity and physical injury when those signs and signals are used to support, signal, promote, or encourage gang activity or affiliation. Students who feel pressured to participate in or condone gang activities are urged to seek help from teachers, administrators, parents, and law enforcement officers.

a. No student shall participate in any gang-related activities. For purposes of this rule:

i. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts, and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols.

ii. Gang-related activities are any activities engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang; to perpetuate the existence of an identified gang; to promote the common purpose and design of an identified gang; or to represent gang affiliation, loyalty, or solidarity.

b. Conduct prohibited by this rule includes:

i. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, visible tattoos and body markings, or other items, with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;

ii. Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;

iii. Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;

iv. Requiring payment of protection, money or insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person in connection with gang-related activity;

v. Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person in connection with gang-related activity;

vi. Soliciting others for gang membership;

vii. Committing or conspiring to commit illegal act in connection with gang- related activity.

c. When a first infraction involves only the wearing of gang-related attire, the student shall receive a warning and be allowed to immediately change or remove the attire as an alternative to disciplinary action.

d. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to identify examples of gang-related items, symbols and behaviors and shall provide each principal with this information. Parents and students shall be notified that such information is maintained in the principal's office, that it is subject to change, and that the principal's office may be consulted for updates. In providing this information for parents and students, the school system acknowledges that not all potential gang indicators connote actual membership in a gang.

III-3 Weapons/Dangerous Instruments/Substances: No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any weapon, facsimile of a weapon, dangerous instrument/substance or other object that can reasonably be considered or used as a weapon or dangerous instrument/substance. This does not apply to any student who finds a weapon or dangerous instrument/substance on school property or receives it from another person on school property and who immediately reports the weapon or dangerous instrument/substance to school or law enforcement authorities.

The following definitions apply to this rule:

a. **Weapon:** Any firearm, BB gun, stun gun, air rifle, air pistol, ammunition, power loads, fireworks, knife, slingshot, leaded cane, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors, razor blades except cartridge razors used solely for personal shaving, box cutter, mace, pepper spray, and other personal defense sprays, and any sharp- pointed or edged instrument except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction, and maintenance.

b. **Dangerous Instruments/Substances:** Any object or substance that is possessed, handled, transmitted, or used for the purpose of causing or attempting to cause physical injury.

c. **Facsimile of a Weapon:** Any copy of a weapon that could reasonably be perceived to be a real weapon.

Note: Refer to Level IV: Rule IV-1 for violations involving Firearms/Destructive Devices.

III-4 Assault on a Student: No student shall cause or attempt to cause serious physical injury to another student. For the purposes of this policy, serious physical injury shall refer to any significant or aggravated bodily injury, including but not limited to broken bone(s), loss or chipping of teeth, loss or impairment of vision, loss

of consciousness, internal injuries, scarring or other disfigurement, significant bleeding, lacerations resulting in sutures, significant bruising, severe or prolonged pain, any injury requiring hospitalization for any period of time, and/or any injury resulting in medical treatment beyond simple first aid procedures.

III-5 Assault on School Personnel or Other Adult: No student shall cause or attempt to cause physical injury to any school employee or other adult.

Note: If a teacher is assaulted or injured by a student and as a result the student is reassigned to alternative education services, long-term suspended, or expelled, the student shall not be returned to that teacher's classroom unless the teacher consents.

III-6 Assault Involving Weapon/Dangerous Instrument/Substances: No student shall assault another using a weapon, dangerous instrument, or dangerous substances.

Note: Refer to Level IV: Rule IV-1 for violations involving Firearms/Destructive Devices.

III-7 Bomb Threats: No student shall make a bomb threat or hoax by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting, or burning is located on the school premises or at the site of school activities, or by placing or concealing an object or artifact on school property or the site of school activities so as to cause any person to reasonably believe the object or artifact to be a bomb or other destructive device.

III-8 Threats of Mass Violence: No student shall, by means of communication to any person or group, threaten to commit an act of mass violence on educational property or at a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by a school. For purposes of this rule, "mass violence" is physical injury that a reasonable person would conclude could lead to permanent injury (including mental or emotional health) or death to two or more people.

LEVEL IV

IV-1 Firearm/ Destructive Device K-12: As required by state law, any student in grades K-12 shall be recommended for suspension for 365 calendar days for bringing a "firearm" or "destructive device" onto school property or to a school-sponsored event off school property, or for possessing a "firearm" or "destructive device" on school property or at a school-sponsored event off school property. School property includes any property owned, used, or leased by the Board, including school buses, other vehicles, and school bus stops. Principals are required to refer to the law enforcement system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school.

The following definitions apply to this rule:

a. Firearm: A weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; or any firearm muffler or firearm silencer. The term does not include an inoperable antique firearm, BB gun, stun gun, air rifle, or air pistol.

b. Destructive Device: An explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the devices listed in this definition.

Violation of this rule shall result in suspension from school for 365 days unless modified by the Superintendent or Board on a case-by-case basis.

The 365-day suspension does not apply to any student who finds the firearm on school property or receives it from another person on school property and who delivers the weapon, immediately, to school or law enforcement authorities.

LEVEL V

Level V is the most serious level in this Code. While there are no separate Level V rules, the violation of one or more Level II, III, or IV rules in this Code becomes subject to Level V sanctions – meaning that a student may be permanently expelled from the Wake County Public School System – if all of the following criteria are met: (1) the student is fourteen (14) years old or older; (2) both the principal and the superintendent/designee recommend expulsion; (3) the superintendent and Board determine, consistent with the Board’s “Due Process” policy, that there is a significant or important reason not to offer the student alternative educational services; and (4) the Board determines, by clear and convincing evidence, that the student’s continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff.

Additionally, any student who is registered as a sex offender under [Article 27A of Chapter 14 of the North Carolina General Statutes](#) may be expelled in accordance with these procedures. If such a student is offered alternative education services on school property, the student must be under the supervision of school personnel at all times. This is a consequence of last resort. Principals are urged to consult with their area superintendents before recommending a student for permanent expulsion.