



VOORHEES
MIDDLE SCHOOL

VOORHEES TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VMS Student Handbook 2021-2022



PHILOSOPHY FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS

Our school recognizes the fact that middle school students have many special interests and needs. It also recognizes that these interests and needs may differ widely among the students.

Since we are concerned about the overall development of every student, a wide variety of educational experiences are provided at the school. Our school program encourages the exploration, discovery and evaluation of many experiences, concepts, ideas, skills and information.

The school program emphasizes the following goals:

- To provide rich and varied educational experiences that will encompass student interest and develop in them a desire to learn.
- To help students to become increasingly self-directing, moving from dependent childhood to self-actualizing adolescence.
- To improve basic learning skills, the processes involved in thinking and decision making, and the most efficient ways of dealing with information.
- To guide students in assessing strengths and weaknesses, evaluating growth, and developing a positive concept of self and others.
- To offer a wide spectrum of exploratory opportunities through curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- To help students better understand various subject areas and their inter-relationships.
- To foster the development of the skills, understanding, appreciation, and attitudes necessary to live successfully in a democratic society.
- To help students adjust rapidly to the middle school and make a smooth transition to high school.
- To enhance and encourage more parent and community involvement in the school.
- To help students recognize the importance of Digital Citizenship.

ADVANCED COURSES

Students entering the eighth grade may be eligible for an Accelerated Algebra I course. This is a high school level program and follows the curriculum of Eastern Regional High School. At this time, students who elect to take the course do not receive high school credit toward graduation. Successful completion of the pre-algebra program enables participation in this course. Specific questions about pre-algebra and Algebra I should be addressed to the School Counselor or Mrs. Idalis Kizee, Math Coordinator.

Spanish 1 and French 1 will be offered to qualifying students. This course is offered in lieu of developmental reading. This is a high school level program and follows the curriculum of Eastern Regional High School. At this time, students who elect to take the course do not receive high school credit toward graduation. The school staff will use a prognostic test and final grades in reading and language arts after the 1st and 2nd marking periods to determine eligibility into the Advanced Foreign Language Program.

Eighth grade students also can take an accelerated art program. Students must have an “A” average in art classes and have a portfolio evaluated by the art teachers to gain admission into the program.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regular school announcements will be made daily during the homeroom periods and at the end of each day. Announcements are also emailed to the students daily.

ASSEMBLIES

Assembly programs will be presented by various school groups for the education and entertainment of all students. Students are expected to always extend courtesy to the performers and are to remain seated until dismissed.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Regular attendance is necessary if you are to be successful in your studies. The only excused absences are illness, approved religious holidays, death in the family, or special cases approved by the Principal. **ALL ABSENCES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE SCHOOL NURSE (795-2025) ON THE MORNING OF ANY ABSENCE.** All students returning from an absence must present a note from home to the homeroom teacher. The note should include the date the note was written, the date(s) of absence, the reason for the absence, and a parent's signature.

If a student is absent for three (3) or more days, or if there is a question about the validity of an absence, the school nurse will check with the home to see what the problem is, and will also make a report to an administrator.

Parents can request homework when **extended** absences (**3 days or more**) occur by calling the Middle School grade level office **before 10:00 a.m.** Homework assignments should be picked up between 3:00 and 4:00. Students and parents may check the teachers' websites and calendar for information as well.

The Principal is to be notified if a student is going to be absent for an extended period of time.

Board of Education policy #5113 states that absences in excess of twenty (20) school days may be considered unsatisfactory and students may be considered for retention.

Students arriving to school after 8:30 a.m. for reasons other than family emergency, doctor appointment, or illness are considered to have earned an unexcused lateness. A note from a doctor or parent/guardian is required for each instance of lateness. Consequences for repeated lateness from academic classes are defined in the code of discipline.

Guidelines for attendance are as follows:

- Any student arriving between 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM will be marked tardy for the day
- Any student arriving after 10:30 AM will be marked absent- half day
- Any student leaving for early dismissal before 9:30 will be marked absent for the day
- Any student leaving for early dismissal between 9:30 and 1:30 PM will be marked absent half-day
- Students leaving for early dismissal after 1:30 will be marked early dismissal

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

For a student to be considered for a Perfect Attendance Award they must have “perfect” attendance. There must be no absences, lateness’s or early dismissals for the entire school year.

BAND & ORCHESTRA PROCEDURES

- Students will have scheduled lessons and rehearsals once a week, during the school year.
- Students must take all scheduled tests in class. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instrumental music instructor of any conflicts in order to be excused.
- Students missing three unexcused lessons, and/or rehearsals, in a marking period may be dropped from the program.
- Students are expected to attend a combination of lessons, rehearsals, and two evening concerts per school year in order to be eligible for: regional auditions, festivals, or additional performances outside of school.
- It is school policy that a student may not have lessons without rehearsals, or visa-versa.

BELL SCHEDULES

FULL DAY BELL SCHEDULE

Students Arrive	8:13
Warning Bell	8:20
Homeroom	8:21 - 8:27
1 st period	8:30 - 9:25
2 nd period	9:28 - 10:23
3 rd period	10:26 - 11:10
4 th period	11:13 - 11:43 Lunch 1
5 th period	11:46 - 11:57
6 th period	12:00 - 12:30 Lunch 2
7 th period	12:33 - 12:44
8 th period	12:47 - 1:17 Lunch 3
9 th period	1:20 - 2:04
10 th period	2:07 - 2:51
Dismissal	2:51
Late Bus	3:25
Activity Bus	4:10

HALF DAY BELL SCHEDULE

Students Arrive	8:13
Warning Bell	8:20
Homeroom	8:21 - 8:27
1 st period	8:30 - 9:06
2 nd period	9:09 - 9:44
3 rd period	9:47 - 10:17
4/5 period	10:20 - 10:50 Lunch
5/6 period	10:53 - 11:23 Lunch
7/8 period	11:26 - 11:56 Lunch
9 th period	11:59 - 12:29
10 th period	12:32 - 1:02
Dismissal	1:03

BOOKBAGS AND BACKPACKS

Bookbags and backpacks are not permitted in school during the day. This rule is in the effect for all students to protect the safety and welfare of our school community. Students may use bookbags to carry their materials to and from school but once in the school they must be left in the locker.

Gym bags are to be used exclusively for physical education clothing.

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD)

To increase student contact with technology tools for classroom use, considering that many students have access to their own privately-owned devices that could be used in learning activities, we have initiated a limited “Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)” program.

Teachers must approve, direct and supervise student use of their devices during instructional time, after receiving prior approval from an administrator, and may also prohibit that use for any given activity. They will not assist or provide technical assistance to students who are not able to properly operate their own devices. Designed activities may in no way provide an advantage for students who use privately-owned devices over those who do not.

Students may not use the school’s WiFi network or connect to a wired Ethernet port with their devices, and when or where connectivity is required, they must use the privately contracted data plan associated with their own device. They must also comply with established rules for use of school-owned technology resources when using their own devices, they may not use their devices to access school network equipment, and they may only use these devices if first granted permission by a parent or guardian.

Students are permitted to bring their cell phone to school. Students may use their cell phones for personal use if approved by a teacher or administrator. Students are expected to turn their cell phones off when entering a classroom if the cell phone is not being used for instructional purposes.

Any student who abuses this privilege will forfeit their right to use their cell phone in school and will receive disciplinary action.

*For policy and procedure information about our 1:1 iPad program, please see our 2021-2022 iPad Handbook.

BUS PROCEDURES

IN THE MORNING AND AT THE BUS STOP:

- Be on time for your bus. Wait in an orderly and quiet manner until your bus comes.
- Do not get off or on at any bus stop other than your scheduled stop.
- Follow every school rule as if you were in the Middle School.
- ***If there is an awareness of strangers and/or unsafe situations it is best to contact the police and school as soon as possible.***

ONCE YOU HAVE BOARDED THE BUS, THE FOLLOWING RULES WILL BE ENFORCED:

- Do not disturb the bus driver; if an emergency should arise notify the bus driver.
- Talking is permitted and must be done in a quiet manner.
- Stay seated whenever the bus is moving.
- You are not permitted to eat on the bus.
- No objects of any kind are to be thrown while on the bus.
- No hazardous objects will be permitted on the bus; if you must transport any object that is dangerous, have your parents take you or pick you up.

- Smoking, vaping and lighting matches and the carrying of these objects will not be permitted on the bus.
- Windows will be open to a level that is considered safe. (This will be determined by the bus driver, or teacher in charge.)
- No objects or any parts of your body are to be out of the window.
- Upon arriving at the school, you should go directly to your assigned area.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE BUS RULES JEOPARDIZES THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. BUS SUSPENSIONS WILL BE GIVEN FOR ANY INFRACTION AND MAY RANGE FROM ONE DAY TO TOTAL LOSS OF RIDING PRIVILEGES.

STUDENTS MAY ONLY RIDE THEIR ASSIGNED BUS ROUTES. ANY PARENT HAVING A QUESTION ABOUT BUS ASSIGNMENTS OR ROUTES SHOULD CONTACT THE DISTRICT BUS COORDINATOR, Mrs. Szatkowski at 751-8446 EXT 6124.

AT DISMISSAL TIMES:

- When dismissed, leave the building by the assigned door.
- Walk directly to your bus; remember to stay on the sidewalk. Students who are eligible for bus transportation may not leave school premises unless transported by parents.
- If your bus has not arrived, wait in an orderly fashion until the bus comes to a complete stop. For your safety avoid standing, or stepping in the street while waiting.
- Go promptly to your seat and stay there until the bus reaches your stop.
- If you miss the bus, report to the main office. Office personnel will assign you to a supervising teacher.

STUDENTS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL FROM THE TIME THEY LEAVE THEIR HOME IN THE MORNING UNTIL THEY ARRIVE HOME THAT EVENING. ALL STUDENTS MUST ABIDE BY THESE RULES TO ENSURE A SAFE TRIP TO AND FROM SCHOOL. ALL BUSES HAVE BEEN EQUIPPED WITH VIDEO EQUIPMENT THAT SERVES AS AN ADDED SECURITY FEATURE.

LATE BUS

A late bus is provided for students who remain after school for extra work, extracurricular activities, or detention. The 3:25 late buses are for students staying for extra help, behavior modification, community service, etc. The 4:00 and 4:30 buses are for clubs and sport activities. A permission form must be filled in by the teacher responsible for your after-school activity. **This form must be signed by parents and returned to the assigned teacher.** Teachers may keep a student after school with parent notification via phone. Late buses provide transportation for the entire district; therefore, parents should expect their child to arrive home later than on a normal bus route.

Since students are the responsibility of the school until they arrive home, it is imperative that students who stay after school go directly to their own homes. The school does not permit students to ride a late bus to another student's home or other location (e.g. mall). Any student who attempts to go to unauthorized locations may lose late bus privileges. Students are not permitted to cross Evesham Avenue after school.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

- Students should always walk into the cafeteria
- Students are assigned to cafeterias and switching is not permitted. Students who change assigned cafeterias without permission are cutting an assigned class.
- Students may sit at the table of their choice; once seated, students are not to go to another table or wander around the cafeteria without permission.
- Students may be assigned specific seats for leaving dirty tables, for excessive noise, or for any other reason that affects the smooth operation of the cafeteria.
- Student ID's are required in the cafeteria.
- While standing in the lunch line, students are to remain behind the line on the cafeteria floor until the student in front of them enters the serving area door.
- All food must be eaten while sitting at the tables.
- Students will be dismissed from the cafeteria only when their table and area is clean.
- Students are not to leave the cafeteria without permission and a pass.
- Students must always obey the cafeteria supervisors and staff.
- Parties are not permitted during the lunch periods. Students may not have catered food delivered to the school.

CELL PHONE USE

Student cell phones should be on silent or off while in school. Cell phones are not to be used in school (halls, bathrooms, etc.) without permission from a staff member.

COMPUTERS/IPADS

Students will have access to computers/iPads and parents must sign permission forms for them to use the online services that include access to the Internet. In addition, permission is also needed if your child's name (first only), picture, and/or work are to be displayed on the web. computers/iPads have become part of the everyday life of a Voorhees Middle School student. They are available during the day and after school for student use. The following rules apply to students using computers.

- All computer/iPad users must log in under their ID number only.
- Students who use the library computers will sign in, designate computer use and receive a numbered computer pass.
- Students will remain at their assigned workstation during their stay in the library.
- Only students using the computers should be in the computer area.

Any student who is disruptive or misuses the computers/iPads in any location can be denied access to computer usage for a specified length of time. With the access to the Internet, students may be able to navigate into areas that may not be suitable for Middle School. *Students who willingly access inappropriate information are subject to the same disciplinary actions as if bringing the material from home. Students who originate inappropriate material via e-mail or instant messages will be subject to disciplinary actions that may include suspension from school. Students who forward such information are also responsible for their inappropriate behavior and subject to disciplinary actions.*

*For policy and procedure information about our 1:1 iPad initiative, please see our 2021-2022 iPad Handbook.

DANCES

The purpose of school dances is to provide students with a social life, to acquaint them with rules of etiquette at this kind of affair, and to provide the students with the experience of planning, organizing and completing a project of this nature.

Students must present their school photo identification to be admitted into evening school dances. No other form of identification will be accepted.

Students who lose their photo identification may purchase a duplicate card for \$5.00. The money should be given to the grade level office and the ID will be printed and distributed in a timely matter through the homeroom teacher.

Students must stay for the entire length of the activity. No one is permitted to leave the activity early unless a note from the parent is received and the parent comes in to pick up the student.

The following rules will be in effect at all dances:

- Those attending must adhere to the dress code except for special dances; wherein it will be stipulated the type of clothing to be worn. However, no coats may be worn in any school sponsored activity.
- A **\$5.00** admission fee will be charged in order to cover expenses.
- **Students are responsible for their own transportation and must be picked up within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the dance. Students who are picked up more than 15 minutes late will be excluded from the next dance or student council activity. Students who are picked up more than 30 minutes late will be excluded from the next two student council sponsored activities.**
- School dances are limited to only students who attend our school.
- **Attendance at school the day of the activity is required for admittance to the evening dance.**
- Dances will be held in the Cafeteria and students may not leave the building until the activity has concluded.
- The committee in charge of the dance will be responsible for removing decorations and cleaning up at the conclusion of the dance.
- All school dances shall be chaperoned by members of the school staff.
- No beverages of any kind may be brought into school dances.
- **Students may be excluded from dances at the discretion of the administration.**

DETENTION

Detention will be scheduled for after school hours as needed. The teacher assigning the detention will be responsible for supervising those who remain after school. Detention may be given for disciplinary infractions, which a teacher feels are detrimental to the smooth operation of the school.

In **most** cases, students will be given one day's notice before the detention period is in effect. The teacher will send the detention form home so that the parents will know that their child has detention. Failure of the students to remain for detention will result in further disciplinary actions. The parents will be notified, and a conference may be scheduled.

Administrators may also assign after school detentions and Saturday detentions if a student is referred to the office for disciplinary reasons. All students assigned to an office detention must report to the assistant principal's office immediately after school and will be escorted to the lecture hall.

DRESS CODE

Research has proven that the way a student dresses for school has a strong effect on his/her attitude and behavior in school. Our dress code is intended to make the student body, the staff, the parents and visitors proud of our students' appearance.

A student should dress properly and appropriately for school. Moderation and neatness are expected. Since dress styles change on a yearly basis, the following examples are **not** considered appropriate:

- Clothing that is dirty, has inappropriate holes/tears or clothing that is excessively tight, sheer, brief, low-cut, too short, or revealing and no undergarments showing. This includes bare midriff attire, spaghetti strap tops, off the shoulder tops.
- Any garment imprinted with obscene vocabulary, inappropriate images, double meaning slogans or distracting.
- Any garment that advertises or refers to alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, sex and violence.
- Hats, head coverings, beach attire, and coats.
- Accessories that can be considered dangerous such as but not limited to hanging chains, large/heavy medallion neck chains, spiked or sharp items, etc.
- Skirts and shorts must be an *appropriate length and suitable for school.

Students will not be permitted to attend school functions or class unless properly attired. *The school authorities reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of dress in accordance with the guidelines set forth above.

EARLY DISMISSALS

If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school before the regular dismissal time, a written request from the parent must be submitted explaining the reasons for, time of, and person designated to collect the student for early dismissal. These requests must be brought to the office for permission prior to the morning homeroom period. Before leaving the building, the accompanying adult must sign the attendance log in the office. No student will be permitted to leave the building unless accompanied by an adult who has been properly identified.

Students will not be called for an early dismissal until the parent or authorized person arrives in the office to sign out their child.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYED OPENING

In the event of a severe storm, or any other emergency, parents will receive a phone message notifying them of either a 90-minute delay or school closing. In addition, a special announcement will be made over the radio that schools are closed or opening later. Our emergency number is 574. Please observe the following:

- District website
- ERHS Channel 19
- KYW (1060) - Between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

The Middle School provides an enrichment program through related arts in grades six and seven for students who qualify. See our section on Advanced Courses for students entering 8th grade.

FIRE DRILL

- As required by law, fire/emergency drills will be held at a minimum of one time per month; the signal for a fire drill will be a **CONTINUOUS RING** of the fire bell and the emergency drill will be various alarms.
- Students are to walk in an orderly fashion and in a single line out of the building. Talking is not permitted so directions can be heard in the event of a blocked exit or other emergency announcements.
- Close all windows, turn the lights out, and close the door as you exit.
- Attendance will be taken after the entire class has reached their designated areas.
- Classes will return in an orderly fashion, maintaining silence once the "all clear" has sounded.

EMERGENCY DRILLS DURING THE DAY

- During the year students, will practice emergency in school procedures.
- All doors will be locked, the police notified, and students will be directed to a safe area within the classroom.
- Students must be quiet so that emergency directives can be heard.
- An all clear announcement will be given when the drill has been completed.

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

In the event of an emergency evacuation students will be directed to specific areas. Silence must be maintained so that directions can be heard over the public-address system. Whenever students are asked to leave the school premises they must move silently and quickly with their classroom teachers. Once assembled they may be re-located to another area of the school grounds, the high school, the hospital complex, or an elementary school.

PARENTS SHOULD CALL THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT 751-8446 FOR ANY STATUS REPORTS IF THERE SHOULD BE ANY EMERGENCY EVACUATION.

In the event of an emergency where students may have to spend extra time in the school, we will practice a Room Clear drill. Students will be called to designated large group areas within the

school. The school district will have a supply of fresh water and other essentials to maintain the students until the students can be sent home.

HALF DAYS/EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

Throughout the school year there will be times when students will be dismissed for a half-day session. Lunch will be served on half days and students will depart the Middle School at approximately 1:03 PM.

HALLWAYS

To make passage in the halls safe, pleasant, and orderly, there are certain rules by which the student body must abide.

- Always walk, do not run.
- Do not push or shove.
- Talk in a normal tone; do not shout or make excessive noise.
- If a room is occupied and it is necessary for students to wait outside, line up silently outside the room, in a single file line close to the wall.
- No food or drinks in the hallways.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is something that cannot be tolerated at any level. The Middle School shall enforce the Board of Education policies that deal with harassment. If a student believes that he/she is a victim of harassment by another student it should be reported to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Bullying is a form of harassment that happens when someone uses his/her power unfairly to hurt someone. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect (rumors, exclusion). Bullying will not be tolerated at VMS. Bullying should be reported to a staff member. Appropriate follow up will be taken by VMS counselor/administration.

504 ACCOMMODATION PLANS

Some students have a need for special accommodations for them to receive a proper education in the public schools. For this reason, the Middle School will make reasonable accommodations for those students identified with special needs. There is a District policy that outlines the procedures for obtaining a 504 Accommodation Plan. The District 504 officer is Dr. Diane Young, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Office is located near the Main Office. Students who need to see the nurse should get a pass from the teacher and then proceed to the nurse's office. If a nurse is unavailable, report to the main office.

The nurse is available for emergency situations and sudden illness. All school injuries are to be reported promptly. If a student requires further medical treatment, the parent or an authorized representative will be contacted, advised, and requested to provide transportation. **It is**

imperative that emergency parent contact information is current. Please update the school nurse with any changes.

A school nurse will check students in grade six and eight annually for height, weight, hearing, vision, and scoliosis. Any parent who would prefer having this done by their family physician must submit a note to the nurse and have it completed as soon as possible.

A nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe. She is available for a conference with the student, or the parent, on matters pertaining to health or personal hygiene.

A nurse will administer prescription and/or over the counter medications provided the following conditions are met:

- *Medication must be in the original container.*
- *Medication must be labeled with the child's name, medication name, and dosage.*
- *A note from the physician and parent giving directions for dose of medication, time of administration, purpose of the medication, and termination date.*

Please contact the school nurse for information and forms about self-medication.

2NDFLOOR® New Jersey's Youth Helpline

The New Jersey Youth Helpline, 2NDFLOOR, is a toll-free, anonymous and confidential helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to all New Jersey young people, ages 10 to 24. Youth can call 2NDFLOOR at 1-888-222-2228 to speak with professionals and trained volunteers who listen attentively, non-judgmentally and compassionately to issues and problems they are facing. Visit www.2NDFLOOR.org for more information and try the message board!

HOMEROOM PROCEDURES

WHEN STUDENTS GET OFF THE BUS, THEY MUST GO TO THEIR LOCKERS AND THEN TO HOMEROOMS. A TONE WILL RING ONE MINUTE BEFORE THE OFFICIAL START OF MORNING HOMEROOM. ANY STUDENT ENTERING AFTER THE 8:26 TONE IS LATE TO HOMEROOM.

Passes will be issued by the homeroom teacher to those students with legitimate reasons for visiting other rooms or leaving the homeroom for any other purpose. This includes visits to the rest rooms. During homeroom, the teacher will take the attendance. Morning exercises consisting of the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem will be conducted by members of the Student Body. After this, announcements will be made and matters concerning the homeroom section will be discussed.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of every student's learning experience. It is given by teachers to practice and reinforce skills taught in the classroom and work on independent research projects. Generally, a student should spend between one hour and two hours on homework each night while in the Middle School. Each student is encouraged to get his/her homework assignments from a reliable friend whenever absent. This can be done by checking the teacher's website or each student's iPad calendar.

HONOR ROLLS

The purpose of the Honor Roll is to distinguish those students who do outstanding work during each marking period.

The Principal's Honor Roll recognizes those students who received all A's (and least a B- in Related Arts) on their report card. The Honor Roll recognizes students earning all A's and B's. Instrumental music lessons earn a letter grade, but because it is not a required course, it is not part of the honor roll system.

Eighth grade students who earned all A's in every subject including, related arts and Health/PE, for 11 consecutive marking periods are recognized by the Superintendent of Schools, the Principal, the 8th grade Assistant Principal and the counselors with a luncheon for them and their parents.

INSURANCE/ ACCIDENTS

Every attempt is made to prevent accidents. If a student is injured, he/she must report the injury immediately to the teacher in charge. The school nurse oversees all accident reports.

The school carries an accident insurance policy for all students. This policy will cover expenses beyond your personal insurance. Forms are available through the school nurse.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The Library serves the school as an information and instructional center. All students are encouraged to make use of it. It has an excellent selection of books, periodicals, audio-visual aids, and materials needed for both group and individual study.

Students may visit the library at any time during the school day, provided he/she has a pass from his/her teacher. Groups of students working on special projects may also visit, provided they have their teacher's permission and the library is not too crowded. Since the library is an extension of the school program, it is governed by the same rules that prevail in the classroom. Students will be held responsible for all items borrowed from the library and are expected to return them when due or satisfy payment of lost, damaged, or items not returned. Students are encouraged to use the library after school for research, however, late bus passes or permission forms to stay must be signed by a teacher granting said permission. Additional information is located on the school library web page.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds once they arrive. Students who are transported to school must leave the grounds via bus or parent transportation. Walkers must go directly home after dismissal. Students who choose to leave school grounds under other circumstances will earn a consequence as per code of conduct.

LOCKER PROCEDURES

A locker will be assigned to you by the teachers and physical education locker will be made available for your use. The locker is the property of the Board of Education; its use is a privilege extended to you, subject to inspection and random searches by the administration at any time. You are cautioned not to disclose your combination to anyone. Never bring valuables or large sums of money to school. **The school will not be responsible for the loss of personal belongings.**

You will be allowed to use your hall locker during the school day as designated by the grade level administrator.

DO NOT bring locks from home for use on lockers. If they appear, the custodians will remove them. Your lockers are only large enough for clothing and books.

- Keep your locker neat and clean.
- Use no other locker except the one assigned to you.
- No pictures or signs are to be posted inside or outside lockers.
- No private locks are to be placed on lockers.
- Close lockers quietly; spin the combination dial to insure proper closing of the locker. (Many items are lost because a significant number of students do not lock their lockers.)

LOST AND FOUND

Check for lost articles in the "lost and found" box in the Health Office. Every few months the lost and found items are given to charity after announcements have been made over the public-address system.

Students often carelessly leave personal belongings in the cafeteria, on a bench in the locker room, or in the desk of their previous class. When this occurs, an immediate reaction to the lost articles is the assumption that they have been stolen. You must assume responsibility for your belongings; no one else can do that for you.

If you find an article of significant value, please take it to the Health Office. Any money that is found will be returned to the person turning it in after 30 days if it remains unclaimed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

If a student is to be excused from gym because of illness, an accident, or a parent's request, a written excuse must be presented to the nurse between 8:15 AM and 8:35 AM and signed by the parent. If a student is to be excused for three or more classes, a note from a doctor must be provided explaining the reason for non-participation. Students medically excused from physical education or students who are unprepared and do not participate are not eligible to participate in interscholastic sports or an after school physical activity.

In order to participate in the diversified program planned by the physical education department, it is necessary that students be properly prepared for this activity. The wearing of jewelry is a safety hazard and may not be worn during Physical Education class.

All personal clothing used in the physical education program must be supplied by the individual. All valuables must be locked up in the lockers. You alone are responsible for your possessions. It is imperative that students lock their valuables in the gym lockers.

Clothing for Physical Education includes the following:

- Athletic sneakers that are secure to the foot
- VMS Gym Uniform or a plain white T-shirt and shorts
- Athletic Socks

It is recommended that all students' possessions are labeled, T-shirts (front and back), and it is strongly recommended that students secure their valuables during gym classes. V-61 Locks may be purchased in the Viking Shop at a nominal fee. *The school is not responsible for lost articles, so lock your locker.*

PLAGIARISM

Students at Middle school are taught that plagiarism is considered stealing. The following are considered plagiarism: turning in someone else's work, copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit, failing to put a quotation in quotation marks, or copying sentence structure but changing words without giving credit.

***The school authorities reserve the right to determine the appropriate disciplinary action.**

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Failures in three major academic areas may result in a recommendation for retention of that student.

PARTICIPATION IN 8TH GRADE ACTIVITIES IS A PRIVILEGE. ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE 8TH GRADE PICNIC, DINNER DANCE AND GRADUATION ARE UNIQUE ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. PARTICIPATION IN THESE EVENTS MAY BE REVOKED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

REPORTS TO PARENTS

Teachers may request a conference with parents or guardians at any mutually agreed time. Also, parents or guardians can make the same request of teachers. Between report card dates, interim reports will be sent home for students that do not have access to parent portal. Such notices are issued to keep both parents and students informed of the student work being done and to suggest ways and means of correcting any deficiencies.

REVIEW OF THE MARKING PERIODS AND MARKING SYSTEM

Interim reports will be available to the parents of all students at the mid-point of every marking period. Interims may also be sent at any other time a change in academic work occurs. Report cards and interims will be posted on-line through the parent portal 4 times during the school year.

FIRST MARKING PERIOD

Interims posted *October 8th*
Marking period ends *November 12th*
Report cards posted *November 23rd*

SECOND MARKING PERIOD

Interims posted *December 23rd*
Marking period ends *January 28th*
Report cards posted *February 8th*

THIRD MARKING PERIOD

Interims posted *March 4th*
Marking period ends *April 8th*
Report cards posted *April 27th*

FOURTH MARKING PERIOD

Interims posted *May 25th*
Marking period ends *June 22nd*
Report Cards posted *Last day of school*

THE MARKING SYSTEM IS:

100-92=A 73-65=D
91-83=B 64 AND BELOW=F
82-74=C

Incomplete = I (1 week after the report cards are issued to make-up work)

DETERMINING GRADES

A student must be enrolled in our school for at least 25 school days to earn a grade for a specific marking period.

50% Major Tests/Projects
40% Quizzes, Graded Assignments
10% Ungraded Assignments, Class work, Participation

LATE GRADES

Responsibility and adherence to time limits are important work habits that students need to acquire. Students may be penalized for not complying with assignment deadlines.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Please respect all school property. We are proud of our school and its grounds. Please do your part in helping us keep our school looking beautiful. The residents of our community have invested a great deal of money in providing you with a very up-to-date, comprehensive, and comfortable school. Please show your appreciation by taking care of the school.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

The school counselors are particularly interested in the wellbeing of all students. They are specially trained to help you in ways that pertain to your social, emotional, vocational, and academic life. Visit our website for more information: <http://www.voorhees.k12.nj.us/domain/1545>

As a middle school student, you are sometimes referred to as an "In-Between". That is, you are no longer considered a child, and not yet considered an adult. You are in the process of "Growing Up." Growing up is certainly a very interesting and exciting period of your life but it can also be a complex and difficult period. We are interested in helping you to better understand yourself. There may be times when you will be confused, upset, or undecided about the best way to handle a problem. When such a situation occurs, it is usually helpful to talk with your parents, counselors or teachers.

During the year, the counselors will meet with interested students, classes or small groups of students to help them better understand and cope with problems they may be experiencing. Groups that have been formed in the past have included study skills, self-esteem, divorce, etc. In addition, the school psychologist facilitates groups for students having special needs.

To request an appointment with the counselor, ask your teacher for a pass or stop by the School Counseling Office.

The School Counselors are available for the following services to parents/guardians:

- Individual meetings regarding pupil progress or problems.
- Interpretation of standardized test results and pupil data.
- Information about sources of information regarding child growth and development.
- Information relevant to promoting academic/social growth.

Parent conferences can be arranged by contacting the secretaries and arranging a time between 8:10 a.m. and 3:25 p.m. - Sixth grade at ext. 5160, Seventh grade at ext. 5201, and Eighth grade at ext. 5228.

SPORTS AND ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

The Voorhees Middle School takes pride in its sports and activity programs. Both boys and girls are encouraged to participate in the programs, for this helps instill the qualities of school spirit and leadership.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES/MISSING CLASS

During the regular school day, if a student is scheduled to participate in an extra-curricular activity during class time, he/she will be responsible for the following:

- The student must report to the regularly scheduled class/teacher prior to attending the activity.
- The student is responsible to find out about and make up any class work/homework for that day. All assignments will be due on the same day as for the rest of that class.
- If a test is being given during the class period in question, the student must take the test at the scheduled time unless permission is given by the teacher to take it at a different time.
- If new material or material that cannot be made up is being presented during that period, it is strongly suggested that students attend the class.

Remember that student participation in extra-curricular activities implies extra effort on the part of students so that continual academic progress can be maintained.

SPORTS PROGRAM

I. Season Schedule

a. Fall Sports	Sept. - October	Field Hockey, soccer
b. Winter Sports	Nov. - March	Basketball, wrestling, cheerleading
c. Spring Sports	March- May	Baseball, softball, track

Sport Participation Forms are available in the nurse's office and the Main office. Forms can be downloaded from the VMS website under Athletics. The student's physical examination must be completed by your own physician. This completed exam must be within 365 days prior to the first day of tryouts. Please listen to the daily announcements for sport meetings and tryout dates.

II. Grade Policy for all Co-Curricular Activities

The Board of Education recognizes that academics are the primary focus of the public school but encourages students to be active in co-curricular clubs and athletics. To help insure students a successful education, a grade policy for curricular activities has been adopted.

- Any student with two failures in major subjects on his/her report card is not eligible to participate in any co-curricular activity until a passing grade is achieved.
- Any student with one failure in a major subject will be placed on probation. This serves as a warning that participation in co-curricular activities are at risk.

III. Detention

Any student who fulfills his/her detention obligations will be permitted to practice and/or play in the games. Individual coaches may have additional rules that affect student eligibility on the team.

IV. Attendance

A student must be in school the day of the activity to be able to participate in a sport or after school program. (This includes the drama production and the eighth-grade end of year activities).

V. Transportation

Late buses are provided for after-school activities, which take students home on route. Parents who transport their child from practices and games should be sure to arrive promptly. Students will be placed on the late bus if a parent has not arrived by the time the bus is set for departure.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

“Students who are involved in co-curricular activities while in the middle grades generally have higher achievement and improved attendance. They are less likely to experiment with drugs or participate in illicit behaviors, and they develop personal growth traits that enhance positive personal growth. Student activities promote achievement, citizenship, and service to the community while developing self-esteem, self-confidence, and social cooperation. We know that students who participate in activities in the middle grades are likely to continue to be active in high school, college, and beyond” (Arico and Rimmer, 1997).

Student Yearbook
Student Council
School Newspaper
Trailblazers
Viking Shop
Intramurals
School Bands
School Chorus
Technology Club
Math Club

Drama Club
Interact Club
Reflections Magazine
Environmental Science
Adopt-a-Grandparent
Odyssey of the Mind
Stage Crew
Chess Club
Sign Language Club
Library Media Aides

Running Club
Science Olympiad
Free to Be Club
Homework Club
Peer Tutors
S.P.O.R.T.
E-Sport

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

All students will be issued a laminated ID card that must be in the student's possession while on school time (this includes to and from school). The purpose of the ID is to contribute to the overall safety of the students and staff within our school. By having our ID's, we are identifying ourselves as members of the Middle School Community. Students must always be able to produce their ID when requested by a staff member. In case of an emergency that requires outside response personnel, they will be notified that all students and staff can be readily identified with an ID card.

Student ID's are used every day in the lunchrooms to identify students purchasing school lunches. Identification cards are also required for admittance into student council sponsored activities and after school attended events. Replacement fee for a lost student ID is \$5.00.

STUDENT SPECTATORS

You are encouraged to attend after school interscholastic events. Students must have ID's and register with the after-school supervisor when staying after for sport activities. Bathroom passes are available from the supervisor. When the sporting event is outside the only entrance to be used is the E wing entrance. Transportation must be provided by the parent.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The purpose of the Student Council is to help develop citizens who understand the importance of community involvement and the democratic process. The Council provides the student with the opportunities to voice opinions, make suggestions and develop policies for the good of the entire student body.

All students are welcome to apply for Student Council. Each homeroom will have a representative. Representatives must maintain a minimum of C- in all subjects. Experienced members can apply to be officers. Officers must maintain a minimum of B- in all subjects. The number of meetings, duties of officers, and governing rules are spelled out in the council's constitutions.

Good representation comes through an effort in five basic areas:

1. Maintaining an open membership policy
2. Scheduling a wide variety of activities
3. Developing communication with students
4. Maintaining a respectable council image
5. Active participation in school activities

Members who do not fulfill their responsibilities may be removed by the advisors.

STUDENT PASSES

Since the school is liable by law for all students when they are under its jurisdiction, it is necessary that students be always accounted for, even after school. Therefore, students must always have a pass from a teacher whenever they are in the hallways. Students in the hallways without a pass during the school day or after school may receive demerits.

STUDENT PICTURES

Each year the school engages a commercial firm to take color photographs of each student. This tradition is an accommodation to the pupils and the parents. This year all students will have the regular school pictures taken in September. Eighth grade students will **also** have their graduation pictures (with graduation robes) taken in October.

1. Make-ups are scheduled in November for those absent on the scheduled days.
2. Purchase is optional and the cost is determined by the number of pictures an individual may require.
3. A pupil's picture will be published in the school yearbook, regardless of whether the pictures are purchased.

In addition, there are many times when our public information officer photographs or videos students engaged in the learning process. These photographs may be submitted to local newspapers. **Please notify the office immediately if you do not wish to have your child photographed.**

STUDENT RECORDS/TESTS

Any parent who wishes to review their child's records should contact the Guidance Office for an appointment.

Standardized department tests or exams do not routinely go home. However, parents may, at any time, request to review the results of any assessment by contacting and meeting with the teacher or guidance counselor.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS' ROLE

Students must realize that a substitute teacher has the same authority as the regular classroom teacher. All students are to show respect and cooperation in working with the substitute teacher. Any infractions of the school rules will be treated according to school policy.

TELEPHONES

If it becomes necessary for a student to use a telephone during school hours, students must request permission from one of the teachers to use a classroom phone or their personal cell phone.

Parents are requested to limit telephone calls to the school for the purpose of relaying reminder messages for their children, as classes will not be interrupted during the school day. In addition, if forgotten items are delivered to the office such as lunches, gym clothing, or school work by the parent, it is the student's responsibility to check at the grade level office to see if the items have arrived. The secretaries will not interrupt a class to call students to the office to retrieve forgotten items.

TEXTBOOKS

It is the responsibility of the student to take care of all the textbooks, which have been issued to him/her. Rules to remember concerning textbooks are:

- The student's name must be written in the space provided.
- The student will be responsible for **putting covers** on the books, in order to protect them.
- Textbooks are not to be used as a filing place for papers, notes, and other matter, as it will break the binding.
- Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student at replacement costs.
- Textbooks are the tools of learning and should be utilized to their utmost.

Students who fail to pay their outstanding debts will be denied privileges that include participation in clubs, activities, sports, and year-end activities, as well as possible retention of report cards. All privileges will be reinstated once outstanding obligations have been met.

TRANSFERS

When a student is leaving our school district, he must notify the office at least **one week in advance**. He/she will be given a Withdrawal Form which must be filled out completely. Before final clearance is given, all books, fines and athletic equipment must be returned. Each teacher will sign the Withdrawal Form when the student has completed all the requirements. The Withdrawal Form must then be returned to the office before a transfer will be issued.

VALUABLES

Large sums of money and items of value should **not** be brought to school. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items, including electronics.

VISITORS

All visitors must report to one of the offices in the Middle School, sign in when visiting the building, and wear a visitor's badge. **Students who do not attend Voorhees Middle School are not permitted to visit our school during the regular school day. Parents of sixth and eighth grade students should enter at the administrative offices in those specific wings of the building. Seventh grade parents should enter at the main office. Anyone wishing to visit CER should enter the building at that entrance.**

VOORHEES MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY CODE

For our school to attain our goals, it is necessary for a set of disciplinary rules and procedures to be followed by all students. If effective learning is to take place, students must be in attendance, their behavior must not be disruptive of the atmosphere for learning, and their actions must not jeopardize the rights, property, and wellbeing of others.

To help students develop the self-discipline necessary for living and learning, they have a right to know what is expected from them, and what the result of rule infractions will be. For this reason, the disciplinary code should be closely read and understood by all concerned parties.

As students enter the Middle School it is expected that they will make errors in judgment as they mature. With each passing year, the expectations for making good decisions increases so that by the time a student leaves the school district they are more confident and self-assured.

The Voorhees Middle School may use surveillance devices and may use law enforcement resources to maintain a drug free and safe environment.

School, State, County, and local law enforcement authorities and resources, including, but not limited to drug sniffing dogs, may be utilized to inspect lockers, other school grounds, storage facilities provided by staff and students on an ongoing basis. 18A: 36-19:2.

School discipline records are cumulative and will become part of the student permanent record. They are required to follow the student to any school (transfers) and to the high school.

The school is required by county, state, and school board regulations to report the following:

To the local police department:

1. The possession of unlawful drugs, substances, or alcohol.
2. The possession of a gun or weapon.
3. The destruction of school property.
4. Harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment.
5. Bias incidents/hate crimes.
6. Stolen items.
7. Presence of strangers
8. Unsafe conditions

To the Division of Children and Families (DCF)

1. Any suspicion of child abuse.

To the Superintendent of Schools

1. All of the above.
2. Suspicion of non-residency.

**VOORHEES MIDDLE SCHOOL
DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Students are expected to always conduct themselves as responsible members of the school community including on the way to and from school, during school hours, in all activities supervised by the school, and on field trips. The District Discipline Policy, which sets forth and defines offensive conduct shall be in force at all times, it may be viewed on the District website. Any student behavior in conflict with the District Policy will be considered an offense and shall be dealt with in the following manner. However, this list of penalties is meant to serve only as a guideline for school staff when students have acted contrary to the District Discipline Policy, and is not all inclusive. Consequences including suspension or expulsion pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2 may be changed depending on each incident, the developmental level of the student, and at the discretion of the administration. Repetitive violations of any school rule may result in more severe disciplinary actions.

Offensive Conduct

Disrespectful Behavior	
First Offense	Warning, and/or parent notification, and/or **detention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention or ISS
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS
Disruption	
First Offense	Warning, and/or parent notification, and/or **detention

Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention or ISS or OSS
Physical Contact	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention
Theft, Damage	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention, restitution
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention, restitution
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, or OSS, or possible police intervention, restitution
Sexual Harassment	
First Offense	Principal referral, Referral to Affirmative Action Officer, Parent notification, **detention, or ISS or OSS, possible police intervention
Second Offense	Principal referral, Referral to Affirmative Action Officer, Parent notification, ISS or OSS, possible police intervention
Third Offense	Principal referral, Referral to Affirmative Action Officer, Parent notification, or OSS, possible police intervention
Weapon Possession	
First Offense	Principal referral, Parent notification, ISS or OSS, and possible police intervention, possible board hearing, possible CST involvement
Second Offense	Principal referral, Parent notification, ISS or OSS, and possible police intervention, possible board hearing, possible CST involvement
Third Offense	Principal referral, Parent notification, ISS or OSS, and possible police intervention, possible board hearing, possible CST involvement
Inappropriate Language	
First Offense	Warning, and/or parent notification, and/or **detention
Second Offense	Possible office referral, and/ or parent notification, and/or **detention
Third Offense	Possible office referral, and/ or parent notification, and/or **detention, or ISS
Buying/Selling/ Extortion	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, and possible police intervention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention, or ISS, and possible police intervention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS, and possible police intervention
Wrongful Entry	

First Offense	Warning, and/or parent notification, or **detention
Second Offense	Parent notification and/or **detention
Third Offense	Parent notification and/or **detention
Vandalism	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS, restitution/ possible police notification
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS, restitution/ possible police notification
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, OSS, restitution/ possible police notification
Fighting	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS 1 day, possible police intervention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS 1-3 days, possible police intervention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS or OSS 1-5 days, possible police intervention
Unexcused Lateness	
After 5 Unexcused	Parent notification, detention
Cheating	
First Offense	Parent notification, **detention
Second Offense	Parent notification, **detention
Third Offense	Office referral, parent notification, ISS
Smoking/Vaping	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS 1-day, possible police intervention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, OSS 1-day, possible police intervention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, OSS 1-3 days, possible police intervention
Cutting **detention	
First Offense	**detention reassigned
Second Offense	Parent notification, additional **detention
Third Offense	Parent notification, ISS
Forgery	
First Offense	Parent notification, possible **detention
Second Offense	Parent notification, **detention
Third Offense	Parent notification, **detention
Disobedience/ Misconduct	
First Offense	Warning, and/or parent notification, possible **detention
Second Offense	Office referral, parent notification, **detention
Third Offense	Office referral, parent notification, **detention or ISS
Misuse of Computer Networks/Computers/ Cell Phones	
First Offense	Parent notification, **detention or ISS, possible loss of computer usage for 9 weeks

Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention or ISS, possible loss of computer usage for 18 weeks.
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS, possible loss of computer usage for remainder of school year.
Leaving School Grounds	
First Offense	Office referral, parent notification, **detention or ISS
Second Offense	Office referral, parent notification, ISS
Third Offense	Office referral, parent notification, OSS
Loitering/Late to Class or Lunch	
First Offense	Warning
Second Offense	Parent notification, **detention
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, **detention
Gum Chewing	
First Offense	Warning
Second Offense	Parent Notification, possible **detention
Third Offense	Parent Notification, **detention
Public Displays of Affection	
First Offense	Warning
Second Offense	Parent Notification, possible **detention
Third Offense	Parent Notification, **detention
Possession of Intoxicants	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, police notification, OSS 5 days
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, police notification, OSS 7 days, CST referral
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, police notification, OSS 9 days, CST referral, demonstrated rehabilitation required/possible expulsion
Distribution or selling of Intoxicants	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, police notification, possible expulsion/required counseling
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, police notification, school suspension pending expulsion hearing
Cutting Class	
First Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, detention
Second Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, ISS
Third Offense	Principal referral, parent notification, Saturday detention
Falsifying Alarm Substance Abuse Arson Exploding Device Gang Membership Acts of Terrorism Assault Staff Member	Principal Referral, parent notification, police notification, OSS CST Referral, possible expulsion

**detention could be lunch detention, office detention, after school detention, or Saturday detention

Demerit Program

Students earn demerits for the following:

Administrative Detention= 2 demerits

School Suspension= 4 demerits

Out-of-School Suspension=5 demerits

The accumulation of demerits results in the following consequences:

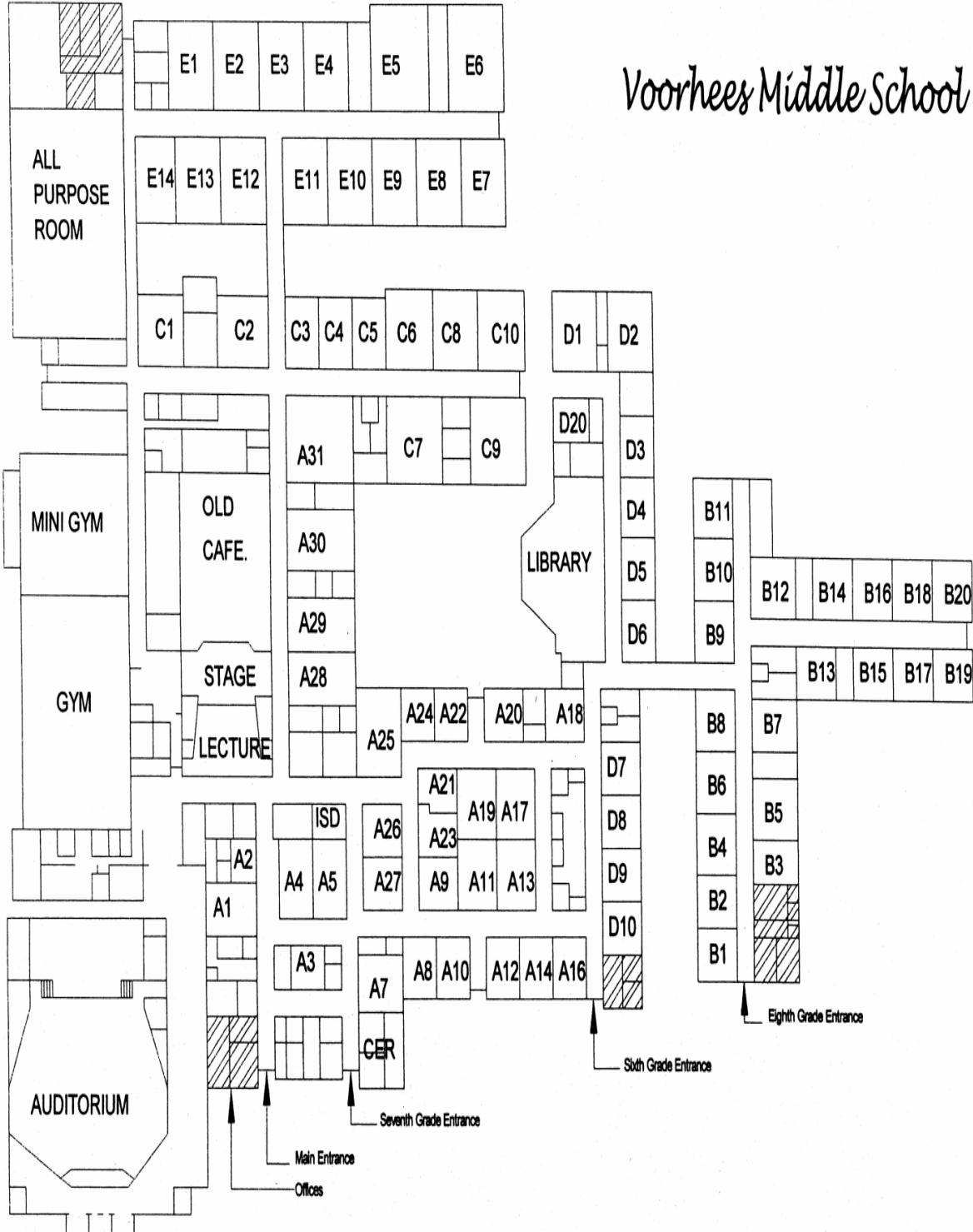
10 Demerits= In-School Suspension

20 Demerits= Loss of Student Council Activities/spectator privileges without parent supervision

30 Demerits= Removal from interscholastic sports, co-curricular activities, clubs, and grade level activities.

Each marking period, students' demerits become inactive from their record. All students can earn a merit sticker at the end of the next marking period.

Voorhees Middle School



PLEASE RETURN TO THE HOMEROOM TEACHER BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021.

I HAVE READ THE STUDENT HANDBOOK AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND UNDERSTAND THE OUTLINED RULES AND PROCEDURES.

STUDENT NAME (PRINT) _____

PARENT NAME (PRINT) _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

HOMEROOM TEACHER _____ DATE _____