

SVRCS

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026



Sugar Valley Rural Charter School
236 EAST MAIN STREET
LOGANTON, PA 17747

Letter of Welcome

The Administration of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School welcomes you to the 2025-2026 school year.

This handbook has been created as an aid and resource for you as we work together to make your school year a meaningful and successful one. All policies are designed to create a strong and safe learning community. We will do our very best to provide your child with a quality education. We are available to assist in any way.

The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School depends heavily on the interaction and support of parents/guardians, students, faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, and community members in the individualized education of each child. We are a community, dependent upon one another. We are creating a learning environment for children as well as adults and we feel privileged to be a part of this valley's progress. We are excited that you continue to chose SVRCS for your child's educational needs.

Please feel free to contact our office between the hours of 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM for assistance.

Office Phone: 570-725-7822

Office FAX: 570-725-7825

E-mail: info@svrcs.org

236 East Main Street

Loganton, PA 17747

Sincerely,

Tracie Kennedy

Chief Executive Officer

Sugar Valley Rural Charter School

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SUGAR VALLEY RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL

2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR



M T W T F

AUGUST				
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

19, 20 In-Service Day
21 First School Day

SEPTEMBER				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

2 Labor Day - No School

OCTOBER				
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

4 In-Service
23 End MP1 (44)

NOVEMBER				
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

1,4 Parent-Teacher Conf - No School
27 - 1/2 Day Early Dismissal
28-29 Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

2-3 Thanksgiving Break
23-31 Holiday Break

M T W T F

JANUARY				
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

1-3 Holiday Break
20 MLK Day (no School)
16 End Second MP (44)

FEBRUARY				
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

13 Parent-Teacher Conf - No School
14 In-Service
17 Presidents Day - No School

MARCH				
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

21 In-Service
25 End Third MP (44)

APRIL				
	1	3	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

17 1/2 Day Early Dismissal
18 Spring Break
21 Spring Break
22, 23 Snow Day

MAY				
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

2 In-Service
23 1/2 Day Early Dismissal
26 Memorial Day

JUNE				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

4 Last Student Day/Early Dismissal (45)
5,6 In-Service Day

Snow Makeup	Teacher	Para-Professional
	In-Service Days	In-Service Days
April 22	Aug 19, 20	Aug 19, 20
April 23	Oct 4	Oct 4
	Nov 1, 4	
	Feb 13, 14	Feb 14
	March 21	March 21
	May 2	May 2
	June 5, 6	June 5

- ☒ In-Service Day
- ☒ Snow Makeup Day
- ☒ Weather Cancellation
- ☒ Vacation Day

SUGAR VALLEY RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL - 236 E MAIN ST - LOGANTON, PA - 17747 - 570-725-7822

Approved 02/20/24

Please review this student handbook completely with your child.

Part I: Teaching at SVRCS

Our History and Mission

Sugar Valley Rural Charter School opened in August 2000 and is part of one of the most significant initiatives for change in public education in Pennsylvania. Founded by a local group of parents, educators, and rural community members, SVRCS opened its doors as the state's first rurally based K-12 charter school emphasizing flexibility in responding to students' needs, innovation, and individualized learning. SVRCS is located on a 15-acre campus in the borough of Loganton, PA serving a student body that reflects the community we serve.

The mission of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School is to provide a rural, community-oriented, lifelong learning center, which both reflects and helps to shape the best of the Sugar Valley's social, cultural, and educational heritage as embodied in its citizen's knowledge, values, and skills. Striving for a zero-dropout rate, high academic achievement, and 100% post-secondary continuing education, SVRCS extends the conventional K-12 classroom to include varied educational practices to model and promote the practice of lifelong learning.

The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School empowers educators, involves parents, and boosts accountability to achieve positive outcomes for all students and serves as a catalyst for a new generation of successful public school.

Phase System

Explanation of Phase System; Kindergarten does not have a phase. Phase I: grades 1 and 2. Phase II: grades 3 & 4. Phase III: grades 5 & 6. Phase IV: grades 7 & 8. Phase V: grades 9-12.

2025-2026 PSSA Testing Window

April 20 – April 24, 2026	English Language Arts	Grades 3-8
April 27 – May 1, 2026	Mathematics/Science 5 & 8/Make-up	Grades 3-8

PSSA and Your Child

What does PSSA stand for?

- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

What is the PSSA's?

- In 1999 Pennsylvania adopted academic standards for Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Speaking, and Listening.
- The standards identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels.
- The annual PSSA is a standards-based assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards.

Who will take the PSSA?

- Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 tests in one or more of the subject areas including Math, English Language Arts, and Science.

What do the PSSA's mean to your child?

- Indicates what your child has learned based upon Pennsylvania common core standards
- Indicates if your child is proficient in the subject area
- Gives your child an opportunity to show what they know

What do the PSSA's mean to SVRCS?

- SVRCS is required to meet Academic Target.
- SVRCS is held to higher standards every year under the Academic Target.
- Data from the PSSA is analyzed to improve instruction and provide interventions for students

How should you prepare your child for PSSA?

- Be sure your child gets plenty of sleep
- Limit your child's TV and video game time
- Give them a hearty breakfast every day
- Speak in a positive manner about the tests
- Make sure the child gets to school on time

Keystone Exams

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in the subject areas of Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Literature, English Composition, and Biology.

The Keystone Exams are one component of Pennsylvania's new system of high school graduation requirements. Keystone Exams will help school districts guide students toward meeting state common core standards.

Keystone Exam information can be attained at www.pdesas.org.

2025-2026 Keystone Testing Window

Winter Wave December 3-17, 2026 Algebra I, Biology and Literature

Spring Wave May 11-22, 2026 Algebra I, Biology and Literature

Teacher Qualifications

SVRCS understands that highly qualified teachers increase student learning and a school's effectiveness. Therefore, we make it a practice to employ highly qualified teachers and teacher aides as defined by the ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). We welcome inquiries regarding the qualifications and certification level of each of our teachers and paraprofessionals. Contact the school office with your questions.

Emergency Closings and Dismissals

SVRCS school closings and delays will be advertised on the following stations, WNEP-16(TV), SVRCS Website, SVRCS Facebook, and advertised by School Messenger via phone. Parents/Guardians will need to keep their telephone updated with the main office in order to participate in this program.

- When the school calendar schedules an early dismissal or there is an early dismissal due to weather, lunches will be served and school will be dismissed at approximately **12:20 pm**.

Emergency Drills

- SVRCS will regularly practice emergency drills for fire and severe weather.
- Students are to follow directions given by the closest teacher and to proceed quickly and silently to assigned locations.
- Emergency exit directions are posted in each room.
- All students should be familiar with fire drills, lock down procedures, and civil defense regulations in the school building, on school property, or on the school bus. In a state of emergency, all students shall comply as directed, refraining from the use of cell phones or telephones. Practice drills will be conducted at times to assist students in knowing what to do in case of an emergency. False alarms are punishable by law as well as the discipline code.

Health Services

- SVRCS maintains a health room staffed by a full time LPN and a part time registered nurse.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed of all medical injuries as determined by the nurse.
- If a student registers a fever of 100.4F degrees during the school day and the nurse feels there is a medical necessity, the parents/guardians will be contacted and are required to pick their child up at school.
- Students who take medication on a daily basis must go to the health room to obtain their medication.
- No medications will be administered in school except by the written direct order of a physician. All medicines must be in the properly marked container dispensed by the physician. **Parents/Guardians must complete a request form to have the medication administered to their child by the school nurse. This medication must be brought by the parents/guardians to the school nurse who will dispense the medication at the correct time.** Students are excused only from the nurse's office for illness or injury and the parents/guardians must arrange transportation for the students. **{The nurse, NOT THE STUDENT, will call the parent from the school. If a student contacts their parent without the knowledge of the school nurse, the student will receive a consequence.}** Students are required to have a pass to visit the nurse unless the situation is an emergency.

Student Assistance Program

A Student Assistance Program (SAP) has been developed at SVRCS. SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community agencies.

When an issue lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP team will assist the parent and student so they may access services within the community. The student assistance members do not diagnosis, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

It is the parent's right to be involved in the four phases of the process; referral, team planning, intervention and recommendation, support and follow-up. Involvement of parents in all phases of the student assistance program underscores the parents' role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting their children's education. This is the key to the successful resolution of concerns.

The student assistance process is based upon state guidelines, professional standards and policies and procedures adopted by the local board of directors. Professional training for team members in all phases of the student assistance process, which is consistent with state guidelines and conducted by a Commonwealth approved training provider, is required to ensure the appropriateness of the recommended services, effective interagency collaboration and compliance with the state and federal laws protecting the privacy rights of parents and students.

Homeless Program

SVRCS participates in the Pennsylvania Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (PA ECYEH). PA ECYEH assures execution of the federal legislation, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1988, also incorporated into the 2001 No Child Left behind Act. Implementation of this program ensures that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.

Homeless children and youth are located in a variety of locations and situations. These locations and situations are not limited to public or private shelters, with a parent in a domestic violence shelter, transitional housing program, and individuals/families staying with relatives or friends due to the lack of housing. Additional situations may include children and youth who have been abandoned or forced out of their home by parents or caregivers, abandonment in hospitals, and children of migrant families.

The rights of Homelessness Children and Youth include: continuing their education in their current school, immediate enrollment in the school district where they are temporarily housed, assistance with obtaining school supplies, participation in school program, and assistance with school-related expenses.

Sarah Schroth, Regional Coordinator, and Jason Pletcher, SVRCS Liaison, may be contacted for additional information through the main office or at jpletcher@svrcs.org

Notice of Special Education Services and Programs Child Find

Each school district, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, to aid parents/guardians, and to describe the parent/guardians' rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process.

Identification Activity

Child find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the state, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that, if found, may cause a child to need services are: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment including blindness. In the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay, each school district is required to annually provide notice describing the *identification* activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of *personally identifiable information*. This notice is intended to meet this requirement.

Each school district, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 and other applicable federal and state laws, protects the confidentiality of *personally identifiable information* regarding students that are identified as children with disabilities and eligible for special education services and protected handicapped students. The school district protects the personally identifiable information by one school official being responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of the records; training being provided to all persons using the information, and maintaining for public inspection a current list of employees' names and positions who may have access to the information. The school district will inform parents/guardians when this information is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child and will destroy the information at the request of the parent/guardian, except general information such as your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, and grade level completed may be maintained without time limitation.

Special Education Referral Process Policy

The school administers a wide variety of programs for exceptional students. A person who is suspected to have a disability or who is thought to be gifted is referred for a multidisciplinary evaluation. (Parents/Guardians and/or the classroom teacher may submit a request, in writing for an evaluation.) No evaluations may take place without the parent/guardians' written permission. The school will evaluate the child without cost to the parents. Please contact the Director of Support Services, Carrie Nixon at (570) 725-7822 to refer a student for evaluation.

The Identification, Evaluation and Placement Process

Public Law 101-476, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, set forth the following minimum procedures that must be followed in the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of exceptional children.

Step One: A child is recognized by the school personnel and/or parents/guardians as possibly being exceptional and in need of special education.

Step Two: At the elementary level (K-6) the Instructional Support Team (RTI) convenes. Instructional modifications within the regular classroom are implemented to ascertain if the concerns can be corrected within the regular education environment. If they cannot, the RTI team will recommend a multidisciplinary evaluation. At the elementary (K-6) /secondary level (7-12) the referral is made to the school psychologist to initiate a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Step Three: An evaluation to specifically determine the child's exceptionality, educational strengths, weaknesses and needs is scheduled by the school. This evaluation will not take place until the parents/guardians are notified and their written approval is obtained. If agreement to evaluate is not achieved, either the school system or parents/guardians may initiate the procedural safeguards system. The evaluation procedures and materials must be selected and administered so as to not be racially or culturally discriminatory.

Step Four: A meeting among the parents/guardians, school personnel, and if appropriate, the child, is scheduled to discuss the results of the Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER). Signatures are required indicating agreement or disagreement with the report. Those disagreeing are encouraged to write a dissenting opinion.

Step Five: From this meeting, the child's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will be developed, written, and agreed to by the school, parents/guardians, and the child where appropriate. The IEP team determines the appropriate educational placement for the child.

Step Six: When an IEP is agreed to by the parents/guardians and the school, then the parents are issued a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) to sign. The child's education will conform to the IEP. If for any reason the school and parents/guardians cannot agree on the appropriateness of the IEP, either may initiate the procedural safeguard system.

Step Seven: At least annually, each child's IEP and his / her school performance in relation to it will be reviewed for the purpose of specifying the future educational program for the student.

Step Eight: At least every three years, a multidisciplinary reevaluation is conducted to review a child's program and eligibility for special education. If a student is diagnosed with Intellectual Disability a re-evaluation occurs every two years.

Support Service Student Records

As the parent/guardian of the child you have a number of rights regarding the confidentiality of your child's records; for example, the right to inspect and review any education records related to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the school. This includes instructional materials. The school will comply with a request for you to review the records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding planning for your child's special education program (called an IEP meeting), before a hearing should you and SVRCS disagree about how to educate your child who needs special education, and in no case, take more than 45 days to furnish you the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records.

Enrollment Policy

Our Enrollment Policy can be located in the Main Office on campus and on our website.

Non-Discrimination of Special Education Students

SVRCS does not discriminate against students with disabilities. Such students are assured equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate. It is the policy of the school to provide a free and appropriate public education to each student with disabilities, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. SVRCS is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or religion.

Alternative Assessment of Students

SVRCS supports the right for full and equal educational opportunity for all students. Instructional accommodations and alternative testing programs may be necessary and will be utilized in order for qualified students with disabilities to participate in instructional programs. Such accommodations should allow equivalent opportunity for qualified students to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and competence. Faculty are responsible for the educational activities of the institution, including the assessment of student learning in their courses and are required to work with students to identify and provide reasonable accommodations for assessment. Support Services will inform faculty in a timely manner of their need for such accommodations identified in students' IEP's. Alternative response formats may need to be arranged, including (but not limited to) oral, large-print, computer-generated tests, multiple choice, limited matching, decreased number of problems, extended test time, and separate or small group testing environment.

Behavioral Support Obligations

Behavioral intervention plans include a variety of techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Potential causes of behavior problems, such as physical and medical conditions, environmental factors, staffing and program concerns, shall be reviewed and addressed by the IEP or administrative team prior to the development of a behavior intervention plan. For each eligible student who exhibits behavior problems which interfere with the student's ability to learn, including students identified as emotionally disturbed, the IEP shall include provisions for a program of behavior management. The plan will be reviewed with all staff involved with the student and the parents/guardians for final approval before implementing the plan.

Extended School Year

Extended School Year (ESY) is any individualized instructional program, which is extended beyond the regular school year for handicapped students who are enrolled in a school's special education programs. ESY must be considered, for all students with disabilities, by the IEP team. (If eligibility is predicated on regression/recoupment criteria, documented and/or predicted regression/recoupment must be considered.) Whether a student is to receive ESY is an IEP team decision; and the length, nature, and type of ESY services must be determined on an individual basis by the IEP team.

Assistive Technology

SVRCS is committed to providing appropriate assistive technology to students with disabilities. The school is also committed to training teachers, paraprofessionals, and students on how to most effectively use assistive technology. The need for assistive technology must be determined on a case-by-case basis. If the IEP team determines that a particular assistive technology item is required for the student to be provided a reasonable educational benefit from his/her education program, the technology must be provided to implement the IEP. In some cases, this may include the placement of school-purchased assistive technology devices in other settings as required by the child's IEP. A student may need assistive technology in multiple environments in order to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Assistive technology refers to the need for the use of devices and services to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of students with disabilities. An "assistive technology device" refers to any item, piece of equipment (e.g. laptop computers, special audio-visual equipment, special wheel chairs or desk, and/or other capital items for use by students and/or staff), or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of students with disabilities. Students having special needs but not requiring a formal IEP according to law, which may include, but are not limited to Section 504 students, migrant students, homeless students, students living with poverty, and English Language Learners, will also be considered for assistive technology devices and/or services on a case-by-case basis.

Secondary Transition Services

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for secondary students with disabilities, designed to achieve specific outcomes, which promote movement from school to post-school activities. SVRCS will work with students, families and related services and agencies to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities who are leaving secondary education and entering adulthood. These efforts are critical to enable students to achieve maximum success in post-school activities consisting of integrated employment (including supported employment), post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation. The coordinated set of activities is based on the individual student's needs, considering the student's preferences, potential, abilities and interests. These activities include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Limited English Proficiency Program and Students Placement

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services will be provided for students who qualify and are in need. Translations of policies and procedures outlined in this book will be provided in a reasonable time to qualifying parents/guardians. Reasonable accommodations and modifications to classroom instruction will be provided to students depending on their individual needs.

Child Abuse

The Child Abuse Policy and information to Child Line are available in the main office on campus.

Educational Surrogate Parent Policy

SVRCS shall ensure that an educational surrogate parent may be appointed when necessary to protect the rights of students with disabilities. An educational surrogate parent shall be appointed when the student's parent(s) is/are unknown; when the whereabouts of the parent(s) is/are unknown; when after reasonable efforts, the student's parent(s) cannot be located; or when the student is a ward of the state. The educational surrogate parent may represent the student in all matters relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and provisions of a free and appropriate public education. Any person assigned as an educational surrogate parent shall not be an employee of a public or private agency involved in the education or care of the student, or have any interest that conflicts with the student. The educational surrogate parent should possess the knowledge and skills necessary to adequately represent the student.

Wellness Policy

The SVRCS Wellness Policy is available in the Main Office on campus.

Wellness Committee 2025-2026

Tracie Kennedy – SVRCS CEO	Kathy Miller – Food Service Director
Lori Barner – School Nurse	Tyler Koser – Physical Education/Health Teacher
Alicia Mitchell – Parent	Darice Fine - Administrator
Sonya Downing - SVRCS School Board Member	JT Bitner – Physical Education Teacher

List of suggested healthy snacks:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low-Fat / No-fat pre-packaged foods ex: baked potato chips,
- Whole grain enriched such as but not limited to, crackers and pretzels

Physical Education

- Please plan ahead! On days when your elementary student is scheduled for Phys. Ed. class, the student should wear clothing that is appropriate to the activity. Secondary students should bring gym clothes to change into at the beginning of class.
- Clothing should allow freedom of movement.
- No high heels should be worn. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are advised. **NO flip flops.**
- If your student is unable to participate during gym class, a note from the child's physician is required.

Cafeteria and Lunch Accounts

The cafeteria is a place where students should be able to get a well-balanced lunch and be able to relax. With that in mind, the following expectations are in place:

- Students should report to the cafeteria in a timely manner.
- Students are not permitted to leave the lunchroom unless they have a pass.
- Throwing of food or anything else will not be tolerated. Students who violate lunchroom rules will be assigned appropriate consequences.
- Deposits for lunch accounts can be made out to SVRCS and should be placed in a sealed envelope with the student's name. Deposits may be given to the food service cashier during breakfast or to the homeroom teacher. Funds will not be collected during lunch times.
- Student lunch account balances are available to parents at any time. The cashier will send balance reports home weekly.
- Snacks are available for purchase during grades 5-12 lunch periods each day.
- Additional food is available for purchase during grades 5-12 lunch periods each day.
- Snacks for elementary students are provided for purchase on Fridays.
- Students should never share food from their lunch tray or packed lunch. Students should keep their hands away from other student's lunches.
- Please instruct your child not to purchase food for their friends.
- If your student has any food allergy or special dietary needs please notify the Food Service Department.

Meal Charge Policy

Sugar Valley Rural Charter School Food Service department recognizes adequate nutrition is essential to student mental, physical and academic growth. All students K-12 participating in the national school lunch program, whether free, reduced, or paid rate, will receive a full reimbursable lunch meal that meets the USDA requirements. SVRCS's national school breakfast and lunch program is free to all students. Snack and extra lunch items can pre-paid with cash or check on student lunch accounts in the following ways:

- SVRCS main office which then is forwarded to the Food Service Dept.
- Mailed to SVRCS Food Service Dept
 - 236 East main St
 - Loganton, PA 17747
- Given to students' homeroom teacher which then is forwarded to the Food Service Dept
- Given directly to the Food Service Dept

Money that is leftover at the end of a school year is carried over into the next school year as credit. However, money that is left in delinquent at the end of a school year is carried over in to the next school year as delinquent debt and collection efforts will continue into the new school year. If a student graduates and/or withdraws with a delinquent balance the student will not receive his/her transcripts and or report card. If a student graduates and/or withdraws and has money leftover in their student account, the Food Service Dept will send a full reimbursement to the household. Gifts or donated funds are accepted by the Food Service Dept for the purpose of offsetting delinquent student meal accounts.

The above policy is provided in writing via student handbook and on the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School's website at www.SVRCS.org under the food service tab. This policy is provided to all households through a letter upon enrollment and the first time it is applied to a student. This meal charge policy is provided to and reviewed with all school level staff responsible to policy enforcement, including food service personal responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, food service staff responsible for notifying families of low and negative balances. School nurses, guidance counselors, principals, CEO and other administrators are informed of this policy.

Recess

- Students go out for recess as often as possible with their own class. Even in colder temperatures, they often go out for some physical activity. Students will not go outdoors when temperatures fall to 32 degrees or below. Please check the weather report on our school's Weatherbug site and send your child to school in appropriate clothing and shoes.
- In case of rain, students will remain indoors.

Visitors

- SVRCS encourages family and community members to visit our campus.
- **All visitors must report immediately** upon arrival on the campus to the **main office** which is housed in the in the Elementary Building A to **sign in** and receive a visitor pass
- Please remember that this is a learning environment; for convenience, telephone in advance to arrange for conferences.
- Students from other schools must have written parental/guardian permission to visit SVRCS. Advance notice of 24 hours for school visits should be submitted to and approved by the administration.

Student Files

- Any parent/guardian wishing to review their child's school file is invited to call the office to set up an appointment. While reviewing these files, you may refer any questions or concerns to a school administrator.
- Release of student information - On occasion the school will release limited information for public relations purposes. This information is limited to the student's name, picture, and the achievement of the student. All other information will be released in compliance with the federal law. Please contact the school office if you have any questions concerning this matter.

SVRCS Property

- The school furnishes text books, laptop computers, workbooks, library books and various school learning materials. If these materials assigned to a student are lost, misused, or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the parent/student will be responsible for their replacement.
- The school and school equipment are public property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for significant disciplinary action as well as the involvement of the state police for possible criminal charges.

Students participating in acts of vandalism may face suspension and be liable for restitution for damages incurred.

Military Recruiter Access to Student Information

Under the general provisions of the NCLB Act of 2001, local education agencies (LEA) receiving funds under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) shall provide the Armed Forces recruiters access to student names, addresses, and telephone listings as is provided to universities and prospective employers. However, Federal law requires districts to provide parents/guardians the right to have their child “opt out” from the list of student information provided to the military, colleges and prospective employers. Forms can be obtained in the main office.

Communications

SVRCS publishes communications on social media sites, as well as, the school website www.svrCS.org.

Graduation Requirements

Students must complete a total of 26 credits (**27 beginning with the class of 2027**) to be eligible for graduation. These credits are broken down as follows:

	Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Classes of 2027 and after
English Language Arts	4cr	4cr	4cr
Mathematics	4cr	4cr	4cr
Science	4cr	4cr	4cr
Social Studies	4cr	4cr	4cr
Wellness (must include Health 11)	2cr	2cr	2cr
Art and Music (minimum 1cr each Art and Music)	4cr	4cr	4cr
Career Readiness	0.5cr	0.5cr	0.5cr
Computer Education	Suggested 0.5cr	Suggested 0.5cr	Suggested 0.5cr
Personal Finance	Suggested	0.5cr	0.5cr
Electives	3.5	2.5	3.5
Total Credits	26	26	27

The elective courses for above may come from any area of the curriculum or from independent study courses coordinated through the school administrators.

In addition to the coursework requirements above, SVRCS seniors must also complete a Senior Portfolio and one of the PA Dept of Education’s Graduation Pathways, as described below.

Each student will walk at graduation only one time. If a student chooses to walk at graduation in June without having completed the requirements, that student is then considered to have “walked” the one time. However, their diploma will be held until they meet all requirements. If a student does not meet his/her requirements by the start of the next school year, they are required to be on campus on the first day of school. If a student does not come to school, they will be considered a dropout after 10 consecutive days.

Senior Portfolio

A Senior Portfolio is a collection of student work representing performance over time. They are also valued as an assessment tool. The creation of a senior portfolio is important as students engage in the process of exiting high school and entering the world of college, training, military, or jobs. Their portfolio should provide a snapshot of their high school experiences and accomplishments. This process should also guide students to explore career paths and prepare for life after high school.

All SVRCS Senior Portfolios will be electronic, using the Smart Futures platform. This portfolio will be presented at the students’ senior exit interviews and will serve to support their assertion that they are prepared to graduate. This is a graduation requirement.

Graduation Pathways

Beginning with the class of 2023, the Commonwealth of PA is requiring that each graduating senior complete one five Graduation Pathways.

- Pathway 1: Keystone Proficiency
 - Achieve proficient or advanced scoring on each Keystone Exam – Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature.
- Pathway 2: Keystone Composite
 - Achieve at least one proficient or advanced Keystone Exam score
 - Composite Keystone score is at least 4,452
 -
- Pathway 3: Career & Technical Education (One of the following)
 - Industry-based competency certification
 - Likelihood of industry-based competency success
 - Readiness for continued engagement in Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator program of study
- Pathway 4: Alternative Assessment (One of the following)
 - Meet or exceed any one of the established scores on one alternative assessment
 - ACT (21)
 - ASVAB AFQT (31)
 - PSAT/NMSQT (970)
 - SAT (1010)
 - Attainment of 3 or higher on AP Exam(s) related to each Keystone content area in which less than proficient
 - Successful completion of dual enrollment course(s) related to each Keystone content area in which less than proficient
 - Successful completion of a pre-apprenticeship program
 - Acceptance into a four-year institution of Higher Education for college-level coursework
- Pathway 5: Evidence-Based

- One of more from this list:
 - Attainment of 3 or higher on any AP Exam
 - Successful completion of any dual enrollment or post-secondary course
 - Industry recognized credentialization
 - Acceptance into another-than-four-year institution of Higher Education for college-level coursework
- AND, two of the following:
 - Attainment of proficient or advanced on any Keystone Exam
 - Successful completion of a service-learning project
 - Letter guaranteeing full-time employment
 - Completion of an Internship, Externship, or cooperative education program

Grading Scale/Calculations

- For students in grades 1-12, letter grades will be assigned to student marking period grades based on the following scale:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
93% to 100%	A	4
86% to 92%	B	3
78% to 85%	C	2
70% to 77%	D	1
up to 70%	F	0

- Percentage grades are not rounded for the purposes of calculating passing scores. For example, a 69.9% does not round up to a passing score. Students must earn a full 70% of available points in a class to be considered passing for the entire course.
- Final grades for classes will be calculated using an average of their marking period point values. The four marking period grades are each 25% of the yearly grade.
 - Example: A student earns MP grades of 86 (B=3pts), 83 (C=2pts), 92 (B=3pts), 95 (A=4pts).
 $(MP1 + MP2 + MP3 + MP4)/4$
 $(3 + 2 + 3 + 4)/4 = 12/4 = 3$
 3pts converts to a B, so the final grade for the course is a B
- For the purposes of course final grade calculations, partial grades ≥ 0.5 will round up to the next grade. For example, 3.6 = 4(A), 2.5 = 3(B), etc. The exception is in the calculation of passing scores. Students cannot round up to a passing score. An average of 1.0 is required to pass a class (0.6, 0.7, etc are not considered passing averages).
- If, due to transfer or other reasons, a student is missing some component of their final course grades (i.e., a marking period or semester exam score is missing), the final course grade will be calculated without the missing grades, and the missing percentage of the final score distributed among the grades that are present. Adjustments will be made so that marking period grades are valued at twice the value of semester exams.

Grade Point Average/Class Rank

- A Grade Point Average (GPA) will be calculated annually for all students in grades 9-12. The GPA is a weighted average of the point values (see table above) of all final course grades earned for high school classes. For this calculation, each course grade is translated into its corresponding grade point value (A=4pts, B=3pts, C=2pts, D=1pt, F=0pts). This point value is multiplied times the credit value of a course. All the resulting values are added together and the total is divided by the number of credits attempted for that year. The resulting value is the student's GPA.

Example:

Couse Name	Credit Value	Student Grade	Grade Points	Weighted Grade Points
Algebra 1	1.0	92	3	3x1.0 = 3.0
English 9	1.0	94	4	4x1.0 = 4.0
US History 2	1.0	87	3	3x1.0 = 3.0
Biology	1.0	83	2	2x1.0 = 2.0
Wellness	0.5	98	4	4x0.5 = 2.0
General Art	0.5	91	3	3x0.5 = 1.5
Band	0.5	99	4	<u>4x0.5 = 2.0</u>
Total Credits	5.5		Total Points	17.5

$$\text{Grade Point Average (GPA)} = 17.5/5.5 = 3.182$$

- A similar calculation is conducted for all classes a student takes in high school. This is considered a student's high school GPA. This GPA is reported to colleges for students when they graduate.
- AP/Honors Courses – Students enrolled in AP/Honors courses will be eligible to earn honors points for their classes. All grades of A, B, or C in an Honors/AP class will be awarded an extra grade point (A=5pts, B=4pts, C=3pts, D=1pt, F=0pts) for all GPA and class rank calculations.
- **Dual Enrollment Course** – Any class taken under an approved Dual Enrollment agreement will be credited as 0.5 Elective credits. Grades of A, B, or C in Dual Enrollment courses will also be awarded honors points (A=5pts, B=4pts, C=3pts, D=1pt, F=0pts) for all GPA and class rank calculations.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Guidelines

In order to be eligible for consideration as Valedictorian/Salutatorian, a student must have been enrolled at SVRCS continuously from the state of their Junior year. Any calculation for this purpose will include only classes taken after the start of ninth grade, and will be finalized based on grades at the end of the 3rd MP of senior year. In order for grades from dual enrollment or online coursework to be included in Valedictorian calculations, final grades must be submitted to the **Secondary Administrator no later than May 20th of a student's** senior year.

- If **exactly one student** has earned a grade of "A" in all of their courses during high school **and has had at least one Honors/AP class**, that student will be declared the Valedictorian.
- If **multiple students** have earned a grade of "A" in all their courses during high school **and have had at least one Honors/AP class**, the student in that group who has earned the most Honors/AP credits will be declared the Valedictorian. If there is a tie among this group for the largest number of Honors/AP classes, then those students will be declared Co-Valedictorians.

- If **no students** have earned a grade of “A” in all of their courses during high school **and have had at least one Honors/AP Class**, then the student with the highest Weighted GPA (calculated to 4 decimal places) will be declared the valedictorian. In the event of a tie for the highest Weighted GPA, then Co-Valedictorians will be awarded.

Following the selection of the Valedictorian, the Salutatorian will be selected using the same process as above. If Co-Valedictorians are awarded by the process above, then no Salutatorian is awarded.

Upon completion of the above process, the remainder of the class ranking is determined by using the students’ Weighted GPA.

Academic Progress/Promotion (Grades 7-12)

SVRCS K-12 Continuum stresses five phases rather than the thirteen traditional “grades.” However, we are still required to report our student progress to PDE in the traditional grades K-12. For this reason, the following policy has been established concerning grade level promotion at the secondary level.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GRADE LEVEL PROGRESSION

Phase IV, Grade 7 – Student is required to have successfully completed the 6th Grade

Phase IV, Grade 8 – Student is required to have passed at least two 7th Grade core content area courses. Any core content classes that are failed, must be made up either during the following summer or during activity periods the following year. Any core content classes not passed in Grade 7 must be made up before the end of 8th grade.

Phase V, Grade 9 – Student is required to have passed all 7th Grade core content courses and to have passed at least two 8th Grade core content courses. Any core content classes that are failed must be made up either during the following summer or during activity periods the following year. Any core content classes not passed in Grade 8 must be made up before the end of 9th grade.

Phase V, Grade 10 – Student is required to have passed all 8th Grade core content area courses and to have accumulated a minimum of 6 Secondary Credits

Phase V, Grade 11 – Student is required to have accumulated a minimum of 13 Secondary Credits

Phase V, Grade 12 – Student is required to have accumulated a minimum of 19.5 Secondary Credits

Core content areas include – Math, Science, English (ELA), Social Studies

Mid-term Progress Reports/ Report Cards

- Mid-marking period reports will be sent home to the parents/guardians of secondary students to keep them informed of each child’s progress.
- Each mid-marking period report has a page for parent/guardian signature that needs to be returned to school as soon as the report has been reviewed.
- It is the responsibility of students and parents/guardians, as well as teachers and administrators to monitor individual student progress.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your child’s grades, homework, or academic development please contact the appropriate teacher as soon as possible.
- Report cards are issued four times per school year or every nine weeks.
- Report cards and diplomas will be held at the end of the year if a student has outstanding accounts or school materials that have not been returned. This includes textbooks, library books, past-due lunch balances, and equipment.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of the total instructional program at SVRCS. Teachers take their responsibility seriously to assign meaningful work, and therefore, expect students to complete the assignments carefully and completely. A Homework Page for each teacher can be found on the school's website at www.svrCS.org and/or instructor's wikispace page. The SVRCS Home/School Contract specifies that parents/guardians spend at least 20 minutes daily with their students reviewing homework and discussing readings and current events.

Homework Requests

Parents may call the school to request homework when their child is absent for **more than one day**. In order to give teacher's time to complete the information requests must be called in before 9:00a.m. and may be picked up in the office between 3:00-3:30p.m.

Tutoring

Individual help for students is available before, during, and after the school day by appointment with the teachers. All SVRCS students are encouraged to make use of this valuable opportunity offered to them for additional help. SVRCS provides additional help to students in the after-school program on Tuesdays and Thursday afternoons from 3:15-4:30 beginning in the fall and continuing until spring. Grades 4-12 are invited to take part in this program. If you desire tutoring for your child, please contact the school administrators to arrange for this help. Tutoring dates for the 2025-2026 school years are **September 24th thru May 1st**.

Title I School, Parent, and Family Engagement Policy

Significant research exists describing the positive impact on student achievement resulting from meaningful parental/guardian involvement. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School encourages active involvement of all parents/guardians in the education of their children. To specifically encourage parental/guardian involvement in the Title I program, the following activities will be offered by the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School:

1. An annual meeting of the Title I parents/guardians **will be held at convenient time, with flexibility**, to inform parents/guardians of their schools' participation in Title I, to explain the Title I Parental/Guardian Involvement Policy, and to review parent/guardians' rights to be involved in Title I activities.
2. An opportunity will be provided to Title I parents/guardians to become involved in Title I planning, review, and improvement efforts.
3. Parents/guardians of the Title I children should be provided with timely information about Title I programs, school and individual assessment information and results, including explanation of those results, information about curriculum and the levels students are expected to achieve, opportunities for regular meetings related to the education of their children, timely responses to parent/guardian inquiries and suggestions.
4. Parent/guardian and school staff, when appropriate, will annually review the home/school contract. This contract details how parents/guardians, staff, and students share responsibility for improved student achievement.
5. Parents/guardians will be provided with opportunities to improve their own skills so that they may effectively work with their children to improve achievement.
6. Opportunities for Title I parental involvement activities will be coordinated and integrated with those opportunities offered through other programs to the extent feasible and appropriate.

Accessibility

SVRCS will ensure that the information related to the school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents and family members of participating children in a format and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and family members can understand.

Course Selection and Drop/Add

- Secondary students may drop/add courses by talking to the scheduling personnel.
- Changes in schedules must be with permission of parent/guardian and approval by the SVRCS Administrators.
- If students choose to drop/add a class they are required to do so no later than 3 school calendar days of the start of the class for each semester

Kindergarten Enrollment

A child is eligible for Kindergarten when he or she has attained the age of five (5) years on or before the first day of September. A child who is 4.7 years on or before the first day of September may be eligible for Kindergarten. The child must meet the following criteria to enroll.

- Pass the SVRCS Kindergarten diagnostic screening
- Receive administrative approval

Beginning July 1st of each school year early-entry Kindergarten students (younger than 5 years old), may be admitted to SVRCS only after all 5-year old Kindergarten students have been admitted. If a Kindergarten lottery is required, students will be slotted on the wait list according to SVRCS Board Policy 820 (Admission of Students and Lottery Process).

The CEO shall require that each student who registers for entrance to school exhibit his/her birth certificate or similar documentation as proof of age and birth date, proof of residency, and proof of appropriate and current immunizations.

Residency

In all instances where residency is questioned by the school or district, the burden of proving residence shall lie with the person claiming residence.

Compulsory School Attendance Law

Children reach compulsory school age once they enter school and must attend school until their 18th birthday or graduation from high school.

ATTENDANCE

The Attendance Policy is available in the Main Office on campus.

School day starts at 7:40am. Students may begin arrive at 7:30am when being dropped off by a parent/guardian to the MPR breakfast. Before this time parents/guardians are responsible for the care of their child/children.

Excused Absences

Every SVRCS day is a valuable day. Interaction with teachers and classmates makes each day a unique learning opportunity. Regular attendance will aid students in successful academic work. If a student must be absent these procedures must be followed:

- SVRCS must have a **written** parent/guardian confirmation excuse for all absences the day the student returns to school. (No more than three days after the date of absence.)
- Parents/Guardians may photograph the doctor's excuse and email it to **attendance@svrcs.org**.
- If no written excuse is received in the office by the third day, the student is considered **unexcused**. This applies even if a student has visited a physician or is under a doctor's care.
- Following ten cumulative days of absence of any kind, a doctor's excuse is required for all absences. Any absence of greater than ten days without a doctor's excuse will be considered unlawful.

- SVRCS may contact appropriate individuals to verify excuses. Only information related to the absence will be requested during these contacts.
- The law stipulates that the following reasons are considered to be **excused absences**:
 - Illness of the student
 - Death in the immediate family (Immediate family member defined as parent, sibling, grandparent or near relative who lives in the same household) (3 days)
 - Quarantine
 - Emergency directly affecting the student
 - Recovery from an accident or surgery
 - Court requirements
 - Religious holidays
 - Educational trips (**Educational trips will be approved to a maximum of 7 days within the school year, any requests that exceed 7 days will be and become an unexcused absence.** Trips will **not** be approved during the **PSSA** for grades 3-8 based on the current year's testing window and during the **Keystone** testing window)
 - Out of school suspensions
 - Proof of attendance for PA Driver's Examination
- Any student participating in an extra-curricular activity on a given school day must be in attendance by 11:30 am in order to practice or participate. Also, if the activity is on a Saturday (such as Prom) or Sunday, they must be in school by 11:30 am on the Friday prior to the activity.
- Only those students emancipated by the court may sign their own excuses, permission slips, and departures from school.

Unexcused Absences

The Pennsylvania law stipulates that the following reasons are considered to be **unexcused absences**:

- Vehicle problems
- Vacations
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Helping or caring for family members/ babysitting

Truancy/Habitual Truancy

A student who has **accumulated three or more** unexcused absences will be considered to be **truant** and the following consequences will occur:

- The SVRCS Administration will mail the parent/guardian a letter indicating accrued unexcused absences. This letter will state a meeting date and time for the parent/guardian to attend. Outside agencies may attend the meeting.

As per ACT 138, a student with six (6) or more unexcused absences will be considered **habitually** truant.

At this point the student will be referred to county children and youth agency. A possible citation may be filed with the court.

Excessive Absences in A School Year

- Any student who is absent for the equivalent of 30 or more school days in an individual year will fail all of their full-year classes for that school year. Additionally, students missing the equivalent of 20 or more school days within a given semester will fail all of their semester-length classes for that term.

- The CEO may approve exceptions to this policy for students with extenuating circumstances.

Tardiness

- A student who arrives in homeroom after the 8:05 AM bell will be marked tardy until 9:00 a.m.
- From 9:01am – 11:30am the student is marked half day unexcused absence. From 11:31am to 3:15pm the student is marked full day unexcused.
- Students in grades K-4 who accumulate five (5) tardies will be assigned lunch detention. Students in grades 5-12 will be assigned after school detention.

Make-up Assignments

- All work assigned during the days of absence will be due two class periods from the day of return to school in order to receive credit for the missed work. All tests and quizzes that were missed during the absence are required to be taken during the next scheduled class. If the student chooses not to take the required tests or quizzes, the student will receive a 0%.
- Students who are absent due to trips or foreseen events should coordinate with the appropriate teachers to arrange completion of all work on the **day of return**.
- Parents/guardians should contact the school to request that homework be gathered for students who are absent for **more than two consecutive days**. Parents/guardians are required to pick up assignments or make arrangements for assignments to be sent home for absent students.

Leaving Campus

- A student may not leave the SVRCS campus without written parent/guardian and/or administrative permission.
- If a student must leave campus for a pre-planned school sponsored trip, they must have a permission slip signed by a parent/guardian in advance of departure.
- A student who wishes to be transported by another student may only do so with written permission from the driver's parent, passengers' parent, and approval from administration.
- A student who leaves campus without permission may be immediately enrolled in an alternate school. Determination will be made by administration. Law enforcement will be involved.

Sign In/ Sign Out

- Students arriving late must **sign** in at the office.
- Students leaving early must provide a note signed by a parent/guardian to the office. This note must be turned in before the first period of the day.

Telephone Calls

- Students may use the SVRCS phones only with permission from an Administrator.
- SVRCS will make every effort to communicate messages to students during the day, unless the message is an emergency, we will not interrupt the instructional period.

Electronics

- When approved in advance by an SVRCS Administrator, pagers and beepers legitimately required of EMT, emergency, paramedic, and fire personnel are permitted.
- SVRCS is not responsible if these items are brought to school and are stolen or lost.

Electronic Communication and Listening Device Procedure

SVRCS acknowledges that electronic communication devices are beneficial when used for educational purposes. However, we also believe that ordinary use of these devices can be highly disruptive to the educational process which is not acceptable.

All student electronic communication and listening devices will not be permitted to be used or seen at any time during their eight-period class schedule. All electronic communication and listening devices will be put away, unseen, and unused during this time. Students may use their electronic communication and listening devices during morning homeroom, during the 3-minute time period in between classes and during their lunch period (grades 9-12 lunch only). **Also, no pictures or videos may be taken of any student or SVRCS staff member without their consent.**

If these devices are used inappropriately, **teachers will place a call to an Administrator to deal with the cell phone violation.** Teachers will continue to use incident reports for students who fail to comply with directives given. Teachers can determine if electronic devices will be used within their classroom for educational purposes.

No cell phones, smart watches or any other electronic device are permitted to be with students during the standardized testing periods by state law.

Unapproved cell phone use will result in a disciplinary action of automatic after-school detention.

Computer and Internet Acceptable Use

All students and their parents/guardians are required to sign an Internet Acceptable Use Policy upon enrolling in the school. All students are required to adhere to this policy at all times or face forfeiture of computer access privileges. Students who lose privileges must still fulfill the requirements of all their coursework.

By agreeing to allow your child to use technology (i.e. Chromebooks) provided by SVRCS, you provide consent for your student to engage with educational content through Google Workspace Apps, as well as partners at third party educational companies (including, but not limited to Savvas Learning Company, McGraw-Hill Education, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, NWEA, IXL, Discovery Education). For more information, contact SVRCS."

Automobiles/ Parking Lots

Driving to school at SVRCS is a privilege. If a student is unable to adhere to the driving policy the result will be loss or suspension of driving privileges on campus.

- Any student who drives to school must register the car with the office and park in the designated parking area.
- For safety reasons students may **NOT** go to their car or be in the parking lot during the school day without permission and a signed pass from an Administrator.
- Those students who drive to school are **NOT** permitted to leave the school campus until after all of the busses have departed at the end of the school day.
- Vehicles parked on school property are subject to search by SVRCS Administrators. (See also *Search and Seizure*)
- Vehicles should travel at a speed no faster than 5 MPH.
- Students who drive to school are prohibited from driving other students, unless it is an immediate family member, without a note of permission from the parent/guardian of the student being transported and the parent of the driver.

Bus Transportation

Students may not be transported on any district bus other than their own. If students are wishing to be transported on another bus within their district a note from home is required from the child's parent and the parent where the child will be going after school. Drivers will not transport students without an authorized note signed by administration.

Bus Video Surveillance

SVRCS authorizes the use of video surveillance on all school transportation vehicles. The use of video recording supports efforts to maintain discipline and to ensure the safety and security of the students and staff being transported on school transportation vehicles.

Bus Discipline

Students who are unable to maintain appropriate behavior and follow the bus rules on district buses will be removed. Transportation is a privilege, not a right. If an issue warrants the administration to collaborate with the home district, a student may be removed from transportation for the remainder of the school year. The consequences will match the offense. If a student is removed from transportation, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make transportation arrangements.

Search and Seizure

All school property is subject to search by SVRCS Administration. Lockers, backpacks, purses, vehicles parked on SVRCS property, and other personal belongings of an SVRCS student may be searched if the SVRCS Administrators have reason to believe that such belongings contain alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illicit drugs, or weapons. Additionally, lockers may be searched on a random basis, without notice and without consent. (See also *Use of Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs*)

The school has the right to utilize drug dogs for needed sweeps of the school campus.

Public Displays of Affection

Public displays of affection {other than holding hands} are not permitted on SVRCS school grounds or at SVRCS sponsored events.

Cheating/ Plagiarism

Cheating, dishonesty, and plagiarism in any form are contrary to the philosophy of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School. Students found guilty of cheating, or of helping others to cheat, will not receive credit for work done or will not be permitted to make up the work unless determined by the classroom teacher. Parents/guardians will be notified if their child is found guilty of cheating or helping others to cheat.

Definitions of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. **Intentional plagiarism** occurs when a student knowingly submits someone else's words or ideas as if they were his/her own. **Unintentional plagiarism** occurs when writers and researchers use the words or ideas of others but fail to quote or give credit (perhaps because they don't know how). When in doubt, students must check with a teacher.

- A. Examples of plagiarism may include but are not limited to:
 - 1) purchasing or copying work produced by others (homework, reports, take-home exams, tests, research papers, music, art, images, etc.)
 - 2) direct copying ("cutting and pasting") of selected sections (words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs) from another source without quotation marks and/or documentation.
 - 3) paraphrasing, summarizing, or otherwise rewording another's original work that is not common knowledge without documentation.

4) failing to document the use of charts, graphs, diagrams, statistics, or other materials not created or compiled by the student.

5) Working together on an independent assignment and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work.

6) fabricating data or in any way falsifying the results of an experiment or inquiry process.

Dress Code

SVRCS believes the standards of neatness and appropriateness in clothing encourages an atmosphere conducive to learning and work. Respect for school, others, and self is influenced by appearance. There are many ways of dressing outside school which are appropriate, fun, and creative, however these may not be appropriate to the school setting. Since SVRCS has students enrolled in grades K-12, what may seem appropriate to older students may not be appropriate for younger students. By enrolling at SVRCS, students and their parents/guardians have accepted the rules governing dress and have agreed to abide by the following policy.

- No shorts, or skirts that are shorter than fingertip (hands at the sides) length/mid-thigh.
- **Pajama pants, crop tops, and spaghetti straps are not permitted.**
- Students will not wear clothing with slogans and/or logos that are disrespectful and/or offensive to others or promote drug/alcohol use or abuse.
- Hoods, sweatbands, and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building.
- Clothing must be worn in the way that it is intended to be worn or used.
- Tank tops straps need to be at **least two inches in width.**
- Leggings are permitted with skirts or shorts that meet the dress code criteria.
- Students' undergarments must be completely covered by appropriate clothing at all times.
- **Any item of clothing or inappropriate dress as deemed by the SVRCS administration, requires a call home to parents/guardians for a change of clothing to be brought to school.**
- Blankets should not be brought on the bus or to school.
- The above standard of dress apply at all school events and activities.

Threats/ Harassment / Bullying (including Cyber Bullying)

Any statement that could be construed as a threat to life or safety, even in jest, will be dealt with immediately and consequences will be issued. Harassment is defined as behavior that is unwelcome, is offensive, and consists of objectionable conduct or comments that demeans, intimidates, or humiliates another person. The person committing the act knows, or reasonably should know, that his/her behavior is unwelcome. Harassment may include the misuse of authority, intimidation, threats, coercion and blackmail; it may be either personal or sexual in nature. Some examples of inappropriate behaviors are:

- Unacceptable remarks about body shape
- Jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment
- Gender-based insults or sexist remarks
- Derogatory or patronizing name-calling
- Racial slurs
- Verbal threats or abuse
- Persistent and unwelcome flirting
- Unwanted hugging or cornering
- Any behavior that adversely affects a person's security or ability to work or study
- Any behavior that belittles, intimidates, or humiliates another person

- If your child feels as if he/she has been harassed, please contact a teacher or administrator as soon as possible.

Bullying - Unwelcomed intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts directed at another student or students, or by an adult, which occurs in a school setting or during any school-related/sponsored activity. If these acts are severe, persistent or pervasive, and have the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Physically harming a student.
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's person or academic property.
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal or academic property.
5. Systematically and intentionally excluding a student from activities with peers.
6. Spreading false information about a student or attempting to influence other to exclude a student from an activity.
7. Otherwise creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school, whether or not the act of bullying occurs at school.

Bullying occurs when there is an imbalance of physical, psychological, or social power between the aggressor and the victim, favoring the aggressor. Bullying is most often a series of aggressive acts as described above. Bullying as defined includes cyber bullying.

Within this packet we have included an anti-bullying pledge that students will sign and return to the school.

Video Surveillance Cameras

Surveillance cameras are located throughout the campus to support our efforts to maintain a safe and secure school environment, while protecting individuals and their property from harm. Video surveillance may be used on proceedings related to law enforcement for purposes authorized by school policy, the School Code and related laws. Students observed by video surveillance in acts which break school policy, procedures, or disciplinary guidelines will be subject to the consequences and sanctions imposed for violating those policies, procedures or disciplinary guidelines. Video surveillance footage may not be accessed by parents/public due to FERPA regulations.

Fighting/ Violence

Students have the choice to walk away in many situations involving fighting or violence. A student should report the incident immediately to a teacher or Administrator. If a student retaliates, he/she is involving himself/herself in an incident that will result in disciplinary actions. It must be clearly understood that SVRCS Administration and Staff do not advocate the philosophy of retaliation and ask parents/guardians to discuss with their children appropriate ways to handle conflict situations.

Any student who witnesses a fight should report the incident immediately. Any fighting on school grounds will result in immediate removal of all parties from campus. Following the investigation of the incident, disciplinary actions will take place. Law enforcement may become involved.

Any SVRCS student found possessing a weapon, firearm or other explosive device on the SVRCS campus will be subject to immediate dismissal (see also *Discipline Policy*).

Prohibition of Weapons in the School

Students have the right to obtain education and school personnel have the right to work in a safe, healthy, danger-free environment. In order for SVRCS to continue to provide as safe a school environment as possible, the following prohibition of weapons in the school policy will be enforced by the administration.

- Weapons and replicas of weapons are forbidden on school property. School property means the school, school grounds, school buses, or any premises, grounds, or vehicle used for official school purposes.
- Weapons include, but are not limited to, any type of firearm, knife, metal knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nun chuck sticks, straight razors, explosives, firecrackers, noxious, irritating or poisonous gases, poisons, slingshots, hand held lasers, and any other tool, instrument, implement or chemical capable of inflicting serious bodily injury or death. The foregoing does not apply to any object which is specifically authorized by school officials.
- A student is deemed to be in possession of any illegal and/or banned item(s) under this policy when such item(s) is found on the person of the student, or under his/her control, on property being used by the school or at any school function, or activity, or any school event held away from the school.
- Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted. The CEO may authorize other persons to possess weapons in school buildings for educational purposes. The CEO may prescribe special conditions or procedures to be followed before giving such authorization.

Use of Tobacco/Drugs/Alcohol/Powder Alcohol Products

Any form of abuse pertaining to alcohol, drugs, and other substances is a social problem of great concern to SVRCS. Since such abuse continues to be a problem for many adults, it is not surprising that their use can be a problem for young people. Students are faced with issues of drug and alcohol use at an early age, and students at SVRCS are not immune to these challenges. The purchase of tobacco products by a person under the age of 21 is illegal. The use of alcohol under the age of 21 is illegal in Pennsylvania. The use of illicit drugs is illegal regardless of age. SVRCS fully endorses the legal and ethical sanctions against the use of alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco of minors. SVRCS Administration and staff will cooperate fully with law enforcement and juvenile authorities in relation to these concerns.

- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages, illicit drugs, and tobacco in any form (cigarettes including electronic forms and chewing tobacco) by a SVRCS student on the SVRCS campus, school bus, school vehicle or at an SVRCS sponsored off-campus event is prohibited.
- Any SVRCS student, regardless of age, who uses and/or possesses illegal drugs and/or misuses legal (including prescription) drugs or alcohol and any synthetic drugs on SVRCS property or at an SVRCS sponsored off-campus event should expect police involvement and dismissal/expulsion from school.
- Parents/guardians should expect the school to be concerned when a student at any time is abusing substances or using alcohol. Any action taken by the SVRCS Administrators will only be taken after careful consideration has been given to the effect such action (or lack of action) shall have upon the school and the possibility of danger posed to others.
- Students who are found with illegal substance/paraphernalia will be referred to the Student Assistance Program.

Field Trip Participation Guidelines

Students will not be excluded from educational trips that are part of the SVRCS curriculum unless the Administration determines otherwise. In order to participate in the field trip, a written permission slip must be completed in full and signed by a parent/guardian and returned to school in the allotted time. Students choosing not to attend class field trips will remain at school and be given an alternative assignment from teachers that will be graded.

After School Detention

When an SVRCS Student is assigned to an after-school detention, the student reports to room D114 at dismissal. The student will work on assignments during this time. At 4:430pm a parent/guardian must pick the student from school. Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:15pm – 4:30pm are the times after school detention occurs.

In-School Suspension

When an SVRCS student is assigned an in-school suspension/exclusion, the student is removed from classes and all school activities for the day, including any extracurricular activities for the duration of the exclusion period.

Out of School Suspension

When an SVRCS student is suspended, he/she is removed from classes and all school activities for the day(s) and evening events. The suspended student is responsible for obtaining and completing ALL work missed during the suspension. The student's work should be completed and submitted to the teacher at the beginning of the first class upon return to school. The student is obligated to report a suspension to other schools, colleges, and agencies if asked.

Discipline Policy

SVRCS students are expected to maintain a high level of self-discipline and respect for themselves and others. SVRCS discipline is enhanced by a strong partnership between parents/guardians and teachers. Cooperation produces the most effective outcome for the child. Parent/guardian support and trust in the expertise and professional background of our faculty and staff are expected and needed for the most effective experience for your child.

The Administration and Staff believe that students have reached a level of maturity at which they can be held accountable for their actions. Proper conduct is expected at school. It is a serious offense to disobey or be rude to anyone on campus including staff, fellow students, teachers, and visitors.

Students who have been removed from their peers will continue to be responsible for all class work and will be referred to the appropriate Administrator for disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to the leveled consequences as per the Student Incident Report shown on the following page.

NOTES: Actions within each level will be taken at the discretion of the SVRCS Administration. The SVRCS Administrative team reserves the right to move actions to a higher level based on the severity of the infraction and the age and maturity level of the student. It is the policy of SVRCS to act in accordance with the federal and state regulations regarding discipline for students with disabilities. The presence of an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for a student however, does not excuse him/her from their academic efforts and behavioral responsibilities. Special needs students are expected to comply with the SVRCS code of conduct along with their regular education peers. In situations where there are questions regarding possible conflicts between a student's (IEP) and an issue of discipline, the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are welcome to consult with the Director of Support Services to discuss their concerns. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved then information will be provided to assist the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) in accessing educational advocates



Sugar Valley Rural Charter School Student Incident Report

Student Name: _____ Grade/Teacher: _____

Time of Incident: _____ Date of Incident: _____ Referred By: _____

Location: <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Specials Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Locker <input type="checkbox"/> MPR <input type="checkbox"/> Hallway <input type="checkbox"/> Gym <input type="checkbox"/> Recess <input type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Stairwells <input type="checkbox"/> Restroom <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Level One Incident: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cutting Class <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone Violation <input type="checkbox"/> Vulgar Language <input type="checkbox"/> Class Disruption <input type="checkbox"/> Insubordination <input type="checkbox"/> Acts to Endanger Self or Others </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/Teasing/Verbal Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Code Violation <input type="checkbox"/> Bus Rule Violation <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to do/complete homework <input type="checkbox"/> Theft <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting/Kicking Another Student or Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Cheating/Plagiarism <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ </div> </div>	
Level Two Incident: - State Reporting <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simple Assault on Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Obscene & other sexual materials & performances <input type="checkbox"/> Indecent Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/Ethnic Intimidation <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment of student on student <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting <input type="checkbox"/> Threatening School Official/Student </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disorderly Conduct <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber Bullying/Harassment of Student <input type="checkbox"/> Possession of Knife <input type="checkbox"/> Possession of other Weapon <input type="checkbox"/> Possession/Use of a Controlled Substance <input type="checkbox"/> Possession/Use of, or Sale of Tobacco <input type="checkbox"/> Possession/Use of, or Sale of Vaping Materials <input type="checkbox"/> Sale/Distribution of a Controlled Substance <input type="checkbox"/> Sale, Possession, Use, or Under the Influence of Alcohol </div> </div>	
Disciplinary Action: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Warning <input type="checkbox"/> Written Apology <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch Detention: Date _____ <input type="checkbox"/> After School Detention: Date _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Restitution/Restoration/Victim Awareness </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Removed from Transportation - Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral Management Plan/Contract <input type="checkbox"/> In School Suspension - Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Out of School Suspension - Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of Indepth Intervention Program <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Expulsion/Formal Hearing </div> </div>	
Parental Involvement: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written Notification <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call – Date Called: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Dojo Message Sent <input type="checkbox"/> Email </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> School Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ </div> </div>	
Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone: _____	

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____

HOME/SCHOOL CONTRACT

We believe:

- That the school and the community can educate each child.
- That the education of each child is the shared responsibility of the entire school community: parents/guardians, teachers, school staff, local businesses and service organizations.
- That the parents/guardians can provide support in the education of their children.
- That each child can use her/his education as a vehicle toward lifelong learning.
- That both the school and community can provide role models for effective social and academic excellence.
- That the school and community can provide a safe environment free of drugs, alcohol and violence.

The student will:

- Come to school prepared to learn.
- Arrive on time with books, materials and supplies.
- Show respect for him/herself by respecting others.
- Participate in community service activities.
- Complete all assigned homework.
- Ask for additional help when it is needed.
- Participate in class activities

The Parents/Guardians will:

- Encourage their child to stay in school.
- Volunteer at least twenty (20) hours of service each year to the school (e.g., school lunches, school programs, field trips, school dinners, classroom instruction, maintenance and cleaning of the school). Volunteers must have clearances.
- Be an enthusiastic participant in their child's learning.
- Spend at least 20 minutes daily with the student reviewing homework and discussing readings and current events.
- Attend parent/guardian-student-teacher conferences.
- Work with teachers to ensure consistency with home/school rules and policies and to enhance students' continuous success and growth.
- Participate in Sugar Valley Rural Charter School social functions.
- Support teachers in their efforts to educate students.
- Ensure their child arrives on time, fed, properly clothed and prepared to learn.
- Discuss with teachers any problems the student may be having at home that might affect school performance.
- Notify the school if their child will be absent and provide any documentation requested by SVRCS.
- Return all necessary forms and documents to the school completed and on time.
- Assist in correcting any behavior/discipline problems identified by the school.
- Visit the school/classroom as frequently as possible, especially if the teacher communicates the need for a meeting.
- Ensure their child respects school materials and property.
- Make restitution for any damages to school materials and property caused by the child.
- Ensure their child does not bring destructive materials to school.
- Ensure their child does not bring weapons or any objects that could be used as a weapon to school
- Ensure their child remains drug and alcohol free.

The Teachers/School Community will:

- Recognize that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children.
- Provide a curriculum that is relevant, emphasizes critical thinking skills, utilizes technology and prepares students for the social interactions they will meet in future employment.
- Support parents/guardians in their efforts to raise their child to be responsible, productive and competent.
- Recognize that each student has individual needs.
- Inform parents/guardians of available school and community resources.
- Make every reasonable effort to accommodate parents/guardians for conferences and meetings.
- Publicly recognize student and parent/guardians' accomplishments
- Constructively document problem behaviors in order to report accurately to parents/guardians.

Your student's continuous enrollment in the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School is dependent upon collaboration between school and home and the adherence of all family members and educators to the items in this contract. By reading this document you are acknowledging your roles and responsibilities in your student's education.

SVRCS Code of Conduct

Sugar Valley Rural Charter School intends to provide an orderly environment conducive to learning and based on principles of student and parent involvement and participation, personal responsibility, respect for others and good citizenship. Ongoing disruptive behavior on the part of one student is an infringement on the rights of other students. Therefore, the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School has adopted the following Code of Conduct:

1. We will respect individuals, families and cultures by acknowledging the rights and opinions of others.
2. We will celebrate one's own heritage and roots.
3. We will develop personal, social, and civic responsibilities.
4. We will strive for the highest character, integrity, and honesty.
5. We will do our best to help each other achieve our goals and dreams.
6. We will instill the merits of collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork.
7. We will uphold the highest expectations and standards.
8. We will provide the models for truth, justice, and freedom.
9. We will maintain a high level of excellence in what we do.
10. We will encourage the qualities of civility, kindness and support in community-oriented activities.

Anti-Bullying Pledge

We will not accept bullying at our school.

Our goal is to create a safe, caring, respectful school.

We agree that it is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying.

It is up to us to make sure that bullying does not happen.

WE WILL:

- **Treat others with fairness and respect.**
- **Find ways to help others join games and other activities.**
- **Speak out against bullying.**
- **Refuse to let others be bullied.**
- **Report bullying to an adult.**
- **Refuse to bully others.**
- **Be responsible bystanders who are part of the solution.**
- **Help others feel safe and comfortable at our school.**

SVRCS
Student/Guardian Signature Page
2025-2026

The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School requires all parents/guardians living in the home with the student to read and discuss all appropriate portions of this handbook with the student. All parents/guardians and students must sign and return this page, signifying that they have read and fully understand the school's policies and procedures. **Please review this handbook, remove this page, sign and return to student's homeroom teacher.**

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
(please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
(please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name: _____
(please print)

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Please review this handbook, remove this page, sign and return to
student's homeroom teacher.**

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Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____