



## 2023-2024 Ventnor Middle School

### Falcon Code of Conduct

**DISCIPLINE:** Discipline is everyone's responsibility. Any disciplinary action taken by a school official is intended to affect a favorable change in student behavior. We provide an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and one which encourages proper conduct – in other words, “Students are here to learn”.

Our Code of Conduct outlines the basic expectations of each student and includes the following:

**Yellow Flag Offense (1-Letter):** Prior to sending an initial yellow flag referral to the office, the teacher will attempt the following interventions:

#### **First Violation-**

- a. The teacher will instruct the student about the code of conduct that was violated and how the student can correct the behavior in the future. The student will also be informed by the teacher at this time that his/her parent/guardian will be notified the next time a yellow flag code of conduct is violated.

#### **Second Violation-**

- b. The teacher will again instruct the student about which code of conduct was violated and what is expected with future behavior.
- c. To the best of the teacher’s ability, he/she will make an attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone to inform him/her that a yellow flag code of conduct has been violated. At this time, (no matter when the violation occurs,) the teacher will also inform the parent/guardian that any future yellow flag code of conduct violation will result in a yellow flag referral to the office.
- d. A copy/summary of the above parent/guardian notification will be forwarded to the middle school principal by email. This will be used as supporting documentation in any future communication with the parent/guardian in the event that a yellow flag referral is submitted later in the year.

***I will act appropriately so teachers can teach, and students can learn.***

**Essential Question:** *Does what I am about to do affect the teacher’s ability to teach or the ability of the other students to learn?*

Students demonstrate this code of conduct by:

- a. Arriving to school on time at 8:15am.
  - Students will be allowed 4 unexcused lates per making period. On the 5<sup>th</sup> unexcused late the office will write a referral for that student and the progression of stages described below will be followed for the 5<sup>th</sup> and all other subsequent lates in that marking period
- b. Being where they’re supposed to be, when they’re supposed to be there, and with the materials they’re supposed to have (books, notebooks, pencil/pen, binders, being on time to class, etc.).
- c. Being quiet, cooperative, and productive (i.e., making an effort to complete class work) in class while politely contributing to discussions when appropriate. Chronic failure to complete classwork will result in a yellow flag warning.
- d. Complete homework assignments. Failure to complete 3 homework assignments will result in a yellow flag. Subsequent missing assignments will result in a progressive loss of letters.
- e. Computer is present in school and fully charged.
- f. Students who are absent for an extended period of time must make up their assignments in an appropriate amount of time. Failure to make up their work will result in them receiving a zero for the assignment and a yellow flag referral. Continuing to not make up future assignments will result in receiving a yellow flag and progressive loss of letters.

- g. Keeping hands, feet, and objects away from other students even when playing.
- h. Acting appropriately in the hallway, at lunch, at recess, in assemblies, class trips, and anything else that occurs outside of the classroom.
- i. Following Bullying Rules: State person's name and behavior that is bothersome; tell the person to stop the behavior; get help from an adult.
- j. Following written and verbal directions issued by supervising adults in a polite and courteous manner.
- k. Obeying all school policies, procedures, and rules.
- l. Not chewing gum, eating food, or drinking beverages in the classroom (unless otherwise directed by a supervising adult.)
- m. Returning important documents (report cards, interims, ID forms, etc.) by the designated date.
- n. Reporting vandalism/graffiti in any bathroom.
- o. Attending Academic Afterschool if required.

**Consequences for violating this code of conduct within a marking period:**

**First Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified.
- 1-letter is taken, or 10 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost.
- 1-lunch detention is assigned.
- 1 after school detention is assigned.

**Second Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified.
- 1-letter is taken, or 10 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost.
- 2-lunch detentions are assigned.
- 2-after school detentions are assigned.

**Electronics Free School Zone Policy:**

Any visible or audible electronic device (cell phone, camera, or any other type of unnecessary electronic device), regardless of whether it is ON or OFF, will be confiscated whether it is on the student's body at the time or in the student's book bag/locker/etc. Any confiscated device and student will be sent immediately to the office, followed by a phone call to the office. A parent/guardian must come into school and pick up the device. Phones may be permitted on field trips or other events at the teachers' discretion and with signed parent permission.

**Smart Watches:**

Wearing a smartwatch to school is a privilege. Smartwatches may be worn only to tell time. If a smartwatch is used for anything other than telling time for example, including but not limited to- using it as a cellular device, looking at pictures, taking pictures, playing a game, recording, texting, the Electronics Free School Policy will apply.

**First Offense:**

- Student will be sent to the office. The electronic device will be confiscated.
- Parent/guardian must come into school to pick up the device.

**Subsequent Offenses:**

- Student will be sent to the office. The electronic device will be confiscated.
- Parent/guardian must come into school to pick up the device.
- Teacher will submit referral (Yellow Flag 1.1)
- Student will lose 1-letter.
- The student will receive automatic 1-day internal suspension.

## **Transportation Policy**

Riding school transportation, whether school provided or on the parent pay bus is a privilege. It is important that students act appropriately on school provided transportation to ensure their safety and the safety of those around them. In the event students misbehave on school provided transportation, the following disciplinary action will be taken-

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Bus Warning and Reg Flag issued- 2 letters lost.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense- 5 Day Bus Suspension and a Red Flag issued- 2 letters lost.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense- 1 Month Bus Suspension and a Red Flag issued- 2 letters lost.

**Red Flag Offense (2-Letters):** *I will respect others, their possessions and school property.*

**Essential Question:** *Does what I am about to do demonstrate respect for others, their possessions, or school property?*

Students demonstrate this code of conduct by:

- a. Using appropriate language and speaking to other students in a respectful and polite manner
- b. Refraining from any type of harassment, intimidation, or bullying related activity (*as per state law- New Jersey P.L.2010, Chapter 122, approved 1/5/2011*) such as but not limited to:
  - name calling or teasing
  - “spinning” or instigating
  - Asking the following questions before commenting about others: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?
- c. Using social media sites responsibly / Cyberbullying
- d. Resolving conflicts with other students through polite dialogue which demonstrates maturity, particularly keeping their hands, feet, and objects away from other students when they are frustrated, aggravated, or upset.
- e. Treating & responding to all staff with respect because they are here to teach, and students are here to learn.
- f. Taking care of school property, the property of other students and refraining from theft.
- g. Refraining from cutting school or cutting class
- h. Chronic violation of dress code (3 times).
- i. Being responsible for the proper care / use of your assigned, school-issued computer, and complying with the district AUP.
- j. Complying with our Academic Honesty Policy (the full policy is described below.)

## **Academic Honesty Policy:**

- a. Utilizing websites appropriately when completing homework or research.
- b. Not passing off someone else’s work as your own. If using other’s work when authorized, properly citing the source, or summarizing the original work.
- c. Not using websites to gain unauthorized answers.
- d. Being honest and accepting of individual responsibility for their decisions, actions, and academics.
- e. Cheating on tests, IXL, Teen-Kid Biz, AR, copying homework, practice assignments will not be tolerated.
- f. Violation of the Academic Honesty Policy by an NJHS student will result in immediate removal from society.
- g. Students who violate this policy during periods of distance learning will receive no credit for the assignment and be referred to the office for the appropriate Red Flag discipline to be applied upon return to school.

## **Consequences for violating 2 Letter Offenses within a marking period:**

### **First Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified.
- 2-letters are taken, or 20 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- 2-lunch detentions are assigned
- 2 after school detentions are assigned.

### **Second Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified.
- 2-letters are taken, or 20 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- 2-lunch detentions are assigned
- 2 after school detentions are assigned.

### **Third Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified and required to come in for conference with principal (and referring teaching if schedule permits)
- 2-letters are taken, or 20 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- 2-Days of External Suspension are assigned

### **Subsequent Violations:**

- Parent/Guardian notified and required to come in for conference with principal and superintendent (and referring teaching if schedule permits)
- 20 days added to ineligible period.
- 4-days External suspension

**3-Letter Offenses:** *Unfortunately, violations can occur in a middle school setting beyond what is described above. When these violations occur, they need to be dealt with more severely because of the implications they can have on others.*

### ***3-Letter Offenses include but are not limited to:***

- a. Any type of major physical contact with the intent to cause bodily harm, such as an actual fight between two or more students.
- b. Sexual harassment or inappropriate contact.
- c. Possession of a dangerous object on school property.
- d. Explosive behavior in the school building that puts teachers or students at risk or causes emotional harm.
- e. The verbal usage of racial slurs, homophobic references, or sexual references.
- f. Behavior that demonstrates a blatant, willful disregard for school policy and procedure.
- g. Use of profanity towards a supervising adult/staff member.
- h. Refusal to turn over cell phone/electronic device.
- i. Repeated Social Media abuse (more than once).
- j. Chronic cutters of detentions (3 or more).

### **Consequences for violating this code of conduct within a marking period:**

#### **First Violation:**

- Parent/Guardian notified and required to come in for conference with principal.
- 3-letters are taken, or 30 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- 3-days External Suspension or greater at discretion of administration

#### **Subsequent Violations:**

- Parent/Guardian notified and required to come in for conference with principal and superintendent.
- 3-letters are taken, or 30 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- 5-days External Suspension or greater at discretion of administration

**4-Letter Major Offenses: *On rare occasions in a middle school setting the most serious of violations can occur.***

***4-Letter Major Offenses include but are not limited to:***

- a. Possession of drugs on school property
- b. Possession of a dangerous object on school property with intent to harm
- c. Sexual assault
- d. Physical contact against a supervising adult/teacher/administrator
- e. Under the influence of illegal substances
- f. Any other extreme circumstance relating to school.
- g. Violation of the district Hazing Policy which includes but is not limited to-

1. "Hazing" means conduct in connection with an initiation of applicants to or members of a student or fraternal organization where a person knowingly or recklessly:

A. Causes, coerces, or otherwise induces another person to commit an act that violates federal or State criminal law;

B. Causes, coerces, or otherwise induces another person to consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, or other substance which subjects the person to a risk of emotional or physical harm or is otherwise deleterious to the person's health;

**Consequences for violating this code of conduct within a marking period:**

- Parent/Guardian notified.
- 4-letters are taken, or 40 days added to ineligible period if all letters are lost
- BOE policy followed.

**Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy (HIB) (NJ P.L.2010, Chapter 122, approved 1/5/2011)**

The policy prohibits harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student. N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(b) (1)

This behavior is strictly enforced!

**Students who are feeling or experiencing harassment, intimidation or bullying should follow these steps:**

- State the person's name loud and clear.
- Clearly state to that person the behavior that he/she is doing that is bothersome.
- Firmly tell that person to stop the behavior.
- If the behavior continues, the victim must remove himself/herself from the situation and get help from an adult.
- Signs are posted in classrooms and in the hallways.

**Parents and Adults**

- HIB forms are available on the website and in the school office.
- Contact the school counselor as soon as possible.
- Fill out HIB forms.

**Chronic Referrals and SIRS (Student Intervention and Referral Services)**

Despite the best efforts of teachers, our FCC policy and administration, some students continue to engage in unproductive behavior. The Ventnor Middle School possesses a SIRS committee in order to develop a plan for students' success and refocuses on learning. Teachers are encouraged to use the SIRS team whenever possible. A teacher who writes up the same child three times is required to complete a referral to the VMS SIRS team.

### **Behavioral Ineligibility Rules:**

Students who become behaviorally ineligible will be so for a period of 1 month from the day they lost their last letter. These students will not be allowed to attend the extravaganza for the marking period in which they become behaviorally ineligible, regardless of when that extravaganza takes place. During their ineligible period they will not be allowed to participate in any activities, attend non-academic assemblies or go on any class/club field trips during the school day.

If a student becomes behaviorally ineligible during a marking period and receives additional write-ups, each subsequent write-up during that marking period would add additional time of ineligibility at a rate of 10-days per letter offense (Yellow Flag = 10 days, Red Flag = 20 days, etc.)

At the start of the next marking period the process starts over, and the student gets 4 more letters. The student, however, may still be behaviorally ineligible at the start of the next marking period if his/her 1 month of ineligibility dictates.

### **Being Behaviorally Ineligible Means:**

- The student cannot attend the extravaganza for the marking period in which they are ineligible regardless of when that extravaganza takes place. For example, if an extravaganza takes place prior to the official end of a marking period and/or before teachers officially enter their grades, the parent portal will be used to determine eligibility prior to this extravaganza.
- The student cannot participate in activities and is immediately removed from the activity's roster.
- The student cannot attend non-academic events.
- The student cannot go on any class/club field trips during the school day.
- The student may not be on school property after school hours without a parent.

### **Attendance Ineligibility Policy:**

Students who are consistently absent from school will face the following interventions and discipline to ensure success.

When a student reaches a total of **5 unexcused absences** the student will become Attendance Ineligible. Being Attendance Ineligible means that-

- Students must attend Academic Afterschool for the remainder of the Marking Period in which they accumulated 5 unexcused absences.
- Students who are Attendance Ineligible may not attend school events such field trips, extravaganzas, or school dances.
- Students must be present in school the day prior to a field trip to attend that trip.

### **Chronic Absences: (Moved to this section)**

- At 5 unexcused absences in the school year- warning letter sent home
- At 10 unexcused absences in the school year – parent/student meeting with the principal
- At 15 unexcused absences in the school year- parent/student meeting with the principal
- At 20 unexcused absences in the school year - truancy papers will be filed with the courts

### **Unexcused Detention Absences:**

Students are expected to attend the detention assigned. In the event that a student is absent for a detention without prior notification, that student will need to make-up that unexcused detention and will be assigned an additional detention.

### **Academic Ineligibility Rules:**

A student will be considered academically ineligible if he/she receives:

- 1 or more F's in any subject at the end of the marking period.
- 3 or more D's in any one marking period in any subject.
- 3 scores of 74 or below on his or her mid-marking period interim.

All Academically Ineligible students will be reevaluated at the next marking period's interim. A student who is Academically Ineligible can regain eligibility by having a grade of 75 or better in the subject(s) that caused ineligibility.

### **Being Academically or Attendance Ineligible Means:**

- The student cannot attend the extravaganza for the marking period in which he/she is ineligible regardless of when that extravaganza takes place. For example, if an extravaganza takes place prior to the official end of a marking period and/or before teachers officially enter their grades, the parent portal will be used to determine eligibility prior to this extravaganza.
- The student cannot begin any activities (sports, clubs, play, etc.)
- The student cannot attend non-academic events.
- The student cannot go on any non-academic class/club field trips during the school day. The grade level teachers will determine if the trip is academic.
- Academically ineligible students, involved in an activity at the time of the interim or report card, may continue with their activity as long as he or she attends 3 academic afterschool sessions per week. The students will be monitored by the grade level SIRS representative. A proof of attendance form will be kept by the teacher in charge of the activity.
- For those students who become academically ineligible and involved in sports, they must attend academic afterschool on days when their games are played at home/Ventnor.
- Academic or Attendance Ineligible students must attend Academic Afterschool until their ineligible period has ended. Yellow flag rules will apply for students who fail to attend the required afterschool classes.

### **EXCEPTIONS TO ACADEMIC INELIGIBILITY:**

- During certain occasions, by administrative approval, academically ineligible students who go "above and beyond" or engage in "Exemplary activities" can be exempt from ineligibility for a particular event. Such exemptions should occur no more than once per school year for a particular ineligible student. This administrative exemption is limited to academic eligibility only, not behavior eligibility.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade end-of-the-year activities will be governed by a separate policy regarding academic eligibility due to the unique nature of these activities (see below).

### **Super Extravaganza: Students may qualify for the end of year Super Extravaganza by-**

1. Students must not have an external suspension from school.
2. Students must not receive a red flag referral.
3. Students must remain discipline eligible for the entire year.
4. Students must be referral free either marking periods 1 and 2 (1<sup>st</sup> half of the year) or marking periods 3 and 4 (2<sup>nd</sup> half).
5. Student with referrals in both MP 1/2 and MP 3/4 with not qualify.

### **Academic/Non-Academic Assemblies:**

Our population of behaviorally ineligible students should attend certain assemblies/programs (gang/drug/motivational/etc.) and while at these assemblies/programs will be seated in an open/visible area of the auditorium so that they may be better supervised.

### **Non-Academic Assemblies:**

Behaviorally ineligible students may not attend non-academic assemblies as determined by administration.

### **Activities and Absences:**

In order to be eligible for any after school activity a student must be present in school on the day before the event AND the day of the event. Such after school related activities can include: school sponsored sporting events, music/band performances, school play, school dance and class/group after school trips.

Administration would need to grant prior approval for a student to attend any of the above activities in the event that the student was absent with a legitimate reason (doctor's appointment, for example).

### **3 - Day Rule for Class Trips/Extravaganzas:**

- If a student is written up within 3 school days before a class trip/extravaganza that student will not be allowed to attend.
- The 3 - Day rule will be:
  - Written on the permission slip for any class trip/extravaganza.
  - Signed by parent.
  - Returned to school before the 3 - day period begins.
- The organizing teacher/grade level team will be responsible for keeping track of who can and who cannot go on a class trip/extravaganza.

### **Lunch and ID's:**

- All students are required to have a school issued ID for the duration of the school day.
- ID's are to be with the student while on school grounds.
- Students will be checked for ID's prior to entering the lunchroom on a daily basis.
- Students who do not have the required ID at lunch will go to the back of the lunch line and will be served last.

### **Student of the Marking Period:**

- Students who have received a discipline referral in a marking period cannot be selected as Student of the Marking Period for that marking period.

### **Homework/Practice - Assignment Forms:**

- It is expected that Math Practice will be assigned and completed each school night.
- A parent/guardian can request that a teacher fill out a Homework/Practice Assignment Form only after the student has missed 3 days of school. It is expected that students who receive a Homework/Practice Assignment Form complete the assignments. If a Homework/Practice Assignment Form is completed, teachers will hold the students accountable for that work. Teachers will follow their normal classroom policy if the work is not turned in upon the student's return.
- A Homework/Practice Assignment Form will not be completed by the teacher for students who miss 2 days of school or less. These students will complete the work when they return to school. These students will also have the same number of days to complete work as they were absent.
- If a student is going on vacation lasting 5 or more days, a parent/guardian may request a Homework/Practice Assignment Form to be completed by the teachers of that student provided at least one week's notice is given.
- If a student misses class for any reason (absence, activities, school play, etc.), the student is responsible for making up the work that was covered. By law, any students suspended from school will have work provided for them.

### **Checks and Balances for Discipline Policy:**

Discipline Record Book: A Discipline Record Book will be created for each grade level each marking period. If a discrepancy appears in the administration of discipline, there are two remedies:

- The referring teacher can personally speak with the administrator to discuss the discrepancy and work out an acceptable compromise.
- The referring teacher can ask a VCEA representative to speak to the administrator on his/her behalf.



### **Administrative Rights:**

- Administration reserves the right to increase the consequences of any discipline consequence depending on the infraction, history of behavior, and communication with referring teacher. Consequences can increase from additional after school detentions to external suspensions at the discretion of the administration.
- Administration reserves the right to search and inspect student lockers at any time during the school year. Locker inspections and searches may be with or without reasonable suspicion.

### **DRESS AND GROOMING:**

The Board of Education recognizes that each pupil's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of the pupil's personal style and individual preference. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices affect the educational program of the schools. Dress or grooming that jeopardizes the health or safety of the student or of other students or is injurious to school property will not be permitted. Students are expected to be clean and well-groomed in their appearance. Students are expected to avoid extremes in appearance that are so disruptive or distracting that the reaction of other students is disruptive to the educational process.

The following dress standards are designed to serve these purposes and are expected to be followed. Clothing that is unacceptable and should not be worn to school include the following\*:

- Extremely low-cut, tight fitting or transparent clothes, bare midriffs, and suggestive clothing.
- Skirts, dresses, pants, and shorts that end higher than the mid-thigh.
- Outdoor jackets, coats or hats worn in the building/classroom.
- Bare feet, unsafe footwear, cleated shoes, and footwear that is intended for the beach.
- Patches and decorations that are offensive or obscene.
- Undershirts (underwear) worn without an outer shirt; boxer shorts.
- Pants worn far below the waist.
- Clothing that is overly soiled, torn, worn, or defaced.
- Nonprescriptive sunglasses, glazed, and tinted glasses, except as prescribed by the student's doctor.
- Tank tops.

### **Consequences for Violating Dress Code Policy**

- 1st Violation - Student sent to the office, given a warning, calls home for a change of clothes.
- 2nd Violation - Yellow Flag Offense - Student sent to the office, calls home for a change of clothes. Parent is notified that the student is in violation of the Dress Code
- 3rd Violation - Red Flag Offense - Student sent to the office, calls home for a change of clothes. Parent is notified that the student is in violation of the Dress Code
- 4<sup>th</sup> Violation – 3 Letter Offense - Student sent to the office. Parent is notified and must pick up the child.

*\*\*\*Dress code may be subject to change for students who participate on designated "School Spirit Days" only.*

## **IMPORTANT 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE INFORMATION**

### **(Eligibility pending Final Exam grades and final averages)**

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Policy:**

##### **Academic Requirement:**

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students who have an F as their final average for two academic classes will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

##### **Behavioral Requirement:**

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students who lose two letters in addition to the 4 letters that they receive in the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Final Exam Exemption Policy:**

Any student who receives an A in his/her academic subjects for marking periods 1, 2, and 3 and who has an A average for his/her 4<sup>th</sup> marking period at the time of final exams, will have the option of being exempt from the final exam.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade End-of-the-Year Activities:**

A different set of criteria will be used to determine who is and who is not allowed to attend 8<sup>th</sup> grade activities:

##### **Field Day:**

- All behaviorally ineligible students will not be allowed to attend.
- Any student who violates the 3-Day Rule will not be allowed to attend.

##### **Beach Barbecue:**

- All behaviorally ineligible students will not be allowed to attend.
- Any student who has an F as a final average in two or more academic subjects
- Any student who violates the 3 Day Rule will not be allowed to attend.

##### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance:**

- All behaviorally ineligible students will not be allowed to attend.
- Any student who has an F as a final average in two or more academic subjects
- Any student who violates the 3 Day Rule will not be allowed to attend.

##### **Great Adventure Trip (or alternative trip):**

- All behaviorally ineligible students will not be allowed to attend.
- Any student who has an F as a final average in one or more academic subjects
- Any student who violates the 3 Day Rule will not be allowed to attend.

##### **Yearbook Signing Party:**

- All behaviorally ineligible students will not be allowed to attend.
- Any student who has an F as a final average in two or more academic subjects
- Any student who violates the 3 Day Rule will not be allowed to attend.