

Covington Middle School



Student Handbook

2025- 2026 School Year

**COVINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026
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COVINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
Office Staff 2025-2026

Katie Hardy	Principal
Josh Kersey	HS / MS Assistant Principal
Brad Short / Jerry Taylor	Athletic Director
Ollie Pettit	School Counselor
Paul Davis	Technology Coordinator
Marilyn Corey	Nurse
Traci Booe	Secretary

VISION STATEMENT

The Covington Middle School Family is committed to equipping every student to achieve their aspirations by applying critical thinking skills and demonstrating responsible citizenship through communication and cooperation.

MISSION STATEMENT

Covington Middle School is committed to serving the academic, physical, social, and emotional needs of its students as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. The school community is committed to creating an orderly, caring environment maintained through fair and consistent discipline. Individual learning styles are accommodated by differentiated instruction and assessment analysis. All aspects of the school's curricular and extracurricular activities are student centered and effectively communicated to the entire learning community. The ultimate goal of the broader educational community is to prepare students for the challenging demands of a competitive global community.

AHERA NOTIFICATION

Under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA of 1986, Covington Community School Corporation is required to annually notify all school building employees, building occupants or their legal guardians, of the availability and location of the Asbestos Management Plans and of any post-response action activities, including periodic reinspection and surveillance activities that are planned or in progress.

In the past year, the AHERA related activities conducted have been the Periodic Surveillance and the AHERA Mandated 3 year re-inspection to maintain current information on the condition of materials in our buildings. The 3 year re-inspection was conducted by ASTESCO, Inc. an independent firm. In the coming year the planned activities under the AHERA standard are routine maintenance of building materials and the AHERA Periodic Surveillance of all building materials. These are scheduled for June 2012 and December 2012. The AHERA Management Plans are available for public review at the Superintendent's Office during regular working hours. A reasonable charge will be made for requested copies of the Management Plan(s). Copies are available in the building offices.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Each individual should be given the opportunity to develop and achieve to the maximum extent possible, being limited only by individual differences. Therefore, the district will foster an educational environment that provides equal educational opportunity for all students. Educational programs and services will be designed to meet the varying needs of all students and will not discriminate against any individual for reasons of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, economic status, or handicap.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL DAY INFORMATION

Students may enter the building at 7:30 a.m. CMS offers a breakfast program. Students may not go to classes or lockers before 7:50 a.m. unless they have an extracurricular meeting scheduled for before school or a prearranged visit to a teacher. First period class will begin at 8:00 a.m. and the school day concludes at 3:00 p.m. Schedule

alterations are made on occasion to accommodate student assemblies, special activities and any weather related delay or dismissal.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

Occasionally, due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances there is a need to delay or cancel the school day. Decisions regarding these matters are made at the earliest possible hour. Information regarding closings and delays will be broadcast on local television, radio stations, and school messenger announcements.

VISITORS

All visitors to public schools in Indiana are required by law to report to the middle school office when they first arrive at the school. Visitors should be prepared to scan their state issued ID through our Safe Visitor program. To ensure school safety and the privacy of all students, parents/guardians will not be permitted into classrooms during the school day. If parents/guardians wish to have a meeting with a teacher, with the guidance department, or with administration, an appointment must be made in advance. Please contact the front office to schedule any appointment. Students from other schools are not permitted to visit Covington Middle School students during the school day.

ENTERING OR REMAINING IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Unless a student has an extracurricular activity, detention, or scheduled meeting with a staff member or administrator after school, the student should leave the building by 3:15 p.m. Loitering is not permitted and students who do not have one of the above-mentioned justifications for being in the building will be told to leave. For evening activities, students are not to enter the building (including a gymnasium) until the teacher/coach in charge of the activity arrives. Students who enter a building other than CMS during regular school hours without authorization may be charged with trespassing. Also, students who attend extracurricular events which are held inside the building are expected to participate in or watch those events. Students are not to be in the building on the night of any program except for the purpose of participating in or watching that program. Again, students who loiter in the building will be told to leave.

HEALTH SERVICES

A school nurse is available throughout the day. In all but extreme cases, a classroom teacher or other school personnel should refer students to the nurse. Please contact our school nurse regarding any specific health concerns.

Student Sent Home (by the school Nurse) Due to Illness

Occasionally a student's illness reaches a degree where the nurse requests the student to return home. Except for special circumstances, this is generally limited to those students either vomiting or running a fever. Leaving school, because the nurse sent you home, is **NOT COUNTED TOWARDS THE 9 DAY ATTENDANCE LIMIT.**

Going Home Due to Illness (NOT being sent home by the school Nurse)

Students who become ill and request to go home must first report to the Nurse's Office; receive parent permission; and sign out in the Office. Students will not be allowed to leave without parent permission, regardless of age. Leaving school due to illness, verified by parent is **COUNTED TOWARDS THE 9 DAY ATTENDANCE LIMIT.**

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

If students require the taking of medication while at school, the following guidelines must be observed (1) The medication must be in a prescribed bottle from the doctor or pharmacist. (2) The bottle must be labeled with the child's name and correct dosages. (3) The prescription must be kept in the nurse's office. (4) The school nurse, administrators, or their designees will supervise the taking of the medicine. (5) A note from the parent must accompany the prescription stating the reason for the medication.

FOOD SERVICE

The Type-A Regular lunch cost will be posted and advertised at the beginning of the school year. Ala Carte is still available. Both regular lunch and ala carte are available on both serving lines. Each student is issued a lunch ID at the beginning of school. Students deposit money in their account and enter the ID each day to purchase their lunch.

TEXTBOOK RENTAL

Covington Middle School purchases textbooks and workbooks to provide each student with instructional materials that are appropriate to each classroom activity. It is your responsibility to care for the materials and return them in good condition. Fines will be assessed to students who damage their textbooks. Students who destroy or lose their textbooks must buy new ones.

WRITING CHECKS TO CMS

Covington Middle School will accept checks to cover the cost of textbooks, fees, consumable items, lunches, etc. Checks must be written for the exact amount of the purchase. Students may not write a check and receive cash in return.

TELEPHONES

A courtesy phone is available in the middle school office during school hours. Please be courteous of others and limit the length of your call. The middle school office phone may be used by students to contact parents. Students may use, with permission, their cell phones also. Phone messages from parents will be accepted and every effort will be made to provide the students with the message. However, families should make plans with their child before and after the school day.

LOST AND FOUND

All articles found in or near the middle school should be turned in to the main office. Lost articles may be claimed from this office, but they will be disposed of if not claimed within a reasonable length of time. Students should report any loss to the main office as soon as it is discovered. Each student should print his/her name on tablets, gym clothes, tennis shoes, and books which are owned by the student. Avoid carrying large sums of money or things of great value to school. If a student must bring something of great value, bring it to the office for safe keeping during the school day. Ask for a receipt for money or the item kept in the office and one will be provided.

LOCKERS

The locker is to be used only by the person to whom it is assigned. Students are to use only the locker assigned to them. Sharing lockers is not permitted. **Students are advised not to place money or items of high value in lockers. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.**

Lockers are school property and may be opened by the principal, assistant principal, or their designees at any time. Nothing is to be placed inside or outside a locker which may damage or deface it. Restitution must be made by the students for damaged lockers and lost locks (PE). The student's use of the locker does not diminish the school corporation's ownership or control of the locker.

The school corporation retains the right to inspect the locker and its contents to insure the locker is being used in accordance with its intended purpose. **(1)** A student who uses a locker that is the property of a school corporation is presumed to have no expectation of privacy in that locker or the locker's contents. **(2)** A law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the geographic area having a school facility containing a student's locker may: a. at the request of the school principal; and b. in accordance with rules of the governing body of the school corporation; assist a school administrator in searching a student's locker and the locker's contents.

FIRE AND DISASTER DRILLS

Fire drills will be held once per month during the school year. Disaster drills will be scheduled at least twice per semester. Signs are posted in each room with instructions telling where to report for each type of drill. Please be quiet as you exit the room. This is especially important should an exit or area be blocked, resulting in verbal

instructions being needed to change the assigned exit or place of safety posted in each room. It is imperative that you follow these instructions and proceed in an orderly manner.

PUBLICATION OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Any parent or guardian wanting the name of his/her child excluded from any listing of honor rolls, athletic awards, or other forms of school activities' participation is asked to notify the office in writing by the first week of school.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Covington Community School Corporation has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the school library professional staff and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Via the Destiny Library Search on our school website parents/guardians may search our database of materials. A form is also available online to request reconsideration of school or library resources.

ENROLLMENT

Students at Covington Middle School are expected to be in attendance on the first day of school. Those who live in the district have five days to enroll after school starts but will not be allowed to make up their work for credit. If extenuating circumstances prevail, the administration reserves the right to decide on individual cases.

SECTION II - STUDENT CONDUCT

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

The students of Covington Middle School are expected to behave in an appropriate manner while at school or any school-sponsored activity. At no time should an individual student or group of students' behavior impose any limitations on, or detract from, any school related activity or event.

It is expected students will follow common rules of courtesy. Violations of rules of common courtesy include the failure to follow staff members' directions, talking back to a staff member, and the use of abusive or obscene language directed toward a staff member.

It is essential to remember that the purpose of Covington Middle School is to provide an optimum environment where learning can take place. Any behavior that is deemed inappropriate or interferes with the educational process will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

STATE LAWS

Students are responsible for their conduct under all local, state, and federal laws. The fact that the law may not be mentioned in this handbook does not excuse the student from the consequences of his actions under such law. All local, state, and federal laws are to be followed at all times.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The School Corporation is committed to a policy that sexual harassment of school personnel and/or students by agents of employees of the Covington Schools is unacceptable. Any employee or student who believes he/she is a victim of sexual harassment should: (1) Make it clear to the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome; and (2) Report the incident (s) to the building principal and/or dean of students for further investigation and/or action.

ANTI-HAZING/HARASSMENT

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process. All such activities are prohibited at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any corporation-sponsored event.

Hazing is defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act, or coercing another person to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk (mental, emotional, or physical harm). Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not exempt this policy.

All employees of this Corporation should be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed of the prohibitions contained in this policy and shall be ordered to stop such behavior. The students will be disciplined in accordance with the student discipline guidelines of the student handbook. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

The purpose of discipline is to maintain the best possible learning atmosphere. Your responsibility is to get an education. A student who is guilty of a behavior infraction may be referred to the office. Each case will be examined on its own merit, and a discipline assignment appropriate with the nature of the infraction will be given. In all cases the goal of discipline will be to bring about a change in the student's behavior rather than to punish. We will strive to remain consistent and fair when dealing with discipline. We do believe that it is in the best interest of both the student and the school to maintain firm discipline.

The following class list of violations is provided to aid in the communication of our expectations and obligations to the student body to insure a proper school atmosphere. It should be understood that discipline is a continual process with the whole year's record of the student being used to determine the necessary penalty for each violation. Repeat offenders will have more severe penalties and could be moved to the next class of punishment. Therefore, a student who has three violations in Class 1 will be moved to Class 2 and considered to be a repeat offender on the second level in this class.

Each student who is subject to disciplinary action by the school administration will be dealt with according to this philosophy. The unique circumstances of each individual's case will be considered before a decision regarding punishment is made. Similar misbehaviors will normally receive similar penalties depending on the student's whole record. This list is not intended to be the "last word" concerning penalties. The merits of each case require flexibility; however, this list is provided to demonstrate a conscientious attempt to deal consistently and fairly with each individual. Misbehaviors not listed here will also be handled with this stated intent in mind. In cases involving expulsion, Public Law 162 of Student Due Process will be followed. (See Section VII)

The superintendent, principal, school resource officer, assistant principal, other administrative personnel or any teacher of the Covington Community School Corporation shall be authorized to take appropriate action in connection with student behavior based on but not exclusively restricted to, the following classes of disciplinary actions:

CLASS 1: (Handled by teacher/staff member with possible discipline referral)

Violations:

- Tardy to class or school;
- Unprepared for class;
- Improper use of computers (notes, games, etc.)
- Class disruptions

Possible Consequence:

- Counseling with a student or group of students;
- Conference with a parent or a group of parents;
- Assignment of 1-hour detention;
- Recommendation to restrict participation in and/or attendance at extra-curricular activities.

CLASS 2: (Discipline referral sent to office)

Violations:

- Leaving class without permission, cutting class, not reporting to the office
- Failure to comply with directions of school personnel;
- Obscenity;

- Public displays of affection;
- Unexcused Absences;
- Interfering with orderly school operation by any means.
- Inappropriate use of technology device (cell phone, chromebook) which includes, but not limited to: videos, photos, messaging, social media posts, and mistreatment of chromebook
- Leaving school grounds without permission

Possible Consequence:

- 1-hour detention;
- 3-hour detention;
- In-school detention;
- Assigning multiple clean-up work periods;
- Assigning multiple detentions after school;
- Rearranging the student class schedule;

CLASS 3 (Student referral to office)

Violations:

- Fighting;
- Harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, verbal, physical and/or emotional);
- Intimidation, threats causing physical and/or emotional harm or hazing (severe cases will be considered as a Class 4 Violation);
- Forged documents/cheating;
- Possession, distribution, purchase, selling, or use of tobacco or nicotine-containing products of any form or any kind or lighters/matches on school grounds or at school activities;
- Truancy;
- Interfering with orderly school operation by any means;
- Unauthorized access to computer files and malicious use of files;
- Gang activity;

Possible Consequence:

- Suspension out of school;
- Multiple In-school detention;
- Combination of In-School and 3 hour detention;
- Combination of 1 day out of school and 3 hour detention;
- Removal from class

CLASS 4 (Student referral to office)

Violations:

- Possession or use of firecrackers, smokes bombs, etc.;
- Theft;
- Knowingly possessing, using, transmitting, having in one's body or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, look-alike substances, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind and/or the possession of drug paraphernalia; (*see page 10 substance abuse*)
- Vandalism;
- Alcohol, possession, use of ;
- Possession of, use, or threatened use of a weapon;
- Unauthorized access to computer files and malicious use of files;
- Sexting;
- Gang activity;
- Habitual misconduct;
- Interfering with orderly school operation by any means;
- Gross disrespect and/or insubordination directed toward a staff member;
- Lewd or obscene behavior;
- Carrying a pocket knife of any size

Possible Consequence:

- In school detention;
- Up to 10 days out of school;
- Up to 10 days out of school and expulsion;
- Restitution as needed;

- Notification of local law enforcement

WEAPON POSSESSION

An armed offender is a person possessing a weapon capable of deadly force, whose intent is to pose a threat, to inflict harm, or to carry out a personal objective. The armed person may be a student, staff member, parent, or community member. The CCSC code of conduct forbids possession of weapons – carrying, storing, or using deadly weapons on school grounds. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.

POSSESSION OF FIREARM.

As defined by Indiana Code 20-33-8-16:

Possession of firearms, deadly weapons, or destructive devices

Sec. 16. (a) As used in this section, "firearm" has the meaning set forth in IC 35-47-1-5.

(b) As used in this section, "deadly weapon" has the meaning set forth in IC 35-31.5-2-86. The term does not include a firearm or destructive device.

(c) As used in this section, "destructive device" has the meaning set forth in IC 35-47.5-2-4.

(d) Notwithstanding section 20 of this chapter, a student who is:

- (1) identified as bringing a firearm or destructive device to school or on school property; or
- (2) in possession of a firearm or destructive device on school property;

must be expelled for at least one (1) calendar year, with the return of the student to be at the beginning of the first school semester after the end of the one (1) year period.

(e) The superintendent may, on a case by case basis, modify the period of expulsion under subsection (d) for a student who is expelled under this section.

(f) Notwithstanding section 20 of this chapter, a student who is:

- (1) identified as bringing a deadly weapon to school or on school property; or
- (2) in possession of a deadly weapon on school property; may be expelled for not more than one (1) calendar year.

(g) The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the property where the school is located if a student engages in a behavior described in subsection (d). The superintendent may give similar notice if the student engages in a behavior described in subsection (f). Upon receiving notification under this subsection, the law enforcement agency shall begin an investigation and take appropriate action.

(h) A student with disabilities (as defined in IC 20-35-7-7) who possesses a firearm on school property is subject to procedural safeguards under 20 U.S.C. 1415.

As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.17. Amended by P.L.114-2012, SEC.42.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

It is a violation of the disciplinary code of Covington School Corporation to:

1. Possess, provide to another person, any substance which is or contains - alcohol, marijuana, a stimulant, an intoxicant, a narcotic, a depressant, or a hallucinogen - whether a prescription or sold over the counter (without a prescription), or any substance represented by the provider to be any of the listed substances - on sponsored grounds at any time or at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus. Use of medication by a student prescribed by a medical doctor, a dentist, or other health care provider authorized by law to prescribe medication for that student, does not violate this rule. Medication must be stored in the nurse's office.
2. Possess or provide to any person anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery or consumption of - alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, depressants, or hallucinogens - on school premises at any time or at any school sponsored activity at any location including the school bus. Examples of things which are not to be possessed or provided to another person are: pipes, rolling papers, clips, - the lists given here are examples and not intended to be all inclusive.
3. Engage in the unlawful selling of narcotics or other violation of criminal law which constitutes a danger to other students, or constitutes an interference with school purposes.
4. Should a violation of this section occur, the building level administrator shall make every effort to contact parents/guardians, contact local law enforcement agencies, and make a detailed written report to the prosecuting attorney.

TOBACCO USE

Use of or possession of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or lighter or matches at school, or at any school related function or activity is not permitted.

All Covington Community School Corporation facilities where kindergarten, elementary and/or secondary education services are being provided to children are to be smoke/tobacco free environments. Smoking and use of tobacco products in any building that Covington Community Schools utilizes to provide education to its students is prohibited.

Students caught in the possession of tobacco, vape, or any other illegal product/substance will be subject to drug testing under the "Just-Cause" clause in the student handbook.

Consequences as follows:

First offense: 3 Day In School Detention

Second offense: 5 Day In School Detention pending in school

Third offense: 10-Day Out of School Suspension pending expulsion

Each offense will result in a ticket issued by the School Resource Officer

GANG ACTIVITY

Gang-Like Behavior: The following examples of misconduct will constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion of students. These examples are illustrative only and do not preclude other examples of student misconduct as grounds for suspension or expulsion period. In a continuing effort to provide a safe and orderly environment for our students and toward the goal of keeping our schools free from the harmful influence of any groups or gangs which advocate and/or provoke dangerous disruptive, violent and/or intimidating behavior, the following information is provided:

A gang is any identifiable group of people who:

1. are perceived as a distinct group by the principal,
2. are perceived by the students, parents, and/or staff of the school as interfering with normal school activities by participating in dangerous, disruptive, violent, and/or intimidating acts of behavior,
3. are involved in the commission of disruptive, violent and/or intimidating acts of behavior.

Gang-like behavior will not be tolerated in the schools of Covington Community School Corporation. Disciplinary measures ranging from a warning to expulsion from school shall be taken upon the observance of gang-like behavior.

BULLYING

This rule applies when a student is:

1. On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or using property or equipment provided by the school.

Bullying by a student or groups of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior is prohibited.

Parents or students who suspect that repeated acts of bullying are taking place should report the matter to the school principal or designee. School personnel will investigate all reports of bullying.

Parents of both the targeted student(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be notified within 5 business days after the incident was reported. All acts of bullying and abusive behavior committed by a verified perpetrator will be documented.

5 Day Window:

Day #1: School personnel are made aware.

Day #2: Parent contact made: parents of both the target student(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be made aware of the incident and told that an investigation is taking place.

Days #3-4: Allegations will be investigated.

Day #5: Parental contact will be made and an update on the investigative process will be shared along with a potential timeline to completion.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.

Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying. Parents may review any material used in bullying prevention and/or suicide prevention programs.

All schools in the corporation are encouraged to engage students, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through parent organizations already in place in each school.

DRESS CODE & APPEARANCE

The Covington Community School Corporation feels that high levels of self-esteem and respect are important to the educational process. It is important to the CMS staff for our students to dress in a manner as to reflect positively and respectfully on themselves, their families, their school, and their community. Therefore, we encourage students to dress in a safe, clean, and neat manner. While the school recognizes that styles of dress come and go, certain standards of reasonable dress should be expected. Students are expected to wear their clothing and manage their appearance in a manner *consistent with the guidelines*. No policy will address all situations, but the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. Students should not wear clothing or hairstyles that can be hazardous or distracting to them or others in their school activities such as shop, lab work, physical education, and art. Grooming and dress which prevent students from doing their best work because of blocked vision or restricted movement are discouraged, as are dress styles that create a disruption of teaching or of classroom order. All footwear must have solid soles.
2. Jewelry will not be worn in physical education class.
3. No torn or tattered clothing or clothing with excessive frays is to be worn during school hours. This applies all pants, shorts, etc. in the area above the knee. Clothing used as undergarments are NOT acceptable as cover-ups. Patches are acceptable coverings.
4. Tube-tops, halter-tops, tank-tops, cut-off shirts, or any shirt that exposes excessive cleavage, undergarments (i.e. bra straps), or bare shoulders should not be worn. Shirts must have at least 2.5 inches (approx. 3 finger widths) width strap in the area between the neck and the arms.
5. **The mid-drift should not be visible or exposed under any garment.**
6. Visible body piercings are limited to pierced ears and/or a stud/hoop in the side of the nostril. Hoops/rings are not allowed in the lip, eyebrow, or any other visible body part other than the ear or nose. Clear spacers or inserts are allowed, unless size is abused and determined as an educational distraction.
7. Students must wear shoes.
8. Students are prohibited from wearing, . . . “messages on clothing, jewelry, and personal belongings that relate to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, violence, sex, vulgarity, or that reflect adversely upon persons because of their race or ethnic group.”
9. Clothing with inappropriate language will not be tolerated
10. Fishnet shirts or other types of mesh or "see through" shirts are to be worn only if an undershirt is also worn underneath them.
11. No hats or hoods (including bandannas) to be worn on heads except on special days deemed by staff.
12. All shorts (including running/cycling shorts) must be fingertip length when the student is standing straight up. No spandex shorts will be permitted.
13. Coats will not be worn in the classrooms unless the teacher grants special permission.
14. Wallet chains or other chains hooked to clothing are not permitted.
15. Pants, shorts, and skirts are to be worn at the waistline.
16. Inappropriate display of the Confederate flag will not be tolerated.

If students wear the types of clothing named in the above paragraph to school, or if they wear other types of clothing or dress in such a fashion as to disrupt the educational process, then such students will be sent home to change into appropriate clothing. Such students will be considered unexcused for the time that it takes them to go home, change clothes, and return to school. Students who repeatedly violate the dress code will be subject to disciplinary action.

Final determination of appropriate dress lies with the school administration.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Wireless communication devices are prohibited in the classroom during instructional time except those approved by a teacher or administrator or as required by a student's IEP or 504. These include, but are not limited to: cellular telephones, tablets, laptop computers, gaming devices, radios, recorders, and IPADS. Such items are a disruption to the educational process and may become lost or damaged. If these items are found at school they will be taken by the Principal, Dean of Students, or Assistant Principal and not returned until the end of the day.

Cell Phones / Personal Communication Devices

Students may use personal communication devices such as cell phones during the following:

1. Before and after school

...as long as they do not create a distraction, disruption or otherwise interfere with the educational environment (as determined by school personnel). Students **MAY NOT** use a PCD/Cell phone while in the locker room or bathroom. Any cell phone use deemed inappropriate or distracting by any means by any school personnel may result in confiscation of the device.

Smart watches are allowed to be worn as a timepiece; however, they are not permitted for any other use during class time.

At all other times between 8:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. (2:35 P.M. on Wednesdays), these devices should be turned off and placed out of sight - in lockers when school is in session. Cell phones are not to be seen, heard, or used by students during the school day - this includes lunch time and passing periods - for any reason.

Any cell phone seen, heard, carried, or used in any manner other than previously mentioned will be confiscated (including SIM card and battery) by an adult, turned into the building administrator, and returned in the manner described below. Failure to forfeit the cell phone (including SIM card and battery) to an adult will be an act of insubordination and will result in an automatic suspension in addition to the consequence as prescribed according to the following numbered offense.

- **1st offense:** 1-hour detention
- **2nd offense:** 3-hour detention
- **3rd offense:** 3-hour detention and cell phone ban while at school. Length of ban will be determined by the school administration on a case-by-case basis.
- **Multiple Thereafter:** In-school detention, possible OSS, extended cell phone ban from school

Any student who allows another student to use his/her cell phone will be subjected to the same consequences as the person using the phone.

The reason for a cell phone policy is to deter classroom disruptions, cheating, cyber bullying, "sexting", and other acts that violate child exploitation and child pornography laws.

Cell phones will be searched if administrators have reasonable suspicion that a student has violated a school rule or the law. Law enforcement will be contacted if the student violates a law such as but not limited to, harassment, bullying, or child pornography.

FIELD TRIPS

Students that are participating in school-sponsored field trips will be held accountable for all rules found in the student handbook. A signed permission slip must be turned into the office prior to the student leaving for the field trip. **Students with 6 or more unexcused absences or students failing one or more classes may be excluded from attending the field trips.**

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM POLICY

Cheating/Plagiarism will not be tolerated at Covington Middle School. Cheating includes copying homework, assignments, and assigned class work, as well as using notes on exams or having other people complete work on a student's behalf. Using ChatGPT and AI to write papers or provide answers to classroom assignments, tests, and quizzes will also be considered cheating/plagiarism. Students who share required graded assignments, exams, or tests, will receive the following consequences listed below.

The following penalties are to be applied on a Semester basis.

- 1st Offense - 0% on test or assignment and a warning issued by principal
- 2nd Offense - 0% on test or assignment and a 1 hour detention
- 3rd Offense - 0% on test or assignment, a 1 hour detention, and one letter grade lower in that subject
- 4th Offense - F for the semester grade

VANDALISM

The Board of Trustees of the Covington Schools has provided the students with great facilities, and are continuing to improve them. Vandalism in any form will not be permitted. All Covington school buildings, grounds, equipment and facilities are covered under this rule. Payment for damages may be enforced.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUND

Permission to leave school at any time during the school day must be given by the Principal, Dean of Students, or the Assistant Principal and must be approved by the Parent (s) or guardian (s). Students who receive permission to leave school during the school day must sign out in the Middle School Office before leaving, and likewise sign in upon their return if they return while that same school day is in session. Medical, dental, or legal appointments for students which must take place during the regular school day will require either a parent note or parent call-in prior to the appointment in order for the student to be released by the Principal or the Assistant Principal. Students who leave school without following these procedures will be considered truant. **A student tardy to first class is required to sign in at the main office at the secretary's desk.**

DANCE DECORUM AND POLICIES

Students need to be aware of certain procedures that take place before and during Covington Middle School dances:

- Students must have an RDT (Random Drug Testing) form on file in the office to attend all school dances.
- Once students enter the dance, they will not be allowed to leave and re-enter the dance without special circumstance and administrative pre-approval.
- Students who are failing a class due to incomplete assignments will not be eligible to attend dances until ALL assignments are completed. Grade checks will be conducted the Friday prior to the dance.
- Any student serving an OSS during the time of the dance will not be allowed to participate.
- All students may be required to submit to a breathalyzer test at any school dance before, during, or after the event.

The following rules will be enforced at all dances with regards to dance behavior. The rules apply to individual, partner, group or large circle dancing.

1. No crowd surfing
2. No sandwiching or moshing
3. No lifting legs above the waist
4. Hands must be appropriately placed
5. All forms of inappropriate body contact are prohibited
6. No lying down or sitting on the dance floor
7. No removing of primary articles of clothing

The administration will use its discretion in determining what type of dancing is inappropriate and may dismiss students violating these rules from the dance.

SECTION III - DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

DEFINITIONS AND PROCEDURES

1-Hour Detention - Additional time assigned at school, either before or after regular school hours, under supervision. Students who have detention time to serve are responsible for arranging their own transportation. The detention will be served on the day or days assigned by the principal or his designee. Detentions will be served from 3:05 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Failure to serve an assigned detention will result in further disciplinary action.

3-Hour Detention - Its main purpose is to help the student realize the consequences of inappropriate behavior. A student can only be sent to a 3-hour detention by a member of the administration. He/she will remain there under the supervision of a certified staff member for three hours. The student should report to the office area promptly after school. 3-hour detention will last from 3:05 until 6:00 p.m. A restroom break will be given at 5:00 p.m. only.

1. Transportation will not be provided by the corporation.
2. It may be necessary for a parent conference during the session, and the parent will be notified prior to the detention period.
3. Failure to show for 3-hour detention will result in
 - In-school Suspension.
 - Additional 3-hour detentions.
 - Out-of-School Suspension.
 - Failure to follow the guidelines that govern Friday Evening School will result in an out of school suspension.

In-School Detention - Time will be spent, during regular school hours, in an assigned area with supervision. Work missed or its equivalent may be made up for full credit. The student's teachers will be notified of the suspension and the student will receive assignments for completion. The completed make-up work is due at the end of the day's suspension period. In-school detention may be assigned two times to a student during a semester. Each assignment could be for multiple days. The student is not to participate in any school activity or function on a day when the student has served an In-School Detention.

Out-Of-School Suspension- Disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period of up to ten (10) days and which does not constitute an expulsion. The student is not to participate in any school activity or function during the time of this suspension. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain assignments from their teachers no later than the day they return to school. Students will be allowed to make up work or its equivalent for 1/2 credit, with the exception of all assessments which will be given upon return for full credit. If the work is obtained while on out of school suspension, the work is due the day the student returns from suspension. If the work is obtained the day the student returns from suspension, the work is due the next school day.

Students may be suspended or expelled for any act which, if committed by an adult, would be an offense, or crime, including any felony, misdemeanor or infraction.

Indiana Public Law 121-1989, went into effect on July 1, 1989. This law prohibits the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles from issuing a driver's license or permit to a student under 18 who is under:

1. at least a second suspension from school for the school year;
2. an expulsion from school; or
3. an exclusion from school due to misconduct

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles is also required to invalidate a student's license or permit for the same reasons. A student whose license or permit has been denied or invalidated for the above reasons will be eligible for a license or permit or have a license or permit revalidated upon the earliest or one of the following:

1. the student turns 18;
2. the end of the semester if the student is reinstated in school; or
3. the suspension, expulsion, or exclusion is reversed after a hearing.

Expulsion: Student is suspended by the principal for up to ten (10) days and a Due Process hearing is requested by the principal. The student may not participate in or attend any school activity during the time of this suspension. Public Law 162 is followed.

Student Assistance Policy

Introduction:

The Covington Community School Corporation will provide students/families with a list of resources that offer treatment and counseling for alcohol, drugs, addictions, and mental health conditions. The programs offered will include identification, intervention, assessment, and treatment recommendations to include in/out school support services for students experiencing school-related difficulties as a result of alcohol, drugs, behavioral, or other personal family problems. Covington Community School Corporation bears no financial responsibility for these programs. It is the responsibility of the student/family to enroll in a SAP program of their choice and provide documentation to the administration of enrollment and scheduled treatment dates. The use of SAP can also be a component of a behavior contract or a Form 16-A, used for the continuation of educational services at Covington Middle School.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1.1 Self-referral

Except for violations reported under section 1.4, a student who self refers to a Student Assistance Program (SAP) and who is making satisfactory progress in following his/her recommendations will not be liable to suspension, extracurricular ineligibility, or denied attendance to any school sponsored activity, or other disciplinary action for behavior that occurs prior to self-referral unless:

1. The student discloses conduct already reported under section 1.4 as a witnessed violation, OR
2. The student fails to follow an SAP Coordinator's recommendations or to comply with SAP policy guidelines.

1.2 Compliance Evaluations

Evaluations concerning agreed upon compliance with SAP policy guidelines will be made by the building SAP Coordinator in consultation with the building administrator, support group facilitators, and other members of the Core Team.

1.3 Voluntary Participation

Participation in a Student Assistance Program is voluntary. At all times it is the prerogative of the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) to accept or reject referral to the SAP Coordinator or to community-based services.

1. Regardless of whether a student accepts or rejects assistance it remains his/her responsibility to behave properly and to improve grades.
2. If a student accepts treatment for chemical dependency, that fact will be regarded as it would for any other illness with respect to the student's rights, benefits, and privileges.
3. Any student judged by the building administrator to present a risk of imminent danger to himself/herself or others may be removed from the school pending the results of a professional evaluation.
4. The Covington Community School Corporation regards chemical dependency to be a chronic progressive illness that is fatal if left untreated. Consequently, refusal by parents to seek treatment for a chemically dependent child will result in a report to the Department of Welfare for suspected child abuse/neglect.

1.4 Violations

A violation would be defined as (but not inclusive) as a student possessing, providing to another person, or being under the influence of any substance which is or contains alcohol, marijuana, a narcotic, a depressant, or a hallucinogen, whether prescription or sold over the counter without a prescription, or any substance represented by the provider to be any of the listed substances on the school grounds at any time or at any school sponsored activity at any location- including on the school bus.

A. FIRST OFFENSE CONSEQUENCES:

Parents and law enforcement officials will be contacted immediately upon verification of the violation. The student will be suspended for 10 days, recommended for expulsion, and ineligible for participation in all extracurricular activities and athletics for a period of one calendar year from the date of offense. The building administrator may table the recommendation for expulsion, reduce the loss of extracurricular eligibility, and reduce the loss of the right to attend any school-sponsored activity if the following criteria are met:

1. During the 10 day period of suspension from school, the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) shall contact the Student Assistance Program (SAP) Coordinator and make necessary arrangements for a preliminary assessment of chemical use and to make other arrangements that might be part of the recommendations of the SAP Coordinator.
2. Should the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to make the required contact with the Student Assistance Program Coordinator during the 10 day period of suspension from school, the student will be subject to due process related to expulsion.
3. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will sign a conditional agreement to defer expulsion proceedings, and will satisfactorily complete all of the terms and conditions provided in the agreement. This SAP contract will contain a "Waiver of Rights" requiring parental and student signatures resulting in forfeiture of due process procedures should the student violate the terms and conditions of the SAP contract.
4. Failure to comply with the SAP Coordinator's recommendations will result in the student being subject to expulsion after due process.

B. SECOND OFFENSE CONSEQUENCES:

Parents and law enforcement officials will be contacted immediately upon verification of the violation. The building administrator will make a recommendation for expulsion for the remainder of the school year to the superintendent. If the request for expulsion takes place during the second semester of a school year, the expulsion, if imposed, shall remain in effect for summer school and for the first semester of the following school year, subject to the provisions of IC 20-8.1-5-11 (f).

1.5 Life Threatening Situations

In the event of a life threatening situation where a student exhibits evidence of acute intoxication, incapacitation, or a drug overdose, in a school sponsored event, his/her parents and the police will be immediately notified, and the student will be transported to the local hospital by an appropriate emergency vehicle. Following his/her return to school, Section 1.4A. of this policy will be implemented.

1.6 Failure to Comply with SAP Guidelines

Reductions in length of suspension or extracurricular ineligibility, or withholding of expulsion may be revoked by the building administrator whenever a student fails to demonstrate compliance with the agreed upon SAP guidelines.

1.7 Referrals by School Staff to the Building Administrator

All school staff members are expected to refer to the building administrator:

1. Any student whom they witness in violation of section 1.4 above.
2. Any student's self-disclosed alcohol/drug-related behavior places them or others at risk or in imminent danger.

1.8 Referrals by School Staff to the SAP Coordinator

All school staff members are expected to refer to the SAP Coordinator:

1. Any student who exhibits a definite and repeated pattern of unacceptable school performance that does not respond to usual and customary attempts to correct it.
2. Any student exhibiting signs, symptoms, or indications of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

(REFERRAL OF A STUDENT TO THE STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BY ITSELF DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ALLEGATION THAT A STUDENT HAS AN ALCOHOL/DRUG-RELATED PROBLEM.)

COVINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

Recognizing that the behavior of some students may be so disruptive that it interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school corporation, the administration may find it necessary to remove a student from the school. In this event and in accordance with the provisions of State Law, the Board of School Trustees authorizes Principals and staff members to take the following actions:

1. **REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR ACTIVITY - TEACHER:** 1) A middle school teacher will have the right to remove a student from his/her class or activity for a period of 1 school day if the student is assigned regular or additional work to be completed in another school setting.
2. **SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL:** A school principal, dean of students, or assistant may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to 10 school days.
3. **EXPULSION:** In accordance with the due process procedures a student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester, with the exception of a violation of rule 13 listed under the grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy.

GROUND FORS SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct or substantial disobedience. The following includes examples of student misconduct or substantial disobedience. Examples can be found in Class I, II, III, IV Violations. In addition to the grounds listed above a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria which takes place during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions. An out of school suspension may require the student to go through the Fountain Circuit Court procedure, which requires the student and parent/guardian to be present at a scheduled court date.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A meeting will be held prior to the suspension of any student. At this meeting the student will be entitled to:
 - a. a written or oral statement of the charges.
 - b. if the student denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against the student will be presented and,
 - c. the student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct.
2. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of the suspension.
3. Following the suspension, the parents or guardians of suspended students will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension, describe the student's misconduct, and the action taken by the principal.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

When a principal recommends to the superintendent that a student be expelled from school, the following procedures will be followed.

1. The superintendent may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following persons to conduct the expulsion meeting:
 - a. legal counsel
 - b. a member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.

2. An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parents are asked to appear at an expulsion meeting conducted by the superintendent or the person designated above. Failure by a student or a student's parents to appear at this meeting will be deemed a waiver of rights administratively to contest the expulsion or to appeal it to the school board.
3. The request to appear at the expulsion meeting will be in writing, delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting.
4. At the expulsion meeting, the principal (or designee), will present evidence to support the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student, and to present evidence to support the student's position.
5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent(s).

The parent has the right to appeal the decision of the person conducting the expulsion meeting to the school board within 10 days of the receipt of notice of the action taken. The student or parent appeals to the school board and the board can vote not to hear the appeal. If the board hears the appeal, it will consider the written summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of both the school administration and the student and/or the student's parent(s). The board will then take any action deemed appropriate.

SECTION IV - BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES AND CONSEQUENCES

The following procedures are in place to maintain proper student conduct while being transported on school buses contracted by the Covington Community School Corporation. Any improper conduct will be deemed as either a Class I or Class II Offense. Class I offenses are viewed as general misconduct; Class II offenses are considered violations regarding safety issues, vandalism, or multiple offenses.

Class I Offenses

- ❖ Spitting
- ❖ Excessive noise
- ❖ Horseplay
- ❖ Eating/Drinking/Littering
- ❖ Leaving seat/standing
- ❖ Use of liquid containers
- ❖ Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures
- ❖ False identification
- ❖ Riding unassigned bus or using unassigned stops
- ❖ Lowering windows beyond limit
- ❖ Riding/attempting to ride during suspension
- ❖ Disobedience to the driver
- ❖ Other offenses reported by the driver/supervisor

Class II Offenses

- ❖ Hanging out windows
- ❖ Throwing/shooting objects
- ❖ Physical aggression
- ❖ Possession/use of tobacco or controlled substance
- ❖ Vandalism to bus or others property (Restitution will be made)
- ❖ Grasping or attempting to grasp any portion of the exterior of the bus
- ❖ Possession/use of lighters, matches or flammable substances/objects
- ❖ Unauthorized entering/exiting through emergency exits
- ❖ Possession or threat of weapons/explosives/flammables
- ❖ Other offenses reported by the driver/supervisor
- ❖ Any offense committed outside of regular transportation will be deemed a Class II Offense. (activities, field trips, etc.)

Consequences					
	1st offense	2nd offense	3rd offense	4th offense	5th offense
Class I	Written Warning	1 day suspension	3 day suspension	1. 5 day suspension 2. Possible loss of bus service 3. Parent Conference (optional)	Loss of bus service
Class II	5 day suspension	10 day suspension	1. 10 day suspension 2. Possible loss of bus service 3. Parent Conference (optional)	Loss of Bus service	

The bus is an extension of the school day. Bus consequences may be superseded by the Covington Community School Corporation board policy. The bus driver has the authority to assign seats. The sexual/racial/harassment policy, the weapons policy, and hazing prohibition policy of the C.C.S.C. will be strictly enforced on the bus as well as school.

SECTION V - DRUG TESTING POLICY/PROCEDURES

DRUG TESTING POLICY

The Board of School Trustees of the Covington Community School Corporation recognizes the health risks and dangers associated with the use of unlawful drugs and/or alcohol. The abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs in the school is a threat to the safety and health of students, faculty, and staff. It jeopardizes the efficiency and the quality of our educational programs. The risks associated with drug abuse include impaired judgment, deterioration of the organs of the body, and addiction. These are conditions that substantially inhibit students from performing to their fullest natural ability. The Board of School Trustees encourages all students to participate in school athletics and allows students to drive to school but believes the opportunity for such participation is not an absolute right, it is a privilege. The primary purpose of this policy is to educate and protect our students.

The Board of School Trustees has approved random drug testing for the following populations in grades 6-12.

1. student involved in school-sponsored athletics;
2. extra curricular activities;
3. student registered drivers
4. students, with parent/guardian consent, who volunteer to participate in the Drug Testing Program

Students who are exhibiting behaviors or are involved in activities, which give school authorities just cause to suspect the student is under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol may be tested at the discretion of the building principal.

Each student who participates in school sponsored athletics and/or extracurricular activities must sign the online consent form upon registration for school. Failure to comply will result in non-participation in athletics and/or extracurricular activities. All students who are part of the volunteer drug testing during the current school year will automatically be in the drug-testing pool during the next school year. Those parents who **wish** to withdraw their students from the volunteer drug-testing program need to sign a release form.

DRUG TESTING PROCEDURE

Consent Form

All students shall be provided with an online consent form, which must be signed by the student and by a custodial parent or guardian before such student shall be eligible to participate in any school sponsored athletics and/or extra curricular activities.

Selection

Students to be tested will be selected randomly, except for those for whom there is probable cause to believe that there is a controlled substance or alcohol in their system. Each student will be assigned a number. A

cross-reference list of names and numbers will be maintained by each school. A certified system of random selection will be employed by the school administrator to determine which students will be tested at a particular time.

Drug Testing Procedure

Upon being selected for testing, each student will be required to provide a sample of his or her saliva in a verifiable manner.

1. The collection of the sample shall be taken/swabbed by the school nurse.
2. The student's number and the date shall be written on the sample bottle.
3. The student and school nurse or school designee shall date and initial the cross-reference list establishing that the sample container has the proper identification number.
4. The school nurse or school designee shall then be responsible for turning over the samples to the testing laboratory.

Drugs Tested

Testing shall be done by a certified laboratory through saliva analysis. The Covington Community School Corporation will pay for testing that it requests. Each sample will be tested for tobacco, alcohol, and those drugs, which may include all drugs listed as controlled substances under the laws of the State of Indiana. If over-the-counter or prescription medications contribute to "positive" test results, then the student should inform the school nurse or administrator of this fact at the time the urine sample is taken. The student will be given 24 hours to produce the prescription in order to be verified by the school nurse.

Laboratory Report

The laboratory will report the results of each test to the administrator by the numbers on each sample container. The test results shall be made known to the student, the student's custodial parent (s), the school nurse, and school administrator. Results are deemed confidential.

Test Results

Tests are "positive" if the student's system shows any level of tobacco, alcohol, or other drug residue substances from drugs previously covered on page 1 of this policy. (Zero Tolerance) The school administrator, if the results are "positive" will advise the student and the student's custodial parent (s) or guardian (s).

The school administrator will explain the type of substance, which was found, and the health hazards involved. The student will then fall under the guidelines for positive tests through random and just-cause testing.

DRUG TESTING PROGRAM GUIDELINES POSITIVE TEST CONSEQUENCES

I. Just Cause - Drugs and/or Alcohol

A. First Offense

1. Juvenile authorities notified if criminal offenses or probationary violations involved
2. Retest at a later date
3. In-school detention (3-day minimum) to obtain an assessment for re-admittance to school
4. If assessment results come back positive, students will be issued a minimum of a 3 day out of school suspension pending expulsion.
5. No extracurricular or athletic participation for five weeks
6. Non-compliance may result in expulsion.

B. Second Offense

1. Juvenile authorities notified if criminal offenses or probationary violations involved
2. Suspension with recommendation for expulsion

II. Random Testing- Drugs and/or Alcohol

1. First Offense

1. No extracurricular or athletic participation for five weeks
2. Athletes/Cheerleaders will also comply with the athletic handbook for drugs and alcohol.
3. One week of in-school detentions followed by a retest at a later date. See discipline guidelines.

4. Non-compliance may result in the loss of all athletic and/or extracurricular participation for one calendar year.
2. *Second Offense (even if first offense was a self-report)*
 1. Juvenile authorities notified criminal offenses or probation violations involved.
 2. No extra curricular and/or athletic participation for one calendar year.
 3. Re-testing during the exclusion period with one test during the month prior to reinstatement of participation.
 4. Non-compliance may result in loss of all athletic, extracurricular, and driving participation during the remainder of the student's enrollment at Covington Middle School and/or Covington High school.
 5. Minimum of 3 days out of school suspension.
3. *Third Offense (even if first offense was a self-report)*
 1. Juvenile authorities are notified if criminal offenses or probationary violations are involved.
 2. Loss of all athletic, extracurricular, and driving participation during the remainder of the student's enrollment at Covington Middle School and/or Covington High School.
 3. Possibility of expulsion.

III. Random Testing/Just Cause - Tobacco

- A. Juvenile authorities are notified if criminal offenses or probationary violations are involved.
- B. Parents notified.
- C. Athletes and extracurricular participants must also comply with their respective handbooks, guidelines, or rules for tobacco use.
- D. In school detention for 3 days.

COVINGTON SCHOOL CORPORATION DRUG SEARCH PROCEDURES

The purpose of these procedures is to find out if there are illegal substances in Covington Middle/High Schools, and if so, to eliminate them from the premises for the safety of our students. Searches can include student backpacks, lockers, and personal belongings on the student with just cause.

The following are the procedures for all searches of the buildings and parking lots to take place:

1. School Administrators may meet with the Fountain County Sheriff and/or his designee prior to a search to explain the area to be searched and the procedures and rules to follow in case that an illegal substance is located on school property. The time and dates of the search will be set at this meeting. This information will not be given to any other school personnel.
2. On the days of the search:
 - a. A dog trained in locating illegal substances will be used to make the search.
 - b. The Sheriff or Deputy will bring the dog to the High/Middle School
 - c. All students will be notified by the intercom to go to their rooms and remain there until the building search is completed.
 - d. The dog will check all student lockers in both the upper and lower levels of the Middle/High Schools.
 - e. The Principal or his designee will accompany the Sheriff on his search.
 - f. If the dog "hits" on a locker, the Principal or his designee will write down the locker number and locate the student of the locker.
 - g. After the dog completes the search of the lockers, the Principal will take the student to his/her locker for a search.
 - h. If an illegal substance is found, the student will be taken to the office and disciplinary procedure will be initiated in accordance with the rules of the student handbook.
 - i. Any illegal substance found will be turned over to the Sheriff or his designee and a receipt will be given to the school.
 - j. Upon completion of the building search, the dog will be taken to the school parking lots, where all vehicles will be searched. The Principal or his designee will accompany the officers and dog as they search.
 - k. If a student's vehicle is "hit" upon by the dog, that student will be called to the office and taken to his car by the Principal or his designee and the vehicle searched. If the student refuses to permit the search, the matter will be turned over to the local law enforcement agencies, and the individual referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If a search takes place and an illegal substance is found, the matter will be turned over to the Superintendent of Schools.

1. SECTION VI - STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular, on-time attendance is essential for student learning and success. Attending school daily is a shared responsibility between students and their parents or guardians. Consistent attendance helps students benefit fully from instruction, build responsibility, and develop good habits.

This policy defines absence types, documentation requirements, and procedures for addressing excessive absences, in line with Indiana law.

Indiana State Definitions

Absence: Any time a student is not in school when school is in session, regardless of the reason.

Chronically Absent: Missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason (excused or unexcused).

Habitual Truant: More than 10 unexcused absences in one school year.

Categories of Absences

1. Exceptions (Exempt from Being Recorded as Absent)

Indiana law identifies certain absences that **do not count as absences at all**. In these cases, students are marked present, must be authorized by the school, and cannot be penalized in any way.

These absences require **advance notice and/or documentation** as needed:

- **Serving as a Page or Honoree** of the Indiana General Assembly
- **Serving on the Precinct Election Board** or as a helper to a political candidate or party on the day of a municipal, primary, or general election
- **Subpoenaed to Testify in Court**
- **Active Duty Armed Forces or National Guard Service** for at least 15 days in a school year
- **Civil Air Patrol Service** for up to 5 days
- **Approved Educationally Related Non-Classroom Activity**
 - Field Trips or School Sponsored Activities
- **Participation in or Exhibition at the Indiana State Fair** for educational purposes by the student or a household member
- **Participation in Scheduled Competitions, Exhibitions, or Events** offered by:
 - The National FFA Organization
 - The Indiana FFA Association
 - The 4-H Club

2. Excused Absences (*Counted as Absent, but Excused*)

These absences **are recorded as absences** but **do not** count toward the limit that triggers disciplinary referral. (If they are indicating that after 5 absences they are at risk of becoming “chronically absent”would this not be considered a disciplinary action? They require **appropriate documentation**.

Examples include:

- **Medical:**
 - Illness or injury documented by a doctor's note
 - Sent home by the school nurse.
 - Mental health treatment or school avoidance with provider or parent documentation.
- **Court-Related:** Appearances or probation office appointments.
- **Funeral or Bereavement:** Attendance at funeral services or related family responsibilities for a close family member or loved one.
- **Approved College Visits:** Must be pre-approved by administration (especially for out-of-state visits).
- **Parent/Guardian Verified Absences:** Parents/guardians may keep their child home for the child's best interest for personal, discretionary purposes with a written note signed by the parent (**limit: 5 per school year**).
- **Vacation (with Prior Approval):** Vacation or travel during the school year is **strongly discouraged**. However, families wishing to request vacation days must follow these guidelines:
 - Vacation absences may be approved **only if they fall within the 5 allowable parent-written excuses for the year.**
 - Once the 5 parent notes have been used, **additional vacation or travel absences will be considered unexcused.**
 - Families must submit a **written request** in advance (at least 1 calendar week before vacation) to the principal or designee for consideration.
 - Students must arrange with teachers for assignments before leaving.
 - Vacation Approval is at the discretion of school administration, taking into account the student's attendance record and academic standing.

Important: All absences require parent/guardian notification **on the day of the absence**. Please call the appropriate school by noon.

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3. Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences occur **without proper authorization or required documentation**. Indiana law (HEA 1243) limits students to **10 unexcused absences per year** before mandatory referral to the county truancy program or the Department of Child Services.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Truancy (skipping school without permission)
- Family vacations without required prior approval
- Illness not documented by a physician or school nurse
- Parent call-ins beyond the 5 allowed Parent/Guardian Verified Absences per semester
- Oversleeping, transportation issues, or other unapproved reasons

Chronically Absent Students

Chronically absent” means **missing ten percent (10%) or more of the school year for any reason**, including both excused and unexcused absences. A student who reaches **five (5) absences (excused or unexcused)** will be identified as *at risk for chronic absenteeism* and monitored closely.

School, Parent, and Student Responsibilities

- Identification: Students who are chronically absent will be designated as such in their school record to ensure appropriate support and monitoring.
- Within **10 instructional days after a student reaches five (5) total absences**, the school will hold a **conference with the student, parent/guardian, and appropriate school staff**.
- At this meeting, the team will **develop an attendance improvement plan** designed to support the student’s success and reduce further absences.
- The plan may include:
 - Counseling or mental health support,
 - Family assistance services,
 - Academic help or tutoring,
 - Strategies to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- Schools will **follow up regularly** to monitor progress and adjust the plan as needed.
- Parents and students are expected to **actively participate** in the conference and plan, communicate challenges, and work together with the school to improve attendance.

Habitually Truant Students

A habitual truant student is defined as a student who is chronically absent by having unexcused absences from school for more than ten (10) days in one (1) school year.

School, Parent, and Student Responsibilities

- **Identification:** Students identified as habitual truants will have this designation in their school records to ensure appropriate monitoring and support .
- The school is required to make reasonable efforts to **address the root causes of truancy** and support the student and family.
- This includes **developing an intervention plan** and offering referrals to services such as counseling, mental health care, family support, or academic help.
- Parents and students are expected to **actively participate** in the conference and plan, communicate challenges, and work together with the school to improve attendance.

Tiered Response to Unexcused Absences

- **1st–2nd Unexcused Absence:**
 - Email notification to parent/guardian and student

- **3rd–4th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Parent phone call
- **5th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Mandatory conference with student, parent/guardian, and staff to develop an intervention plan
- **6th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Second email notification
 - Conference with student by administration
- **7th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Discipline referral
 - 1-hour detention
- **8th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Discipline referral
 - 2-hour detention
 - Parent notification
- **9th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Discipline referral
 - In-School Suspension (ISS)
 - Parent notification
- **10th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Mandatory referral to the Fountain County Truancy Program or DCS
- **11th Unexcused Absence:**
 - Potential loss of academic credit
 - Second meeting with Attendance Board

All attendance matters will be evaluated individually. Final determination of any resulting actions, interventions, or requirements will remain at the discretion of the building administrator or their designated representative.

Extra Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities

Students are expected to demonstrate regular and responsible attendance to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

Students who have an **unexcused absence** for the school day, or who miss **three or more class periods considered unexcused** on the day of an event, will **not be permitted to participate in or attend** any extracurricular or co-curricular activities scheduled for that day.

Exceptions may be considered in advance for documented, excused absences at the discretion of school administration.

Please note: Additional requirements and expectations for student-athletes are outlined in the **Athletic Handbook** and must also be followed.

Reporting an Absence

Parents or guardians **must notify the school on the day of the absence.**

- Please call the appropriate school by noon.
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- **Documentation:** For absences requiring verification (doctor's note, funeral notice, court paperwork), materials **must be submitted within 2 days of returning to school.**

Attendance Board of Appeals (ABA)

Parents/guardians may request a review if **special circumstances** justify absences that exceed limits (e.g., hospitalization, chronic illness requiring extended time away).

The **Attendance Board of Appeals (ABA)** includes school administrators, guidance staff, the school nurse, and at least one teacher.

Families may submit documentation and invite others with relevant information. The ABA may grant additional excused days, modify the attendance plan, or recommend further action.

Questions?

For questions about this policy or to report an absence, please contact the school office.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students who are absent from school are permitted to make up missing work according to the following formula: upon returning to school, students are entitled to at least the number of make-up days equal to the number of days absent plus one day. Work missed due to truancy will be recorded as zeros. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTACT THE TEACHER TO REQUEST ALL MAKE UP WORK.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as absence from school without parental verification and knowledge; or leaving school grounds without consent of parents and school administration. Truancy includes:

1. Any unexcused absence that is not verified by the parent.
2. If a student leaves school without following the proper procedures he/she may be deemed truant.
3. Habitually truant cases may be referred to the Fountain County Court. The student and parent will be asked to meet with the Dean of Students and probation officer to solve the truancy problem. If the problem continues the student may be subject to suspension pending expulsion for the remainder of the semester.

Penalties for truancy shall be as follows:

- 1st offense - 3-hour detention
- 2nd offense - 3 day In-School Detention.
- 3rd offense - 5 day Out-of-school suspension and a potential referral to the Fountain County Truancy Mediation Board as needed.

TARDY POLICY (Per Semester)

Tardies are of two types. 1. Tardy to school at the beginning of the day. 2. Tardy to class within the school day. A student is considered absent if they are 15 or more minutes late to a class. Upon the 4th beginning of the day tardy the student will be referred to administration. 1st Referral - Tardy pass to class, one 1-hour detention. 2nd Referral- Tardy pass to class, a second 1-hour detention, 3rd Referral - Tardy pass to class, plus one day ISS, plus parent conference. Additional tardies to school will result in additional disciplinary action.

Classroom tardy will be dealt with first by the classroom teacher.

Upon the 3rd class tardy the student will receive a written warning from the teacher. On the 4th class tardy the student will be referred to administration.

1. 1st Referral - lunch detention
2. 2nd Referral - 1-hour detention
3. 3rd Referral - In-School Detention plus parent conference.
4. Additional tardies will result in further disciplinary action.

SECTION VII - GUIDANCE & ACADEMIC INFORMATION

COUNSELORS

Guidance services are available to students and parents during the school year and for two weeks before and after school is in session.

FULL - TIME STUDENT STATUS

All students at Covington Middle School must maintain a full time status. To be considered full-time a student must attend all periods of the school day. He/she must be enrolled in classes for all periods. Any need for an exception to this rule must be submitted in writing to the Principal who may grant permission.

STUDENTS ENROLLING FROM HOMESCHOOL POLICY/REQUIREMENTS

- Students must be enrolled in a minimum/maximum of two classes per day, one of which must be either ELA or Mathematics. The other class can be of their choosing.
- Parents/Guardians must present a portfolio for each student coming from homeschool to Covington Community Schools from their previous school year. The portfolio must contain at least four artifacts per class.
- Students must be continuously enrolled in two periods and both semesters in order to participate in athletics.
- Students must be enrolled in homeschool for three previous years in order to be eligible for athletics.
- Students must complete required state testing.
- Covington High School/Covington Middle School will not accept credits from a non-accredited homeschool.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If your address, phone number, or email address changes, please notify the middle school office immediately. It is important that your school records are accurate in case of an emergency.

OUT OF DISTRICT STUDENTS / OUT OF STATE STUDENTS

Any student who is living outside of the Covington Community School District will be required to fill out an Out-of-District Form each year. This form will need to be approved by both the school principal and corporation superintendent. Out of state students will not be eligible to attend Covington Community Schools unless tuition and approval by the superintendent have been agreed upon.

4.0 SEMESTER AWARD

Students who earn Straight A's will be invited to attend a free luncheon at the Beef House after grades are posted. This luncheon will only occur after the first semester.

HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll is computed at the end of each grading period. All grades are counted in computing Honor Roll.

MARKING SYSTEM

Standard Grading Scale

A = 4.0 C = 2.0

A- = 3.67	C- = 1.67
B+ = 3.33	D+ = 1.33
B = 3.00	D = 1.00
B- = 2.67	D- = .67
C+ = 2.33	F = 0

FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND SEMESTER GRADES

Final examinations are considered an important part of each course. Final examinations represent 20% of the final grade, with the two included nine weeks grading periods being 40% each. Students are expected to pass two of the three indicators (nine weeks, nine weeks, final exam) in order to earn a passing grade for the semester.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

As a general rule, schedules will not be changed after the beginning of each semester. If a student is wanting a schedule change, a schedule change request form (available through the Guidance Counselor's Office) must be submitted at the beginning of the semester.

SECTION VIII - ATHLETICS

RULES FOR COVINGTON ATHLETES

A student who plans to participate in a Covington Athletic Program is expected to be a positive influence for the community, family and self. Covington athletes are required to adhere to the general training rules established by the Athletic Committee. These training rules will be enforced the entire calendar year.

Any athlete breaking the following rules will be dismissed from one total athletic season. An athletic season is defined as being a fall, winter, or spring sport season. If a participating athlete breaks the following rules during a season, the athlete will be required to sit out the remaining part of that season and a percentage of the next season in which the athlete participates. (Example: if thirty percent of the contests have been played, the athlete will be required to miss 70% of the remaining contests, and thirty percent of the contests of the next season.)

These rules will be enforced by the Principal, A. D. and Athletic Committee.

GENERAL ATHLETIC RULES

1. A Covington athlete who commits acts of theft, misdemeanor or delinquency, depending upon the degree of seriousness, may be suspended from all athletic events for one calendar year.
2. A Covington athlete may not use or be in possession of a drug, except as prescribed medically.
3. A Covington athlete may not use or be in possession of alcoholic beverages.
4. A Covington athlete may not use or be in possession of tobacco in any form.
5. A Covington athlete may not attend parties where alcoholic beverages and drugs are being used by others. Wedding receptions or parties where alcoholic beverages are being served may be attended if the athlete is with his or her parents.
6. To remain eligible to participate in sports at Covington Middle School the student must receive passing grades in all subjects.

A failing grade in any graded subject at the end of the grading period will cause a student to become academically ineligible until the mid-term grades are reported Athletes academically ineligibility at the end of a school year will remain ineligible at the beginning of the next school year until mid-term grades of the first quarter are reported. If, at mid-term, the athlete is passing **those previously failed classes**, they will become academically eligible. Athletes that have passed **ALL** graded classes on the report card can not become academically ineligible due to mid-term grades. A coach may have additional rules to be handed out to each participating athlete to govern that athlete during the athletic season.

ATHLETIC ATTENDANCE POLICY

- A. An athlete who is absent the last three (3) periods of a school day will be unable to participate in an athletic practice or contest later that day unless prior arrangements have been made with the athletic director or principal OR medically excused.
- B. If an athlete is absent from the last day of the school week and the athletic contest is on a non-school day the athlete must get permission from the head coach to participate. Coaches may establish further requirements for participation such as a parent note.
- C. A student who has been injured and has had medical treatment cannot participate again until the date indicated by the student's doctor in writing.
- D. Daily practice attendance policies will be established by individual sport coaches issued in writing to athletes.

SCHOOL SONG

"ONWARD TROJANS"
Onward Trojans, Onward Trojans
Fight for our defense
Kick the ball, clear 'round the field
and make that score immense.
Rah Rah Rah
Onward Trojans, Onward Trojans
Fight on for our fame.
So fight Trojans fight and we will
win this game.

School Nickname - Trojans
School Colors – Black & Gold