

Covington Elementary School



Student Handbook 2026-2027 School Year

Welcome

Welcome to Covington Elementary School. We encourage all families to acquaint themselves with the policies and expectations of our school. CES takes a great deal of pride in offering a thriving and conducive educational environment. With strong traditions and core values at the forefront, we look forward to providing a prosperous and productive experience for our students.

**STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027
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2026-2027 School Calendar

Semester 1

August 10th	New Teacher Day
August 11th-12th	First Teacher Days
August 13th	First Student Day/Beginning of 1st 9 Weeks
September 7th	Labor Day (No School)
October 13th	End of 1st 9 Weeks
October 13th	Parent Conferences (3:30-7:30pm)
October 14th	Parent Conferences/No Students (8:00-11:30am)
October 15th-18th	Fall Break
November 25th-November 29th	Thanksgiving Break
December 21st-January 3rd	Holiday Break/End of 2nd 9 weeks

Semester 2

January 4th	School Resumes/Beginning of 3rd 9 weeks
January 18th	No School
February 15th	Flex Day
March 12th	End of 3rd 9 Weeks
March 15th-21st	Spring Break
March 22nd	Beginning of 4th 9 Weeks
March 26th	Good Friday
March 29th	Flex Day
May 27th	Last Student / Teacher Day/End of 4th 9 Weeks
May 28th	Flex Day (If Needed)
May 29th	Graduation

COVINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL <u>Office Staff 2026-2027</u>	
Katie Hardy Yessi Girdler Sam Bridge Courtney Cadman Melanie Harmon Mitzi Barnes	Principal Guidance Counselor Technology Coordinator Nurse Secretary Secretary

Vision Statement

Covington Elementary School provides a safe learning environment where all students are motivated to achieve their highest potential. A balanced, diverse curriculum and professional participation in assessment analysis enable all students to experience success. Excellent communication at every level allows the entire learning community to be involved in educating the whole student.

Mission Statement

Covington Elementary School is committed to meeting the academic, physical, social, and emotional needs of all students as they learn, grow, and develop the skills necessary for future success. 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 Education 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 Corporation 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 am. CES offers a breakfast program. Students may not go to their classes before 7:45 am. unless they have an extracurricular meeting scheduled for before school or a prearranged visit to a teacher. The instructional day begins promptly at 8:05 am. and the school day concludes at 2:50 pm for walkers and 2:55 for bus riders. Schedule alterations are made on occasion to accommodate student assemblies, special activities and any weather related delay or dismissal. **Early dismissal on Wednesdays (2:20 for walkers & 2:25 for bus riders).*

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Students walking to school should use sidewalks whenever possible and cross streets only at designated crosswalks.

Arrival Procedures: Walkers & car riders should enter through either of the south doors (playground entrance), which open at 7:30 a.m. Students in grades 2–5 may ride bicycles to school and should park them at the bike rack located inside the playground area. Please note that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bicycles. All car riders should be dropped off on the playground blacktop. The gates open at 7:30 a.m. During drop-off, please pull forward to the next available spot to keep traffic flowing efficiently.

Dismissal Procedures: Covington Elementary School utilizes DashPass to enhance the safety and efficiency of the dismissal process. Detailed information regarding dismissal procedures, DashPass registration, and designated pick-up locations will be provided to families prior to the start of the school year.

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 must report to the main office immediately upon arrival. Visitors should be prepared to present a state-issued photo ID and complete the school's visitor check-in process through the SafeVisitor system. To protect student safety, instructional time, and student privacy, visitors are not permitted to enter classrooms during the school day without prior administrative approval. Parents or guardians who wish to meet with a teacher, counselor, or administrator should contact the main office to schedule an appointment.

Students from other schools are not permitted to visit Covington Elementary School during the school day unless approved in advance by an administrator.

Entering or Remaining in the School Building After School Hours

Students are expected to leave the building by 3:15 p.m. unless they are participating in an approved extracurricular activity, serving detention, attending a scheduled meeting with a staff member, or otherwise authorized by an administrator.

Students may not enter or remain in the building, including gymnasiums or activity areas, unless the supervising teacher, coach, sponsor, or staff member is present. Loitering is not permitted before, during, or after school activities.

Students attending school events are expected to remain in the designated event area. Unauthorized entry into the building or restricted areas outside regular school hours may result in disciplinary action and may be treated as trespassing.

Health Services

A school nurse is available throughout the day. Records are kept by the school nurse regarding special health problems. If your child has a health concern such as asthma, diabetes allergies, etc., please inform the teacher, bus driver, and school nurse. The school registration process also provides a place for you to indicate this information. Please keep the school up-to-date on any medical changes.

Vision screenings are conducted for students in Kindergarten, 3rd and 5th grades. Hear screenings are also conducted for students in 1st and 4th grades. Parents will be notified if their child may require additional vision/hearing screenings.

Please check your child frequently for any contagious or transmittable conditions such as head lice, impetigo, pink eye, etc. Your child may be excluded from school until the condition is treated.

As a school, we are under duty by the State to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. A report is made directly to the Department of Child Services.

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 an excused absence.

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 & brought in by the parent/guardian.
- (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.
- (6) For Daily medication: A permission form must be obtained from the nurse, filled out, signed by doctor and parent, and filed with the nurse.

Food Service

Breakfast and lunch are available to students each school day. Meal prices, account procedures, and payment information will be shared at the beginning of the school year.

Parents/guardians may add funds to their child's lunch account online or by sending cash or a check to school. Please make checks payable to Covington Community School Corporation. Families are encouraged to regularly monitor their child's lunch account balance and/or set up notifications through Skyward to ensure sufficient funds are available.

Students with a negative lunch balance may be provided with an alternate meal option, such as a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, until the account balance is resolved.

Students are responsible for using their assigned meal account appropriately. A la carte items may be available for purchase.

Breakfast:	Served daily 7:30-8:05
Lunch:	K 10:20-10:50 1st 10:40-11:10 2nd 11:00-11:30 3rd 11:25-12:05 4th 12:05-12:35 5th 12:05-12:35

Please note: On a two-hour delay, a cold breakfast will be offered.

Curricular Materials

Covington Elementary School provides students with required curricular materials in accordance with Indiana law. Students are responsible for taking care of school-issued books, materials, devices, and supplies.

Students may be charged for lost, damaged, or unreturned school property. Optional fees, extracurricular costs, or other permissible charges may apply when allowed by law and school policy.

Writing Checks

Covington Elementary 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.

Messages to Students & Teachers

Students and teachers will only be called to the telephone during emergency situations. Parents/guardians may contact the main office to leave a message for a student or teacher, and the message will be delivered as soon as possible.

Whenever possible, after-school transportation arrangements should be made prior to the start of the school day. Parents/guardians should not rely on messaging teachers during the school day, as teachers may not have an opportunity to view messages until after dismissal. Any changes to a student's end-of-day transportation routine must be communicated directly to the main office by calling 765-793-2254.

Lost & Found

All articles found in or near the high school should be turned in to the main office at the middle school or high school. 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 in ink 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.

Fire & Disaster Drills

Covington Elementary School conducts emergency drills throughout the school year in accordance with Indiana law and school safety procedures. These drills may include fire, severe weather, tornado, manmade occurrence, lockdown, evacuation, and other safety-related drills.

Emergency instructions are posted in classrooms and other areas of the building. During any drill or emergency situation, students are expected to remain quiet, follow staff directions immediately, and proceed in an orderly manner. Quiet and orderly movement is especially important in the event that an exit is blocked or staff must provide verbal directions to an alternate location.

Failure to follow emergency procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Publication of Student Information and/or Picture

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 Principal's Office in writing by the first week of school.

If you prefer that your child's photograph not be used in print publications, electronic media, or on school social media platforms, please indicate your preference by selecting the appropriate option during the online annual registration process.

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 Elementary School are expected to be in attendance on the first day of school. Those who live in the Corporation 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.

Legal Name Policy

A child's legal name will be used on all school documents (permanent record, attendance reports, gradebook, report card, standardized tests, honor roll, class list, and certificates) unless the appropriate court document is on file stating a change of name.

Title I Services & Academic Support

Covington Elementary School is proud to be a schoolwide Title I school. Title I is a federally funded program designed to provide additional academic support and resources to help students strengthen essential reading and mathematics skills. Because Covington Elementary operates as a schoolwide Title I program, all students may benefit from the services and resources funded through Title I.

Each year, the school develops and submits a Title I grant application to the Indiana Department of Education. Funding received through this grant is used to support student achievement through the employment of instructional staff and the purchase of educational materials and resources that reinforce critical academic skills.

Students in grades K–2 participate in a formative assessment three times each year. These assessments provide teachers and administrators with valuable information regarding student achievement, growth, and areas where additional support may be needed.

Covington Elementary also provides a dedicated **Tier Time** intervention block. During Tier Time, students receive targeted instruction in small groups based on their individual learning needs. This intervention period is in addition to, and does not replace, the core 90-minute reading block. A Data Team regularly reviews student assessment data to identify specific skill needs and place students in appropriate instructional groups for focused support.

At Covington Elementary School, we are committed to meeting the diverse learning needs of all students. We recognize that children learn in different ways and strive to provide instructional opportunities that support a variety of learning styles. Our staff is dedicated to helping every student achieve success, and we value the partnership between home and school. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and school staff regarding their child's academic progress, and we welcome ongoing collaboration to support student learning and growth.

SECTION II - STUDENT CONDUCT

General Behavior

Purpose and Scope of Conduct Rules

Covington Elementary School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and orderly learning environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports learning, protects the rights and safety of others, and reflects positively on themselves, their families, and the school community.

The rules in this section apply when students are:

- On school property before, during, or after school;
- Traveling to or from school or a school-sponsored activity;
- On school transportation or at a school bus stop;
- Attending or participating in a school-sponsored activity, field trip, athletic event, dance, or extracurricular event;
- Using school technology, school accounts, or school-issued devices; or
- Engaging in off-campus conduct that creates a substantial disruption to the school environment, interferes with school operations, or affects the safety or welfare of students or staff.

Disciplinary decisions will be based on the nature and severity of the behavior, the student's age and disciplinary history, the impact on others, and applicable school policy and law. Consequences may include corrective interventions, parent or guardian contact, detention, loss of privileges, removal from activities, suspension, recommendation for expulsion, restitution, and/or referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

The examples listed in this section are not exhaustive. An administrator may address any conduct that disrupts school operations, interferes with the educational process, threatens safety, or violates school rules.

Discipline Guidelines

The purpose of student discipline is to maintain a safe, orderly, and positive learning environment for all students. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports their own education and the education of others.

When a student is involved in a behavior infraction, the student may be referred to the office or addressed by school personnel as appropriate. Each situation will be reviewed based on the facts, the seriousness of the behavior, the student's disciplinary history, and any relevant circumstances. Disciplinary consequences will be assigned in a manner that is appropriate to the nature of the infraction.

The goal of discipline is to correct behavior, teach responsibility, and help students make better choices in the future. While consequences may be necessary, discipline is intended to support positive behavior change rather than simply punish students. The school will make every effort to apply discipline in a fair, consistent, and reasonable manner.

The following classes of violations are provided to communicate school expectations and to help maintain a proper school atmosphere. Discipline is a progressive process, and a student's behavior record throughout the school year may be considered when determining consequences. Repeated violations may result in more serious consequences and may move a student to the next level of disciplinary action. For example, a student who accumulates three Class I violations may be moved to Class II and may be considered a repeat offender at that level.

Each student subject to disciplinary action will be treated according to this philosophy. The administration will consider the unique circumstances of each case before determining an appropriate consequence. Similar behaviors will generally receive similar consequences; however, the student's overall record and the specific facts of the situation may affect the final decision.

The list of violations and consequences is not intended to include every possible behavior or every possible consequence. The school reserves the right to address behaviors not specifically listed, using the same principles of fairness, consistency, and student safety. In cases involving suspension or expulsion, applicable student due process procedures will be followed.

The superintendent, principal, school resource officer, assistant principal, other administrative personnel, and teachers of Covington Community School Corporation are authorized to take appropriate action in response to student behavior. Disciplinary action may be based on, but is not limited to, the following classes of violations:

Classroom Discipline

Classroom teachers will make every reasonable effort to address discipline concerns within the classroom setting as they occur. Each teacher will establish clear, consistent, and reasonable expectations for student behavior that support a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment.

Classroom interventions will be age-appropriate, fair, respectful, and connected to the behavior being addressed. Teachers will work to preserve student dignity while helping students understand expectations, take responsibility for their actions, and make positive choices.

The primary goal of classroom discipline is to support student growth, responsibility, and improved behavior rather than to rely solely on punitive measures. Parents/guardians will be contacted when behavior concerns become serious, repeated, or interfere with the learning environment.

Major Discipline Violations & Administrative Interventions

Major Discipline Violations

Certain student behaviors are considered major violations of school rules and may require administrative involvement, investigation, and more intensive interventions or consequences. Major violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fighting, physical aggression, or threatening physical harm toward another person
- Harassment, intimidation, bullying, threats, or language/actions that demean, target, or intentionally disrespect the dignity of others
- Inappropriate, obscene, or offensive gestures, language, or conduct
- Open defiance, insubordination, or refusal to comply with reasonable directions from school personnel
- Theft, vandalism, or intentional damage to school or personal property
- Possession, use, distribution, sale, or exchange of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, vaping products, or related paraphernalia
- Possession, use, or handling of any item that may be considered dangerous, harmful, or disruptive to the school environment
- False activation of fire alarms, emergency equipment, or safety systems
- Conduct that violates Indiana law or substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational environment
- Repeated or serious violations of classroom, school, or district expectations

When a major violation occurs, the student will be referred to the principal or designee for review and appropriate disciplinary action. The administration will consider the severity of the behavior, the student's disciplinary history, the frequency of the behavior, the impact on others, and the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Interventions and consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Temporary removal from an activity, classroom, or school setting
- Loss of privileges, including recess, lunch, extracurricular, or activity privileges
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Parent/guardian communication or conference
- Behavior improvement plan or behavior contract
- Restorative or corrective action when appropriate
- Referral to counseling, support services, law enforcement, or outside agencies when appropriate
- Recommendation for expulsion in accordance with school board policy and Indiana law
- Additional disciplinary action as determined by school administration

The goal of disciplinary action is to maintain a safe, respectful, and orderly learning environment while helping students understand the impact of their choices, take responsibility for their behavior, and develop more positive decision-making skills.

Recess

Whenever possible, students will participate in outdoor recess. Recess provides students with fresh air, physical activity, and opportunities for social interaction. At times, students may remain indoors due to illness, weather conditions, playground conditions, or other circumstances determined by school staff.

If a parent/guardian requests that a student remain indoors for recess, a written note must be provided to the classroom teacher. Requests lasting more than one or two days may require a physician's statement. Students who must remain indoors for medical reasons may be monitored by the school nurse or other designated staff. School staff may also use professional judgment when a student appears ill or unable to safely participate in outdoor activities.

Students will remain indoors during inclement weather, including rain, unsafe playground conditions, or when the temperature and/or wind chill falls below approximately 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Students should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather, including coats, hats, gloves, boots, and other winter attire when needed. During winter months, students may be permitted to play in the snow if they are properly dressed. Throwing snowballs is not permitted.

Students are expected to follow all recess and playground safety rules. The following expectations apply during recess:

- Follow directions given by staff members on duty.
- Use playground equipment safely and appropriately.
- Take turns and share equipment when necessary.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Refrain from tackling, wrestling, fighting, or other unsafe physical contact.
- Do not throw rocks, sticks, snowballs, or other potentially dangerous objects.
- Use appropriate language and demonstrate respectful behavior toward others.
- Follow the rules of games and activities being played.
- Return school equipment to its designated area after use.
- Remain in designated recess areas.
- Use the blacktop or other assigned areas when playground conditions are muddy or unsafe.

- Line up promptly and enter the building quietly and safely when signaled by staff.

Students who do not follow recess expectations may receive corrective action or lose recess privileges when appropriate. The goal of recess supervision and discipline is to maintain a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all students.

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.

Harassment and Discrimination

Covington Community School Corporation is committed to maintaining a school environment where all students are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Harassment, discrimination, intimidation, and hostile conduct are prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Harassment or discrimination based on a person's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, ancestry, or any other legally protected status is strictly prohibited. This includes conduct directed toward a student's actual or perceived protected status.

Harassment or discrimination may include verbal, written, physical, electronic, or visual conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or disruptive educational environment; interfering with a student's educational opportunities; or negatively impacting a student's ability to participate in school programs, activities, or services.

Students who believe they have experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination are encouraged to report the concern as soon as possible to an administrator, counselor, teacher, School Resource Officer, or any trusted school employee. Parents/guardians may also report concerns directly to school administration.

All reports will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with school board policy, applicable law, and the specific circumstances of the situation. When appropriate, the school may implement supportive measures, interventions, or disciplinary action to protect student safety and preserve an appropriate learning environment.

Retaliation against any person who reports harassment or discrimination, participates in an investigation, provides information, or assists another person in making a report is strictly prohibited. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action.

Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

Covington Community School Corporation is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, and abusive behavior are prohibited and will not be tolerated.

This policy applies when a student is:

- On school grounds before, during, or after school hours;
- At a school-sponsored activity, function, event, or athletic activity;
- Traveling to or from school or a school-sponsored activity;
- Using school property, equipment, technology, or transportation; or

- Off school grounds when the conduct substantially disrupts the educational environment, interferes with the rights of students, threatens school safety, or impacts the orderly operation of the school.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal, written, electronic, or physical acts, committed by a student or group of students toward another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, or harm the targeted student.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or abusive behavior may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal threats, taunting, teasing, insults, or name-calling;
- Spreading rumors, humiliating others, or damaging another student's reputation;
- Social exclusion, coercion, intimidation, or pressure to participate in unwanted behavior;
- Physical aggression, pushing, tripping, hitting, threatening gestures, or other unwanted physical contact;
- Electronic harassment through phones, text messages, email, social media, gaming systems, artificial intelligence platforms, or other technology;
- Sharing, posting, creating, or distributing embarrassing, threatening, humiliating, sexually inappropriate, or harmful images, videos, messages, or digital content;
- Repeated conduct that causes fear, emotional distress, humiliation, or interference with a student's educational opportunities.

A single serious act may also result in school discipline when the behavior threatens safety, substantially disrupts the school environment, violates school rules, or violates Indiana law.

Reporting Procedures

Students, parents/guardians, employees, and community members are encouraged to report suspected bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or abusive behavior as soon as possible. Reports may be made to a teacher, counselor, administrator, School Resource Officer, or any trusted school employee.

Students are encouraged to report concerns even if they are unsure whether the behavior meets the formal definition of bullying. School staff will review the concern and determine the appropriate response.

A student who reports bullying, assists another student in reporting, or participates in an investigation shall be protected from retaliation, reprisal, intimidation, or false accusations. Retaliation against any person who reports misconduct or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Knowingly making a false report may also result in disciplinary action.

Investigation and Parent/Guardian Notification

School personnel will promptly review and investigate reports of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or abusive behavior in accordance with school board policy and Indiana law.

The school corporation will make reasonable efforts to:

- Prioritize the safety and well-being of the targeted student;
- Take steps to stop the reported behavior and prevent further incidents;
- Document reported and verified incidents;
- Maintain records regarding reports, interventions, and corrective actions;
- Notify the parents/guardians of both the targeted student and the alleged perpetrator in an expedited manner, consistent with Indiana law and school board policy, and generally no later than five school days after the incident is reported;

- Provide appropriate supports, interventions, and corrective actions;
- Monitor the situation when necessary to help prevent recurrence.

The severity of the conduct, pattern of behavior, safety concerns, emotional impact, age and developmental level of the students, disciplinary history, and overall circumstances of each incident may be considered when determining appropriate consequences and interventions.

When appropriate, administration may consider additional safety measures, including changes to class placement, schedule, lunch/recess arrangements, activity participation, transportation, or school assignment, when necessary to protect student safety and maintain an appropriate educational environment.

Disciplinary consequences may include, but are not limited to, parent/guardian conferences, loss of privileges, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, behavior plans, counseling or support referrals, restorative or corrective action, referral to law enforcement when appropriate, and recommendation for expulsion in accordance with school board policy and Indiana law.

Interventions and Discipline

Covington Community School Corporation may use a range of interventions, supports, and disciplinary actions to address bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or abusive behavior. The response will be based on the nature and severity of the conduct, the age and developmental level of the students involved, the impact on the targeted student, the student's disciplinary history, and the need to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.

Interventions and consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Student conference or corrective conversation
- Parent/guardian communication or conference
- Counseling, mentoring, or social-emotional support
- Restorative or corrective practices when appropriate
- Behavioral interventions or behavior improvement plans
- Safety planning or increased supervision
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to school-based or community mental health supports
- Referral to outside agencies or services
- Referral to law enforcement when appropriate
- Recommendation for expulsion in accordance with school board policy and Indiana law
- Other interventions or disciplinary action as determined by school administration

The school may take disciplinary action regardless of whether criminal charges are filed, accepted, or pursued by law enforcement or the prosecutor's office. School discipline is separate from the criminal justice process and is based on whether the conduct violates school rules, school board policy, or substantially disrupts the educational environment.

Education and Prevention

Covington Community School Corporation is committed to preventing bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, and abusive behavior through education, supervision, awareness, and intervention. The school corporation may provide age-appropriate instruction, programs, or activities related to bullying prevention, suicide prevention, digital citizenship, responsible technology use, conflict resolution, kindness, respect, and social-emotional learning.

Students are expected to treat others with dignity and respect, report concerns when they arise, and help maintain a safe and supportive school environment. Employees are expected to respond appropriately to reported or observed concerns and to help reinforce positive student behavior.

Parents/guardians may review materials used in bullying prevention or suicide prevention instruction in accordance with Indiana law and school board policy.

All students, employees, families, and community members share responsibility for promoting a school environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive, and focused on learning.

Student Dress and Appearance

Students are expected to dress and maintain their appearance in a manner that is safe, appropriate for the school setting, and respectful of the learning environment. Student dress and appearance should allow students to participate fully in all instructional and school-related activities, including physical education, laboratory activities, career and technical education activities, art, recess, field trips, and other school programs.

No dress code can address every possible situation. School administration reserves the right to make final determinations regarding whether student dress, grooming, accessories, or appearance is appropriate for the school environment. Dress code decisions will be made in a fair and reasonable manner, with consideration given to student safety, educational disruption, and the orderly operation of the school.

Students must follow these guidelines:

- Clothing, hairstyles, accessories, or grooming may not create a safety hazard, block vision, restrict movement, or interfere with participation in school activities.
- Students must wear shoes with solid soles. Footwear must be safe and appropriate for the school setting and activities.
- Jewelry or accessories may not be worn during physical education, recess, laboratory work, career and technical activities, or other activities when they create a safety concern.
- Clothing may not be excessively torn, tattered, frayed, or revealing.
- Clothing that exposes undergarments or exposes skin in a manner inconsistent with school expectations is not permitted.
- Undergarments may not be worn as outerwear or used as cover-ups.
- Tops must provide appropriate coverage. Tube tops, halter tops, cut-off shirts, crop tops, and shirts that expose the midriff, undergarments, or excessive cleavage are not permitted.
- Mesh, fishnet, sheer, or see-through clothing may only be worn with appropriate clothing underneath that meets dress code expectations.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses must be worn in a manner that provides appropriate coverage.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be of appropriate length as determined by school administration.
- Hats, hoods, sunglasses, and other head coverings may not be worn inside the school building unless approved by administration for religious, medical, safety, instructional, or other appropriate reasons.
- Coats, blankets, or similar outerwear may not be worn in classrooms unless permission is granted by the teacher or administration.
- Wallet chains, long chains, spiked accessories, or other items that may create a safety concern or disruption are not permitted.
- Visible body piercings are limited to ears and nostril piercings. Other visible piercings may be required to be removed or covered if they create a safety concern or disruption to the educational environment.

- Clothing, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, or personal belongings may not display, advertise, or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, vaping, weapons, violence, sexual content, vulgar language, profanity, hate speech, or messages/images that are discriminatory, harassing, intimidating, or substantially disruptive to the school environment.
- Symbols, images, words, or displays that are reasonably expected to cause disruption, intimidation, harassment, conflict, or interference with the educational environment are not permitted.

Students who violate the dress code may be required to change clothing, cover the item, remove the item, or contact a parent/guardian for appropriate clothing. When available, the school may provide temporary clothing or other reasonable options to allow the student to return to class as quickly as possible.

Repeated, intentional, or serious dress code violations may result in disciplinary action. School administrators reserve the right to determine whether a student's attire, accessories, grooming, or appearance is unsafe, disruptive, distracting, or inappropriate for the educational environment.

Cell Phone Use / Electronic Devices/Personal Communication Devices

In accordance with Indiana law and Covington Community School Corporation policy, students are prohibited from using personal wireless communication devices during the school day unless an approved exception applies.

For purposes of this policy, a personal communication device or wireless communication device includes any portable wireless device capable of voice, messaging, internet access, data communication, recording, or other electronic communication. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, e-readers, gaming devices, wireless earbuds, smart eyeglasses, electronic music devices, recording devices, and other web-enabled or electronic devices.

Personal communication devices can disrupt the educational environment, interfere with student focus, contribute to cheating, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, inappropriate recording, and other misconduct, and may be lost, stolen, or damaged. Students who bring such devices to school do so at their own risk. The school corporation is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.

School Day Restrictions

Students may bring personal wireless communication devices to school; however, devices must be powered off, stored away, and inaccessible to the student throughout the school day. This includes class time, instructional time, passing periods, lunch, recess, restroom breaks, assemblies, and any other portion of the student school day.

Cell phones and personal communication devices may not be seen, heard, carried, accessed, or used during the school day unless an approved exception applies. Devices should be stored in the student's locker, backpack, or other location designated by school administration.

Students may use personal communication devices before school begins and after dismissal, unless otherwise directed by school personnel. Students must power off and store devices upon entering the school building or at the time designated by building administration. Students may turn devices back on after dismissal or when permitted by school administration.

Exceptions

A student may be permitted to use a personal communication device during the school day only when one of the following exceptions applies:

- The use is included in the student's Individualized Education Program, or IEP;
- The use is included in the student's Section 504 plan;
- The device is necessary to manage a documented medical condition pursuant to an order from a licensed health care provider;
- The use is authorized by the superintendent or designee during an emergency;
- The device is necessary for language translation to support access for multilingual learners, when approved by school personnel; or
- The use is otherwise permitted by school board policy or applicable law.

When technology is needed for instructional purposes, students are expected to use school-issued or school-approved devices as directed by school personnel. Personal devices may not be used for classroom instruction unless allowed under an approved exception or specifically authorized in accordance with school policy.

Prohibited Areas and Uses

Students may not use cell phones, cameras, recording devices, smartwatches, or other personal communication devices in restrooms, locker rooms, dressing areas, or any other location where privacy is expected.

Students may not use a personal communication device to record, photograph, livestream, message, post, share, or distribute images, audio, video, or other content of students, staff, or school activities without permission from school administration or the supervising staff member.

Any use of a personal communication device that is inappropriate, disruptive, harassing, threatening, discriminatory, obscene, invasive of privacy, or in violation of school rules or law may result in confiscation of the device, disciplinary action, and/or referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

Confiscation and Consequences

Any personal communication device that is seen, heard, carried, accessed, or used in violation of this policy may be confiscated by school personnel and turned in to the building administrator or designee.

Refusal to surrender a device when directed by school personnel may be considered insubordination and may result in additional disciplinary action.

Consequences for violations may include, but are not limited to:

1st Offense:

Device returned to the student after school. Parent/guardian contacted.

2nd Offense:

Device returned to the parent/guardian after school.

3rd Offense:

Device returned to the parent/guardian after school and one day of in-school suspension may be assigned.

Additional Offenses:

Device returned to the parent/guardian after school. Additional disciplinary action may be assigned, including in-school suspension, loss of privilege to bring the device to school for a period of time determined by administration, or other appropriate consequences.

A student who allows another student to use the student's device in violation of this policy may be subject to the same consequences as the student who used the device.

Searches and Law Enforcement

School officials may search a student's personal communication device when there is reasonable suspicion that the device contains evidence of a violation of school rules, school board policy, or law.

Law enforcement may be contacted when a device is believed to contain evidence of criminal activity, including but not limited to harassment, threats, bullying, intimidation, child exploitation, child pornography, unlawful recording, or other illegal conduct.

The school's disciplinary response may proceed regardless of whether law enforcement investigates, files charges, or pursues criminal action.

Weapon Possession

Weapons are prohibited on school property, on school transportation, and at school-sponsored events.

A weapon includes any object that is used, intended to be used, or could reasonably be used to threaten, injure, intimidate, or cause harm. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, destructive devices, knives of any size, explosives, ammunition, look-alike weapons, and any object used or threatened to be used as a weapon.

No student shall possess, handle, transmit, use, or threaten to use a firearm, destructive device, deadly weapon, or other weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

Students who possess, handle, transmit, use, or threaten to use a weapon may be subject to suspension, recommendation for expulsion, and referral to law enforcement. Firearm and destructive device violations will be handled in accordance with Indiana law, federal law, and school policy.

An administrator will notify law enforcement when required by law or when appropriate due to the nature of the situation.

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

The possession, use, transmission, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, controlled substances, look-alike substances, intoxicants, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited on school property, on school transportation, at school-sponsored activities, and in any school-related setting.

This rule applies to substances including, but not limited to:

- Alcohol;
- Marijuana or THC products;
- Narcotics;
- Stimulants;
- Depressants;
- Hallucinogens;
- Inhalants;
- Intoxicants;
- Controlled substances;
- Prescription medication used or possessed in violation of school medication procedures;
- Over-the-counter medication used or possessed in violation of school medication procedures;
- Look-alike substances;
- Substances represented to be alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances; and
- Drug paraphernalia or items used for storage, delivery, processing, or consumption of prohibited substances.

Medication prescribed to a student by an authorized healthcare provider is not a violation when it is used according to school medication procedures. Medication must be stored and administered through the nurse's office unless otherwise authorized through an approved health plan, emergency plan, or legal accommodation.

A violation of this section may result in parent or guardian notification, law enforcement notification, school discipline, drug testing when applicable, suspension, recommendation for expulsion, loss of extracurricular privileges, and/or referral to support services.

The health and safety of students and staff will be the primary consideration in all substance-related situations.

Tobacco/Vaping Use

The use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, or transmission of tobacco, nicotine products, vaping products, electronic cigarettes, nicotine pouches, nicotine gum, lighters, matches, or related items is prohibited at school, on school property, on school transportation, and at any school-sponsored activity.

All Covington Community School Corporation facilities and school-sponsored activities are tobacco-free and vape-free environments.

Students found in possession of tobacco, vaping products, nicotine products, or related items may be subject to disciplinary action and may be subject to drug testing under the just-cause provisions of the student handbook when applicable.

Possible consequences may include:

First offense: Minimum three days of in-school detention

Second offense: Three days of out-of-school suspension

Third offense: Ten days of out-of-school suspension pending possible recommendation for expulsion

Each offense may also result in notification to the School Resource Officer or law enforcement when appropriate.

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.

Cheating/Plagiarism Policy

Cheating/Plagiarism will not be tolerated at Covington Elementary School. Cheating includes copying homework, assignments, assigned class work, as well as copying or using notes on exams. Cheating also includes 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 from principal/assistant principal.
- 2nd Offense - 0% on test or assignment and an after school detention.
- 3rd Offense - 0% on test or assignment, and 2 after school detentions.

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. Detentions will be served from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Failure to serve an assigned detention will result in further disciplinary action.

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.

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.

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 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 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.

Grounds for Suspension or Expulsion

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct or substantial disobedience. 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, on the campus of another school, 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.
4. Depending on the severity of the situation and under administrative discretion, students may be able to still complete classwork online for full credit. Tests and quizzes will not be available online and must be completed as soon as possible under the supervision of the classroom teacher.

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 parents.

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 appeal to the school board to 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 parents. 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 no
- ❖ 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.)

<u>Consequences</u>					
	1 st offense	2 nd offense	3 rd offense	4 th offense	5 th offense
Class I	Written Warning and parent /guardian contacted	Parent/Guardian contacted 1 day suspension assigned by admin.	Parent/guardian contacted 3 day suspension assigned by admin.	1. Parent/Guardian contacted. 2.5 day suspension assigned by admin. 3. Possible loss of bus service 4. Parent Conference	Parent/guardian contacted Loss of bus service
Class II	Parent/guardian contacted 5 day suspension assigned by admin.	Parent/guardian contacted 10 day suspension assigned by admin.	Parent/guardian contacted 1. 10 day suspension assigned by admin. 2. Possible loss of bus service 3. Parent Conference	Parent/guardian contacted 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 VI - STUDENT ATTENDANCE (ISBA Code 4320)

The Covington Community School Corporation has adopted an attendance policy that limits the number of days/class periods a student may be absent from school each semester. This policy places the responsibility for attending school upon the student and his/her parents.

In Fountain County, a student may be referred to the Truancy Program for one or all of the areas of school attendance stated below. The Department of Child Services and prosecutors consult when determining whether a child has violated Indiana's Compulsory School Attendance Law.

All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for class in order to benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. A student, who is not regular in attendance, loses interest, tends to feel isolated, and drops out of school. The procedures we follow eliminate chronic absences, yet provide a manner in which a student may miss if there is a need – provided the school is notified.

Attendance Policy

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 REQUIRE ADVANCED NOTICE AND/OR DOCUMENTATION.**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 (up to 5 days) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approved Educationally Related Non-Classroom Activity (field trips/ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The National FFA Organization ○ The Indiana FFA Association ○ The 4-H Club |
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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**.

****THESE REQUIRE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION.**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 |
|--|---|

• Funeral or Bereavement: Attendance at funeral services or related family responsibilities for a close family member or loved one.	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.	

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: (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

Tiered Response to Unexcused Absences (Grades K–5)

3rd Unexcused Absence:	Email notification
4th Unexcused Absence:	Parent Phone Call
5th Unexcused Absence:	Mandatory In-Person Conference w/ the School Counselor: This conference will include identifying barriers and developing an intervention plan.
6th Unexcused Absence:	Email Notification + Conference w/ Administration: This conference will include an attendance contract.
7th Unexcused Absence:	Discipline Referral + Academic Intervention: Student will stay after school for 1-hour to make up for loss of instructional minutes.
8th Unexcused Absence:	Discipline Referral + Academic Intervention: Student will stay after school for 1-hour to make up for loss of instructional minutes.

9th Unexcused Absence:	Mandatory In-Person Conference with the student, parent/guardian, counselor, & administration to revisit the attendance contract. Issue a Warning regarding Day #10.
10th Unexcused Absence:	Mandatory Referral to Fountain County Truancy Program / Report to DCS

**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.*

Students with **10 or more unexcused absences** in a school year may affect their academic progress or success. This may include, but is not limited to, required participation in summer school or consideration for retention at the current grade level.

Chronically Absent:

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:

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.

Reporting an Absence

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

- Please call the school by noon.
Elementary School 765-793-2254
- **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: upon returning to school, students are entitled to at least the number of make-up days equal to the number of days absent. Work missed due to truancy will be recorded as zeros. Parents should 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 building administrator or designee 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 -2-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)

- Day 7- parents will be contacted and support will be offered to assist in getting the child to school.
- Day 9 - SRO will visit the home and complete a wellness check. If a student is an Out of District student, their enrollment could be revoked if progress is not made.
- Day 11 - students in poor academic standing will stay after school for a 1 hour tutoring / enrichment session.
- Day 13 - DCS report will be filed

SECTION VII - GUIDANCE & ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Counseling Service

Counseling services are available by request for every student in the school and are provided in a confidential manner. Requests for counseling can be made by the student, the teachers, administrators, and parents/guardian. We also have a Social Worker, via Valley Oaks, available with a referral.

Registration

Returning student course registration for the next school year takes place each spring. Registration for classes calls for careful planning on the part of students, parents, and the school. Certain courses are required for graduation, and others are elective. Students with specific goals after high school must select courses that will help to attain those goals. Course selections are finalized by the last day of the current school year and no changes will be made in the fall. The principal will evaluate any extenuating situations but changing classes will not be encouraged and only under very extenuating circumstances will it be allowed.

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.

Reporting to Parents

Report cards are issued at the conclusion of each nine-week grading period. Progress reports will be provided midway through each grading period to keep families informed of student academic performance and progress.

Parents/guardians may monitor student grades and academic information at any time through the Skyward Family Access system. Each family is provided with login credentials to access student information electronically.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate regularly with their child's teacher and may request a conference at any time during the school year. Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled annually in October.

Grading Scale:

A	93% - 100%	D+	68% - 69%
A-	90% - 92%	D	63% - 67%
B+	88% - 89%	D-	60% - 62%
B	83% - 87%		
B-	80% - 82%		
C+	78% - 79%		
C	73% - 77%		
C-	70% - 72%		

SECTION VIII - ACTIVITIES

Clubs & Organizations

Clubs and other extracurricular groups will meet either before or after school, depending on which times are most convenient and desirable for the sponsor and the group members. Students are urged to take advantage of the growth opportunities which membership in organizations affords. The following activities are available to students of Covington Elementary School:

